NARRABRI SHIRE
ADVERSE EVENT PLAN

NARRABRI SHIRE
DISCOVER THE POTENTIAL

DISCLAIMER

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DOCUMENT CONTROL

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

"Narrabri Shire Council acknowledges and pays respect to the Kamilaroi people and their Elders, both past and present, as Traditional custodians of the land which Narrabri Shire Council operations are conducted.

The Narrabri Shire has a rich history of culture and Council is stepping toward endeavours to unite the Community in preserving the unique heritage and celebrating our community diversities.

Council recognises the valuable contribution to the Narrabri Shire made by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and looks forward to a future of mutual respect and harmony."

Adopted by Narrabri Shire Council in July 2016.

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This Plan does not replace the Local Emergency Management Plan (EMPLAN).

In the event of an adverse event, emergency, or disaster, the local EMPLAN should be the first point of reference.

1 Adverse Events

1.1 Background

An 'adverse event' can be broadly defined as an event or incident that impacts negatively on an area, disrupting the community and causing significant environmental, social and/or economic damage. Adverse events can include natural, biological, and human-induced events (see Section 1.5).

Natural events are a common occurrence in Australia, with communities frequently subjected to the damaging impacts of severe weather, prolonged droughts, bushfires, and floods. Climate change is resulting in less predictable and more extreme weather patterns which is increasing the frequency and severity of natural events.[1] At the same time, a broad range of factors (including increasing population and urbanisation, changing work-life patterns and increasing complexity and interdependency of social, technical and infrastructure systems) are increasing the vulnerability of communities to adverse events.[2]

The escalation in the frequency and magnitude of adverse events is resulting in more calls for all levels of government to assist in preventing, combatting, and recovering from adverse events. The National Principles for Disaster Recovery recognise that communities have an essential role to play in their own recovery and that there is a need to build capacity and self-reliance. Local councils are well positioned to coordinate and drive this.[3] Of the three levels of government (being Local, State and Federal), Local Government organisations have the closest relationship to communities and the most comprehensive knowledge and understanding of the impacts of adverse events and the needs and expectations of their community.

1.2 Purpose and Context

The purpose of the Narrabri Shire Adverse Event Plan is to provide the direction and framework for Narrabri Shire Council and key agencies to enhance the capacity of Council and the community to prepare for, respond to and recover from adverse events that currently and could potentially affect the Narrabri Shire Local Government Area (LGA).

The Adverse Event Plan (the Plan) endeavours to align with existing Local, Regional, State and Federal plans for adverse events, as defined in Section 1.5

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1 Council of Australian Governments (2011) National Strategy for Disaster Resilience.
2 Ibid.
3 Emergency Management Australia National Principles for Disaster Recovery.

1.3 Objectives

- To ensure that the Narrabri Shire community is well prepared to respond to and recover from adverse events.
- To build the capacity and resilience of Narrabri Shire to reduce risk and minimise the impacts of adverse events on the Shire community, environment, and economy.
- To articulate the roles of Narrabri Shire Council, response organisations and the local community in the preparation, response, and recovery processes.
- To identify and provide an overview of the integration between relevant Strategies, Plans and Policies for the Narrabri Shire's response to adverse events; and
- To identify gaps in, and shortcomings with, the systems, infrastructure, facilities, and services available to enable Narrabri Shire to plan more effectively for adverse events.

1.4 Glossary of Terms

Terminology	
Adverse Event	An event or incident that impacts negatively on an area, disrupting the community and causing significant environmental, social, or economic damage.
Community Capacity Building	Strengthening the skills, knowledge, access to information, materials, funds and equipment for local communities to develop, implement and sustain their own solutions to problems in a way that helps them shape and exercise control over their physical, social, economic and cultural environments.
Disaster	The event which has caused loss of human life, damage to property or loss of livelihood.
Force Majeure	Unforeseeable circumstances, beyond human control, that prevent a party from fulfilling part or whole of a contract.
Hazard	The phenomenon (natural or human) that presents a risk of harm or damage to humans.
Resilience	How easily a locality or community can simultaneously balance environmental, economic, and social functions in the face of its threats. A resilient locality or community will have the ability to absorb, recover and prepare for future shocks or adverse events.
Risk reduction	Actions taken before a hazard or disaster occurs to reduce the impact of such an event. Examples include, reducing bushfire risk, measures to divert flood water, using drought resilient crops or increasing water storage capacity to maintain water supply in times of drought.
Preparedness	Knowledge and capacities developed by governments, response and recovery organisations, communities, and individuals to effectively anticipate, respond to, and recover from the impacts of likely, imminent, or current adverse events.

Abbreviations	
BOM	Australian Government Bureau of Meteorology
Council	Narrabri Shire Council
DPI	NSW Department of Primary Industries
DCJ	NSW Department of Communities & Justice
DITRDC	Australian Government Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications
DISPLAN	Disaster Plan
DNSW	Destination NSW
EMPLAN	Emergency Plans
EPA	NSW Environmental Protection Agency
FRMC	Narrabri Shire Floodplain Risk Management Committee
FRNSW	Fire + Rescue NSW
LEMC	Local Emergency Management Committee
LEMO	Local Emergency Management Officer
LEOCON	Local Emergency Operations Controller
N2IP	Northern NSW Inland Port
NWLLS	North West Local Land Services
NPWS	National Parks and Wildlife Service NSW
NSWPF	NSW Police Force
PPRR	Prevention, Preparation, Response, Recovery
REOCON	Regional Emergency Operations Controller
RFS	NSW Rural Fire Service
RGDC	Regional Growth NSW Development Corporation
SERM Act	*State Emergency and Rescue Management Act 1989* (NSW)
SES	NSW State Emergency Services
VRA	NSW Volunteer Rescue Association

1.5 Defining Adverse Events

An adverse event can be broadly defined as a natural disaster and other extraordinary event or incident that impacts negatively on an area, disrupting the community and causing significant environmental, social, or economic damage. Adverse events can include:

- **Natural Hazards:** naturally occurring physical phenomena caused either by rapid or slow onset events. These can be:
    - **Geophysical** (earthquakes, landslides, tsunamis, and volcanic activity).
    - **Hydrological** (avalanches and floods).
    - **Climatological** (extreme temperatures, drought, and wildfires).
    - **Meteorological** (cyclones and storms/wave surges); or
    - **Biological** (disease epidemics and insect/animal plagues).

- **Man-Made Hazards:** events that are caused by humans and occur in or close to human settlements (complex emergencies/conflicts, famine, displaced populations, industrial accidents, and transport accidents). This can include:
    - Environmental Degradation;

- Hazardous Materials Incidents;
- Pollution; and
- Accidents.

Adverse events can be sudden (for example, storm) or progressive (for example, drought) and have singular or multiple (accumulative) causes. The location, frequency, scale, severity and impacts of adverse events is generally difficult to predict.

An adverse event becomes a 'disaster' when the impacts of the event exceed the ability of the local community and local resources to respond. With a disaster declaration for their area, affected Local Governments, communities and individuals can access a range of special assistance measures. In NSW the decision to declare a 'disaster' is made by the NSW Government.

1.6 Defining Agencies and Responders:

The lead agency (also known as the combat agency) is the organisation that takes charge and coordinates the preparation, response and recovery efforts relating to an adverse event. In the circumstances of adverse events, local government organisations, such as Council, do not take on a lead agency role, but rather a supporting role. Lead Agencies relevant to the Narrabri Shire Include:

- Fire + Rescue NSW
- NSW Department of Health
- NSW Department of Primary Industries
- NSW Environmental Protection Agency
- NSW Police Force
- NSW Rural Fire Service
- NSW State Emergency Services
- NSW Volunteer Rescue Association

A first responder is a person with specialised training, who are among the first to arrive and aid in an adverse event. First responders are often:

- Fire + Rescue NSW
- Mines Rescue
- NSW Ambulance Service
- NSW Police Force
- NSW Rural Fire Service
- NSW State Emergency Services
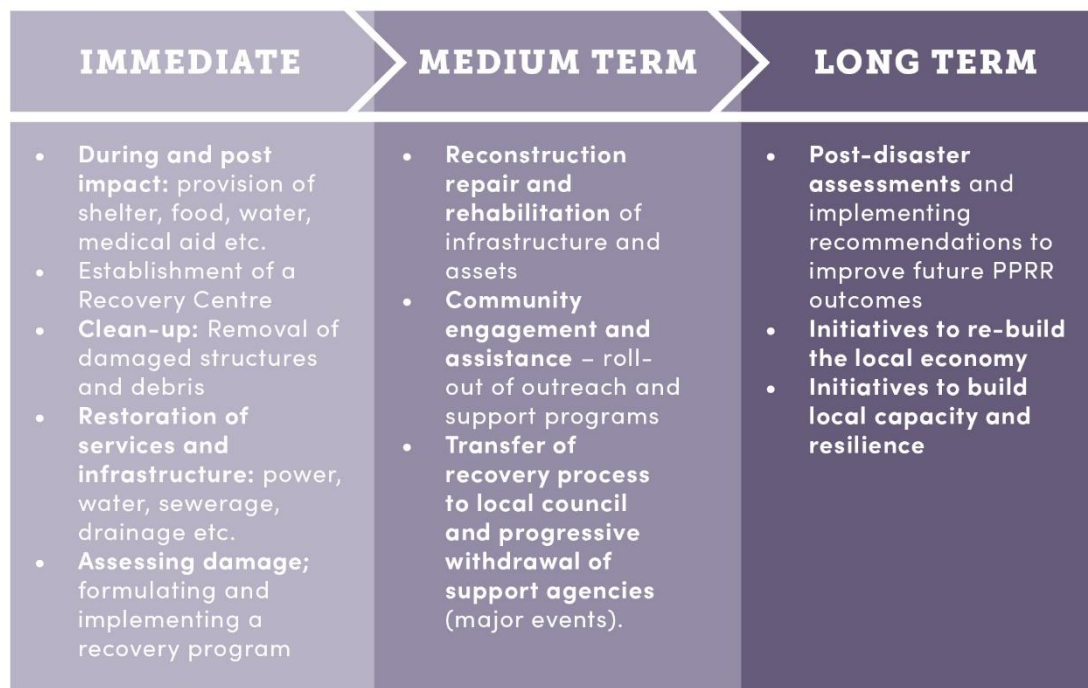- NSW Volunteer Rescue Association

1.7 Managing Adverse Events

The PPRR Model

Management of adverse events is built on a four-pronged approach:[4]

PREVENTION	To eliminate or reduce the level of risk or decreased the severity of emergencies. Actions include identifying hazards, assessing threats to life and property, and taking measures to reduce potential loss of life or property.
PREPARATION	To build the capacity of communities to cope with the consequences of adverse events, including plans and strategies to respond to and recover from adverse events.
RESPONSE	To ensure that the immediate consequences of adverse events, to communities, are minimised by combating the event and providing immediate relief for people affected.
RECOVERY	To support affected individuals and communities to reconstruct physical infrastructure and restore physical, emotional, environmental, and economic well-being to return an affected community to its proper level of function.

Recovery typically occurs in three stages. The 'Immediate' commences at the point of impact and initially runs parallel to the 'Response' Phase of the above PPRR Model, with the focus on ensuring that people are safe and have access to essential goods and services.

IMMEDIATE	MEDIUM TERM	LONG TERM
• **During and post impact:** provision of shelter, food, water, medical aid etc. • Establishment of a Recovery Centre • **Clean-up:** Removal of damaged structures and debris • **Restoration of services and infrastructure:** power, water, sewerage, drainage etc. • **Assessing damage;** formulating and implementing a recovery program	• **Reconstruction repair and rehabilitation** of infrastructure and assets • **Community engagement and assistance** – roll-out of outreach and support programs • **Transfer of recovery process to local council and progressive withdrawal of support agencies** (major events).	• **Post-disaster assessments** and implementing recommendations to improve future PPRR outcomes • **Initiatives to re-build the local economy** • **Initiatives to build local capacity and resilience**

4 Information in this section is taken from: NSW Government: Justice – Office of Emergency Management (2016) Emergency Management Arrangements for NSW

Management Framework – Roles and Responsibilities

Australia has a well-established framework for responding to adverse events at Federal, State, Regional and Local level, with cooperative arrangements in place between each level. In NSW the *State Emergency and Rescue Management Act 1989* (NSW) (the SERM Act) provides the legal and governance framework for emergency management in NSW, including specifying roles and responsibilities in planning and responding to emergencies. 'Slow' events, such as drought, are managed differently to 'acute' events, such as floods and earthquakes.

Emergency Management Committees at State, Regional and Local level are responsible for preparing Emergency Plans (EMPLANs) which articulate the over-arching management arrangements including the agreed roles and functions of different agencies and organisations. EMPLANs are under-pinned by a raft of Supporting Plans, which outline how agencies will provide support for the EMPLAN, and Sub Plans which address specific hazards or events. The organisations responsible at each stage of the PPRR Model are summarised in Figure 2.2.

Local councils are a key player at the local level and are responsible for providing executive support to the Local Emergency Management Committee (LEMC), supporting agencies during the Response phase and providing executive support to Local and Regional Recovery Committees or chairing the Local Recovery Committee if the State Government does not appoint a Recovery Coordinator[5]. This support is coordinated by the Local Emergency Management Officer (LEMO) – a task designated to a Council officer.

Local councils are involved throughout the PPRR process primarily in a support role. At the statutory level, councils are responsible for providing executive support for the Local Emergency Management Committee (LEMC) in the form of a LEMO. Additionally, Councils are required to support Local and Regional Recovery Committees through the appointment of a Recovery Coordinator, and for chairing the Local Recovery Committee when a Recovery Coordinator is not appointed.

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5 NSW Government (2016) Resilience NSW Recovery Plan

Figure 1.7.1 - Organisations responsible for each stage in the PPRR Model[6]

6 Source: Compiled from charts provided in the NSW Government Justice: Office of Emergency Management (2016) Emergency Management Arrangements for NSW.

Figure 1.7.2 - Emergency Management Structure NSW[7]

7 Source: Compiled from charts provided in the NSW Government Justice: Office of Emergency Management (2016) Emergency Management Arrangements for NSW.

2 Local Context

Narrabri Shire is situated within the Namoi River Valley in North West NSW. The Shire has an area of 13,031 square kilometres and extends from the Nandewar Range in the east, west across the Lower Namoi River floodplain. Mt Kaputar National Park lies along the eastern boundary of the Shire, with the Pilliga Forest occupying most of the south western quarter of the Shire. The Shire is bounded by Moree Plains Shire to the north, Gwydir Shire and Tamworth Regional LGA to the east, Gunnedah and Warrumbungle Shires to the south, and Coonamble and Walgett Shires to the west.

Figure 1.1.1 – Narrabri Shire

Table 1.1.1 - Population and Dwellings by Locality – Narrabri Shire, 2016[8]

Locality (Suburb – SSC)	Population		Age Distribution		Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	Private Dwellings
	No.	% of Shire	0-14 years	65+ years		
Narrabri	7,606	57.55%	20.9%	17.4%	11.8%	3,408
Wee Waa	2,080	15.74%	23.2%	16.9%	16.8%	943
Boggabri	1,130	8.55%	18.4%	21.6%	11.3%	584
Bellata	350	2.65%	25.1%	16.9%	8.9%	144
Pilliga	217	1.64%	24.8%	18.5%	25.4%	126
Merah North	186	1.41%	21.9%	10.4%	9.6%	71
Bohena Creek	167	1.26%	16.2%	20.3%	9.1%	63
Baan Baa	163	1.23%	21.1%	15.7%	6.6%	85
Gwabegar	162	1.23%	18.0%	25.7%	25.8%	76
Jacks Creek	135	1.02%	17.5%	24.8%	3.1%	64
Tarriaro	116	0.88%	24.8%	23.1%	0.0%	49
Maules Creek	113	0.85%	21.6%	14.7%	2.7%	62
Edgeroi	109	0.82%	*	*	*	59
Bullawa Creek	108	0.82%	*	*	*	42
Eulah Creek	76	0.58%	*	*	*	33
Spring Plains	75	0.57%	*	*	*	30
Turrawan	72	0.54%	*	*	*	72
Nowley	70	0.53%	*	*	*	22
Yarrie Lake	65	0.49%	*	*	*	30
Couradda	54	0.41%	*	*	*	21
Harparary	45	0.34%	*	*	*	14
Cuttabri	43	0.33%	*	*	*	26
Wean	25	0.19%	*	*	*	9
Bulyeroi	15	0.11%	*	*	*	3
Drildool	15	0.11%	*	*	*	9
Boolcarrol	14	0.11%	*	*	*	3
Kaputar	6	0.05%	*	*	*	7
Total*	**13,217[9]**	**100%**	**21.30%**	**17.60%**	**12.20%**	**6,055**

Narrabri, Boggabri, Wee Waa and the villages of Baan Baa and Pilliga are located on the Namoi River floodplain and are affected by riverine flooding. Narrabri, Boggabri (Coxs Creek) and Bellata (Gehan Creek) are subject to flash flooding. Gwabegar is directly impacted by bushfires in the Pilliga Forest with Pilliga and Baan Baa also potentially at risk from forest fires. Narrabri and Wee Waa have the potential to be impacted by fire storms. Both the Newell and Kamilaroi Highways can be cut by floodwaters, with the Newell Highway often closed during bushfires in the Pilliga Forest.

8 Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics: Quick Stats: 2016 Census – State Suburbs.
9 Note: Suburb population data does not always precisely correlate with an LGA's data and therefore the total of all suburbs' populations exceeds the LGAs estimated population.

2.1 Local Economy

The Narrabri Shire has a diverse economic base with Gross Regional Product (GRP) estimated at $1.952 billion with $583.82 million of output and $336.7 million of value-add. The two main economic activities are extractive industries and agriculture. Extractive industries account for 60.6% of the Shire's output,67.5% of value-add and is the Shire's second largest employer (accounting for 28.1% of jobs). Agriculture is the Shire's largest employer (accounting for 45.6% of jobs), and second-largest contributor to output (22.5%) and value-add (17.4%).

The Shire's primary agricultural activities are broadacre cropping (both irrigated and non-irrigated), and livestock production. Cotton production is concentrated along the Namoi River floodplain from Boggabri through to Wee Waa with the Shire having seven cotton gins, cotton seed storage facilities and a large cotton seed distributor. Grain and pulse production is concentrated to the north and west of Narrabri. Narrabri Shire has three agricultural research facilities: the Australian Cotton Research Institute; Monsanto Narrabri Research Centre; and the University of Sydney's IA Watson Grains Research Centre. The Shire is also home of the Paul Wild Observatory, which houses the Australia Telescope Compact Array. The Observatory is operated by the CSIRO Astronomy and Space Science Division.

The Shire sits partly atop of the Gunnedah Basin and sections of the Great Artesian Basin, (specifically the Southern Recharge and Surat groundwater sources). Due to this placement, Narrabri Shire is resource rich, with access to extensive irrigation, and coal and gas reserves. There are four coal mines in the Shire with a fifth proposed at Vickery just south of Boggabri. The Pilliga Forest in the south west of the Shire has extensive gas reserves. Santos's proposed Narrabri Gas Project has the potential to supply up to half of NSW's natural gas demand and support the development of 'gas intensive' activities in Narrabri, including a Fertiliser Manufacturing Plant.

The Shire has a strong and growing tourism sector. In 2019, the Shire attracted an estimated 295,000 visitors, of whom 165,000 stayed one or more nights in the Shire and 130,000 were day visitors. Overnight visitors spent 409,000 nights in the Shire. The Shire's main attractions are the Mount Kaputar National Park, the Pilliga Forest, the Pilliga Hot Artesian Baths and CSIRO Australia Telescope Compact Array.

Narrabri is a major transport and logistics hub for both road and rail freight. The Shire has three intermodal terminals (Narrabri North, Narrabri West, and Wee Waa), several major grain receival and storage sites, multiple trucking and freight forwarding companies and a range of transport and logistical service providers. The Shire draws commodities from a 350 kilometres radius, with its catchment area including the surrounding LGAs and areas of southern Queensland. The transport and logistics sector are poised to grow substantially with the opening of the Inland Rail and the establishment of the Northern NSW Inland Port (N2IP) in Narrabri.

3 Resilient Communities

Government policy in the management of adverse events in Australia is focused on building resilient communities. Communities that develop a high level of resilience are better able to withstand a crisis event and have an enhanced ability to recover from residual impact.[10]

The Commonwealth of Australia National Strategy for Disaster Resilience describes a disaster resilient community as one where:

- People understand the risks that may affect them and others in their community. They have comprehensive local information about hazards and risks, including who is exposed and who is most vulnerable. They take action to prepare for disasters and are adaptive and flexible to respond appropriately during emergencies.
- People have taken steps to anticipate disasters and to protect themselves their assets and their livelihoods, including their homes and possessions, cultural heritage, and economic capital, therefore minimising physical, economic, and social losses. They have committed the necessary resources and can organise themselves before, during and after disasters which helps to restore social, institutional, and economic activity.
- People work together with local leaders using their knowledge and resources to prepare for and deal with disasters. They use personal and community strengths, and existing community networks and structures; a resilient community is enabled by strong social networks that offer support to individuals and families in a time of crisis.
- People work in partnership with emergency services, their local authorities, and other relevant organisations before, during and after emergencies. These relationships ensure community resilience activities are informed by local knowledge, can be undertaken safely, and complement the work of emergency service agencies.
- Emergency management plans are resilience-based, to build disaster resilience within communities over time. Communities, governments, and other organisations take resilience outcomes into account when considering and developing core services, products, and policies. They are adaptive and flexible to respond appropriately in disasters.
- The emergency management volunteer sector is strong.
- Businesses and other service providers undertake wide-reaching business continuity planning that links with their security and emergency management arrangements.
- Land use planning systems and building control arrangements reduce, as far as is practicable, community exposure to unreasonable risks from known hazards, and suitable arrangements are implemented to protect life and property.
- Following a disaster, a satisfactory range of functioning is restored quickly. People understand the mechanisms and processes through which recovery assistance may be made available and they appreciate that support is designed to be offered, in the first instance, to the most vulnerable community members.

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10 Commonwealth of Australia, National Strategy for Disaster Resilience 2011.

3.1 Economic Resilience

Unlike many Local Government Areas who are single industry towns, making their economy highly reactive to adverse events, the Shire is fortunate to have a more diverse economy. However, the Shire's economy remains highly dependent on the GRP generated from the local extractive industries and agriculture. Therefore, any adverse event that would result in the temporary or permanent closure of one or more mines, or the inability of multiple primary producers to generate income from broadacre cropping or livestock is likely to result in long-term economic down turn in the Shire. It is important that, where possible, Council advocates for and assists in the development of a more diverse economy for small to medium enterprises (SMEs) that heavily rely on the patronage of those involved in extractive and agricultural industries to avoid economic downturn caused by adverse events.

Extractive Industries

A range of adverse events can result in a major mining incident, such as fires, severe weather events, hazardous substance spills and fumes, flooding or any accident that results in loss of life. In the event of adverse events that result in a major mining incident, it is likely that a mine can be shut down for a prolonged period of time, until the NSW Resources Regulator has completed their investigations and deems that the site safe to resume work. If a site is shut for an extended period of time, it is likely to result in economic downturn in the form of decreased GRP, and the loss of local monies out of the Shire through the relocation of a large portion of the affected site's workforce. If this downturn were to occur, it is likely that the local SMEs who rely on this industry's patronage, such as local providers of contract services (often environmental and earthmoving) and retail of luxury goods, will also experience hardship. Therefore, the legislative requirements for mining companies to undertake extensive and ongoing consultation with councils and Emergency Services to develop and test mine emergency plans is critical to ensure that, if a site closure were to occur closure time is minimum.

Primary Producers

Whilst drought, plagues, and agricultural epidemics (adverse events) are unlikely to directly impact on extractive industries, it will directly impact on primary producers. The longer the period of the adverse events, the more detrimental impact the economic downturn will have on local economy. Adverse events not only decrease GRP, but it increases the Shire's debt levels, creating additional strains on the regional, state, and federal economies. In longer periods of adverse events (such as prolonged drought), there are often additional strains on the economy through the loss of farm labourers who may have been stood down because of the halt on production. Like many rural communities, if primary producers are experiencing hardship, soon too will the SMEs that rely on their patronage. This impact is not only felt by SMEs who directly support primary producers, such as those responsible for supplying agrochemicals and farm machinery, but also those in the retail of luxury goods.

3.2 Social Resilience

Adverse events often come with additional negative social impacts, often in the form of stress and mental health issues (such as depressions, anxiety, and post-traumatic stress disorder). A lack of social resilience can often result in prolonged recovery periods, mass relocation from affected areas (causing further economic hardship to a local area) and eroding community solidarity. Managing volunteer fatigue is an additional component to managing social resilience in times of adverse

events; specifically managing long-term volunteer fatigue to ensure that the volunteer agencies responsible for responding to adverse events, (such as the RFS, SES and VRA) feel supported and have sufficient and sustainable membership to continue to respond to adverse events. To foster social resilience it is important, where possible, for Council to encourage strong community support networks, increase flexibility and support volunteers.

3.3 Contractual Resilience

Like most organisations, Council ensures that any contracts they are a party to expressly plans for all eventualities that may result in non-performance, including adverse events. A *force majeure* or 'act of God' is an event that is beyond the control of either contractual party that prevents or delays the performance of the contract. More than ever, it is important for organisations to be the best prepared they can be for an adverse event, which includes developing contractual resilience.[11]

Neither Australian common law nor statute recognises force majeure as a reasonable excuse for non-performance, consequently it is considered good practice to include a force majeure clause. As force majeure is only recognised contractually, how it is defined in a contract will affect what events or circumstances will trigger a force majeure clause. It is common practice for force majeure clauses to at least refer to qualifying events as natural disasters, flood, fire, epidemics, or "Acts of God". A force majeure clause operates temporarily or permanently excuse a party to a contract from performing their obligations due to an event or circumstance which was not reasonably foreseeable and beyond the reasonable control of either the party. A force majeure does not excuse a party for any breach following the event under any circumstances and the duration of the event must be minimised wherever possible. A force majeure clause may entitle an affected party to seek relief from some or all of its contractual obligations, so long as that party was not reasonably able to prevent or overcome the event or circumstance through the exercise of due diligence.

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[11] It is recommended that when entering into any contract, all parties seek independent legal advice and examine each individual clause carefully.

4 Action Plan

The Action Plan provides a range of strategies and actions to assist the Shire Council and the communities to work with the relevant agencies to build capacity and resilience to better prepare for, respond to and recover from adverse events.

The Plan has three strategic themes:

1. Invest in critical infrastructure, equipment, and technology;
2. Build capacity to prepare for, respond to and recover from adverse events; and
3. Develop community resilience.

Strategic Theme 1: Invest in Critical Infrastructure, Equipment and Technology

Objectives:

- Provide fit for purpose emergency operations and management facilities.
- Minimise and eliminate the risk of critical infrastructure failure during adverse events.
- Improve warning, response, and recovery times.
- Prove safe and efficient evacuation facilities for the community.

Actions		Priority	Partners
1.1	**Provide emergency operations and management facilities that are well located and fit-for-purpose**		
1.1.1	Establish an Emergency Services Precinct in Narrabri, incorporating the EOC and key response agencies.	High	SES, RFS, VRA, NSWPF, FRNSW, LEMC
1.1.2	Establish a flood-free evacuation centre in Narrabri with the capacity to accommodate residents of both Narrabri and Wee Waa.	High	DCJ, SES
1.1.3	Ensure there will be access to high speed internet and reliable communications infrastructure at the Emergency Services Precinct.	High	SES, RFS, VRA, NSPF, FRNSW
1.1.4	Establish Heli Pads in key locations (such as areas near isolated workforces) across Narrabri, Boggabri, Wee Waa and the Pilliga to assist in emergency management and evacuation efforts.	Medium	SES, RFS, NSW Ambulance, NPWS
1.1.5	Establish a designated flood free facility to provide emergency shelter of companion animals and livestock.	High	NWLLS
1.2	**Invest in critical infrastructure to increase, prevent, and minimise the risk of failure during adverse events**		
1.2.1	Increase the capacity of the Wee Waa levee bank to withstand a 1% AEP flood event.	High	SES, DPIE, FRMC
1.2.2	Construct a new sewage treatment plant in West Narrabri and flood-proof the existing plant.	Medium	NSW Health, NSW Water, EPA
1.2.3	Upgrade the sewage reticulation system by replacing the current concrete lids on maintenance holes with water-tight lids to meet current Water Supply Code of Australia's standards for systems in flood prone areas.	Medium	NSW Health, NSW Water, EPA
1.2.4	Advocate for an electricity sub-station in a flood-free location.	Low	Essential Energy
1.2.5	Improve communication infrastructure by lobbying the State and Federal Governments to extend mobile telephone coverage across the Shire.	High	Essential Energy, NBN Co, telecommunications providers,

Actions		Priority	Partners
			DITRDC
1.2.6	Install UHF CB repeater system to enable all emergency services to communicate Shire wide.	Low	RFS, VRA, NPWS
1.3	**Upgrade key roads to improve response capability and enable evacuations**		
1.3.1	Upgrade culvert and bridges over the floodway sections of the A39 Newell Highway to provide flood-free access between Narrabri and Coonabarabran, whilst ensuring appropriate drainage is applied to the designs to ensure an unofficial levee bank is not created.	High	TfNSW, DITRDC, DPIE
1.3.2	Upgrade SR29 Yarrie Lake Road to provide all-weather, flood free access between Narrabri and the outskirts of Wee Waa, whilst maintaining consideration for N2IP's priorities.	Medium	TfNSW, DPIE
1.3.3	Seal and widen SR5 Kaputar Road and provide passing bays and safety fencing to improve safety and response times for fires in the Mt Kaputar National Park and assist with evacuations.	Medium	RFS, NPWS, TfNSW
1.3.4	Upgrade the route to the Narrabri Airport (SR10 Old Gunnedah Road, SR5 Kaputar Road, SR8 Airport Road) whilst ensuring appropriate drainage is applied to the designs to ensure an unofficial levee bank is not created.	High	NPWS, TfNSW
1.4	**Leverage rail infrastructure to aid with evacuations**		
1.4.1	Assess the potential to use rail infrastructure (including the Inland Rail) to assist with evacuations and address infrastructure requirements (for example, the construction of a platform at Narrabri West).	Medium	ARTC, DITRDC
1.5	**Increase access to equipment and technology**		
1.5.1	Purchase additional drones for use in fire detection, flood surveillance and re-supply, monitoring fire trails and ensure that response personnel are trained in the use of drones.	Low	SES, RFS, NPWS
1.5.2	Install digital road open/closed signs on key transport routes throughout the Shire.	High	TfNSW
1.5.3	Install telemetric gauges on the creek systems in Narrabri that are subject to flash flooding.	High	SES, BOM
1.5.4	Provide sufficient generators to power emergency facilities and critical infrastructure.	High	SES, Resilience NSW

Strategic Theme 2: Build capacity to prepare for, respond to and recover from adverse events

Objectives:

- Plans are in-place to provide the framework and directions for preparing for, responding to, and recovering from adverse events.
- To ensure that Council has the expertise, capacity and resources need to support response agencies and coordinate and manage adverse events and the recovery process.
- For the Shire to be well prepared for adverse events.

	Actions	Priority	Partners
2.1	**Build the capacity of Council to manage adverse events**		
2.1.1	Formulate a Business Continuity Plan for Council operation that also defines internal chains of command and roles and responsibilities for Council departments and staff for different types of events.	High	N/A
2.1.2	Ensure that relevant Council staff (for example, plant operators, works staff) are trained in emergency response and disaster recovery.	High	N/A
2.1.3	Participate in BCP and LEMC training exercises, including desktop exercises annually and practical exercises biennially.	Medium	N/A
2.1.4	Ensure that the LEMO is trained in emergency response and disaster recovery.	High	Resilience NSW
2.1.5	Implement succession planning and formal hand-over procedures for the LEMO and other key staff.	Low	SES. RFS, VRA, NSWPF, FRNSW
2.1.6	Ensure that Council has the GIS capacity to produce the mapping and property data required during emergencies and the recovery process.	High	N/A
2.1.7	Review and update communication plans in line with local EMPLAN updates.	Low	SES. RFS, VRA, NSWPF, FRNSW
2.2	**Be better prepared for adverse events**		
2.2.1	Advocate for contractors to participate in the ARENA HP Program (for access, use of equipment and machinery etc) between Council, response and support agencies and other organisations such as those who own or lease large scale machinery.	High	RFS, SES, VRA, NSWPF, FRNSW TAFE
2.2.2	Advocate for universal GIS and information sharing processes between response agencies.	Medium	RFS, SES, NPWS
2.2.3	Regularly undertake community education to raise awareness of potential adverse events and provide agency information on how businesses and households can prepare and respond.	Low	SES. RFS, VRA, NSWPF, FRNSW

	Actions	Priority	Partners
2.2.4	Work with local response agencies and support organisations to build their volunteer base.	High	RFS, VRA, SES
2.3	**Endeavour to expedite the recovery process**		
2.3.1	Ensure that recovery plans are reviewed and updated periodically.	Medium	SES, RFS, VRA, NSWPF, FRNSW, LEMC
2.3.2	For major events, work with the LEOCON to act immediately to get the Shire declared a disaster area. Council to advocate for the State and Federal Governments to act promptly.	High	NSWPF, LEOCON

Strategic Theme 3: Build Community Resilience

Objectives:
- A more resilient agricultural sector – one that is prepared for adverse events.
- A more diversified local economy, reducing the dependence on rain dependant industries.
- Natural resource management to minimise the impacts of adverse events.
- Increasing allied health services including more mental health support services.
- Local community leaders and a strong 'neighbour helps neighbour' culture.

Actions		Priority	Partners
3.1	**Build a more resilient economy**		
3.1.1	Continue to encourage innovation and adoption of sustainable land management practices and agritech in the primary production sector.	Medium	DPIE, DPI, Farmers2Founder
3.1.2	Advocate farmers to develop strategies and provide infrastructure to prepare for and manage major and extreme flood events.	Low	DPI, NRAR, NWLLS, NSW Water
3.1.3	Continue to pursue economic diversification through the development of the N2IP and the attraction of gas dependent manufacturing, recycling, transport, logistics and agribusinesses.	High	DPIE, RGDC
3.1.4	Continue to grow the local tourism sector.	Medium	DNSW
3.1.5	Continue to advocate for and support initiatives such as 'Why Leave Town gift cards' and 'Buy from the Bush' to support local businesses.	Medium	Chambers of Commerce
3.3	**Build business skills and preparedness for adverse events**		
3.3.1	Advocate for continued access to the Rural Financial Counselling Service (RFCS) and encourage local businesses to plan for adverse events and improve their business skills including managing cashflow and arrears.	Medium	Northern Region RFCS, DPI, Chambers of Commerce
3.3.2	Promote and support business development workshops and seminars as well as the on-line resources available.	Medium	Chambers of Commerce
3.3.3	Work with tourism and business operators to build their on-line presence.	Medium	DNSW, Chambers of Commerce
3.4	**Build the resilience of the Shire community**		
3.4.1	Capacity build more community groups in helping the community prepare for, respond to, and recover from adverse events	Medium	Progress Associations, Service Organisations

Actions		Priority	Partners
3.4.2	Raise awareness of support services available and connect people to relevant service providers in times of adverse events.	High	Service NSW, DPIE, DPI
3.4.3	Advocate for the introduction of 'neighbour helping neighbour' and 'phone a friend' programs.	Low	Service Organisations
3.4.4	Advocate for additional incentives and financial support for emergency service volunteers.	High	RFS, SES, VRA
3.4.5	Advocate for additional and improved accessible mental health services.	Medium	NSW Health
3.4.6	Continue to support community groups and local businesses to applying for grants.	Medium	Chambers of Commerce

APPENDIX 1: Types of Adverse Events

Adverse Event	Lead Agencies	Supporting Agencies	Stakeholders
High			
Drought	NSW DPI	• Australian Government Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications • Australian Government Department of Agriculture, Water and Environment • Affected councils • NWLLS	• Primary Producers • Agribusinesses • Rural communities' dependant on primary industries • Affected councils
Major to Extreme Flood Event	SES	• Affected council • RFS • FRNSW • NSWPF • Bureau of Meteorology • Service NSW • Transport for NSW • DCJ (will activate Red Cross and Salvation Army in the event of evacuations) • Australian Government Department of Home Affairs	• Affected landholders and residents • Affected communities' tourism industries • Visitors to an affected area
Agricultural Epidemic	NSW DPI	• Australian Government Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications • Australian Government Department of Agriculture, Water and Environment • NWLLS	• Primary Producers • Agribusiness • Rural communities' dependant on primary industries • Affected local government organisations
Major Health Crisis (Pandemic)	NSW Health	• Australian Government Department of Health	• Local hospitals and health providers • Aged care facilities • Affected local government areas • Councils required to undertake sewerage testing
Fires in Rural District	RFS	• NPWS • Affected councils • Owners and operators of aircraft with firefighting capacity • Land holders who enable RFS to access their water supplies • Supporting community volunteers who provide meals to the RFS • Red Cross and Salvation Army • DCJ (will activate Red Cross and Salvation Army in the event of evacuations)	• Affected landholders and residents • Affected communities' tourism industries • Visitors to an affected area
Heat Wave	NSW Health	• Affected councils • Bureau of Meteorology • RFS	• Affected communities • Primary Producers
Adverse Weather Event (Storm)	SES	• Affected councils • Bureau of Meteorology	• Affected landholders and residents
Fires in Fire District (Industrial)	FRNSW	• Affected councils • DCJ (will activate Red Cross and Salvation Army in the event of evacuations)	• Affected landholders and residents
Trade or Labour Market Shocks	DPIE	• Department of Education, Skills and Employment • NSW Department of Education • Regional NSW	• Businesses experiencing labour shortages or trade complications. • Consumers of goods experiencing the shortage. • Local economies
Major Mining Incident (Above Ground)	Relevant Emergency Services	• NSW Resources Regulator (would lead post event investigations and determine site closure and reopening)	• Affected communities
Major Mining Incident (Under Ground)	Mines Rescue	• Relevant Emergency Services • NSW Resources Regulator (would lead post event investigations and determine site closure and reopening)	• Affected communities
Medium			
Hazardous Materials Release	FRNSW anywhere in the State EPA	• Affected councils • NSW Department of Fisheries (if in a waterway)	• Affected landholders, residents, and businesses • Responsible parties
Transport Emergency	NSWPF	• Transport for NSW • Affected councils	• Adjoining landholders and residents • Users of the affected infrastructure
Utility Failure (Water/Sewer)	Council	• NSW Health • NSW Public Works • DPIE	• Affected users
Utility Failure (Electricity)	Essential Energy	• DPIE • DITRDC	• Affected users
Blue Green Algae Outbreak	NSW Water	• Australian Government Department of Agriculture, Water and Environment • NSW Health • NSW Food Authority • Water Manager (private or Council)	• Affected users
Fire in Fire District (Urban or Residential)	FRNSW	• NSW Police • Affected Council • EPA (if there are contaminants involved)	• Affected landholders, residents, and businesses • Adjoining landholders, residents, and businesses
Low			
Earthquake	NSW Police	• Affected councils • FRNSW Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) (if earthquake results in major structural collapse) as per Major Structure Collapse Sub Plan	• Affected landholders and residents • Affected communities' tourism industries • Visitors to an affected area
Incident of Mass Violence	NSW Police	• Australian Defence Force	• Affected community • Adjacent landholders, residents, and businesses • Responsible parties

APPENDIX 2: Communications Strategy for Adverse Events

In the lead up to and during adverse events, Council's priority should be to redistribute ("share") the Lead Agency's communications, to ensure there is clear, consistent messaging being delivered to the affected community.

Audience	Description	Desired Response	Communication Needs	Content	Method	Frequency
Affected Community						
Primary Producers	Primary producers experiencing loss of property, livestock, crops, equipment	Feel safe and supported.	• Where to seek assistance. • Where to take livestock. • Update on recovery effort.	• Fodder donations. • Livestock advice. • Road advice. • Financial support. • Insurance support. • Available Government support.	• Facebook. • Radio. • Public meetings. • Hotline.	• Update when required. • 24/7 hotline. • Public meetings once when safe to.
Land Holders	Residents experiencing damage to or loss of property.	Feel safe and supported.	• Where to seek assistance. • Update on recovery effort.	• Housing and evacuation centres. • Donation centres. • Road advice. • Clean up information. • Financial support. • Insurance support. • Available Government support.	• Facebook. • Radio. • Public meetings. • Hotline.	• Update when required. • 24/7 hotline. • Public meetings once when safe to.
Businesses	Businesses experiencing damage to or loss of property and profits from closure or diminished trading ability.	Feel safe and supported.	• Where to seek assistance. • Update on recovery effort.	• Trading advice. • Road advice. • Financial support. • Insurance support. • Available Government support.	• Facebook. • Radio. • Public meetings. • Hotline.	• Update when required. • 24/7 hotline. • Public meetings once when safe to.
Visitors to the Narrabri Shire	Tourists within the Narrabri Shire during an adverse event, who are experiencing isolation or damage to property.	Feel safe and supported.	• Where to seek assistance. • When it is safe to leave. • Where is safe to go.	• Housing and evacuation centres. • Donation centres. • Road advice. • Financial support. • Insurance support. • Available Government support.	• Facebook. • Radio. • Public meetings. • Hotline.	• Update when required.24/7 hotline.
Public						
General Community	Wider community, not directly impacted but interested in access and recovery.	Be accurately informed.	• Information on the recovery effort.	• What is happening now. • What will happen next. • Facts and figures. • Road advice.	• Social Media. • Tourism sites. • Local news. • Media releases.	• As required.
Media	News outlets seeking information.	Be accurately informed.	• Information on the recovery effort.	• What is happening now. • What will happen next. • Facts and figures. • Road advice.	• Social Media. • Tourism sites. • Local news. • Media releases.	• As required.

APPENDIX 3: Reference Documents

Responding to Adverse Events

Existing plans and strategies relevant to responding to adverse events in the Narrabri Shire Local Government Area, as at 30 June 2021:

EMPLANs and DISPLANs

- Narrabri Shire Local Emergency Management Plan February 2016 (Narrabri EMPLAN)[12]
- NSW State Emergency Management Plan December 2018 (NSW EMPLAN)
    - NSW EMPLAN Sub Plan: Hazardous Materials CBRN Plan June 2019
    - NSW EMPLAN Sub Plan: Human Influenza Pandemic Plan June 2018
    - NSW EMPLAN Sub Plan: Major Structure Collapse Plan December 2018
    - NSW EMPLAN Sub Plan: Mine Plan March 2015
    - NSW EMPLAN Sub Plan: State Bush Fire Plan December 2017
    - NSW EMPLAN Sub Plan: State Flood Plan March 2018
    - NSW EMPLAN Sub Plan: State Storm Plan June 2018
- Australian Government Disaster Response Plan 2020 (COMIDISPLAN)

Specialised Plans

- Australian Government Drought Response, Resilience and Preparedness Plan 2019
- Australian Government Emergency Response Plan for Communicable Disease Incidents of National Significance: National Arrangements 2018 (National CD Plan)
- Australian Government National Strategy for Disaster Resilience 2011
- Bush Fire Management Committee Handbook 2020
- Bush Fire Emergency Management and Evacuation Plan 2014
- Namoi – Gwydir Bush Fire Management Committee Bush Fire Risk Management Plan 2018
- National Disaster Risk Reduction Framework 2018
- NSW Government Drought Recovery Guide 2020
- NSW Government Managing Drought 2019
- NSW Government Recovery Plan 2016
- NSW Rural Fire Service Plan 2014-2021

Legislation

- *Local Government Act* (NSW)
- *State Emergency and Rescue Management Act 1989* (NSW)
- *Rural Fires Act 1997* (NSW)
- *Fire and Rescue NSW Act 1989* (NSW)
- *State Emergency Service Act 1989* (NSW)
- *Essential Services Act 1988* (NSW)
- *Biosecurity Act 2015 (NSW)*

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[12] Narrabri Shire Emergency Management Plan August 2020 is scheduled to be signed off on and placed on Council's website from July 2021.