

Strategy for Aboriginal Community-led Recovery



Acknowledgment

Emergency Recovery Victoria proudly acknowledge the Traditional Owners of Victoria and their ongoing strength in practising the world's oldest living cultures. We recognise the diverse and unique rights and interests of Traditional Owners and pay our respects to their Elders past and present.

We also acknowledge the devastating impact of the disasters on Aboriginal Victorians and the significant impacts of these events due to the social and economic disparity and intergenerational trauma experienced by many Aboriginal people in Victoria today.

We sincerely thank all those who participated in this project and their support to enable self-determination in all aspects of Aboriginal community-led recovery.

Accessibility

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Glossary

Aboriginal refers to both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. They may have connections in and outside of Victoria. The use of the term Indigenous is retained in the names of programs, initiatives and publication titles and, unless otherwise noted, is inclusive of both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

An Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisation (ACCO) is incorporated under the Corporations (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) Act 2006 (Cth), Corporations Act 2001 (Cth) or Co-operatives Act 1996 and managed by a board of Aboriginal people for the purpose of serving a local Aboriginal community. ACCOs provide social, health and housing services (to name some their service and support functions) to their communities.

Country plan or Whole-of-Country plan is a plan developed by a Traditional Owner group outlining their community's vision, aspirations, strategies and actions for their Country. Country Plans support Traditional Owners as a strategic overview of their rights, cultural authority or interest in Country.

Cultural safety refers to 'an environment that is safe for people: where there is no assault, challenge or denial of their identity, of who they are and what they need. It is about shared respect, shared meaning shared knowledge and experience, of learning, living and working together with dignity¹.

Emergency Management Victoria (EMV) is a central body for emergency management in Victoria and is responsible for coordinating the development of whole-of-government emergency management policy, providing emergency management policy advice to Ministers, implementing assigned emergency management reform initiatives and supporting the Emergency Management Commissioner (EMC) to perform the functions conferred to the EMC under the Emergency Management Act 2013.

First Nations people or First Peoples refers to peoples or nations of people connected to an area prior to colonisation. These terms have some general acceptance but may not be the term preferred by individuals or specific groups of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Municipal Emergency Management Plans detail arrangements, including roles and responsibilities, for providing an integrated, coordinated and comprehensive approach to emergency management within a municipal district across mitigation, response (including relief) and recovery, ensuring the promotion of community resilience, interoperability of emergency management systems and meeting of community need.

Regional Emergency Management Plans detail arrangements, including roles and responsibilities, for providing an integrated, coordinated and comprehensive approach to emergency management within an emergency management region across mitigation, response (including relief) and recovery, ensuring the promotion of community resilience, interoperability of emergency management systems and meeting of community need.

Registered Aboriginal Parties (RAPs) are Traditional Owner groups with statutory responsibilities for managing and protecting Aboriginal Cultural Heritage on Country. RAPs are legally recognised under the Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006 as the primary guardians, keepers and knowledge holders and experts of Aboriginal Cultural Heritage in their area.

State Emergency Management Plan (SEMP) provides an integrated, coordinated and comprehensive approach to emergency management at the state level. The Emergency Management Act 2013 requires the SEMP to contain provisions providing for the mitigation of, response to and recovery from emergencies (before, during and after), and to specify the roles and responsibilities of agencies.

A Traditional Owner is an Aboriginal person who has traditional connection(s) to a specific geographical area of Country.

Traditional Owner Corporation (TOC) is an incorporated organisation representing the interests of Traditional Owners in their area. A TOC may hold rights under the Native Title Act 1993 (Cth), the Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006 and/ or the Traditional Owner Settlement Act 2010.

Message from the Chief Executive Officer, Emergency Recovery Victoria

ERV is committed to ensuring the voices of Aboriginal Victorians affected by disasters are represented in relief and recovery. This is underpinned by the Victorian Government ensuring Aboriginal communities can exercise their rights to self-determination and are empowered to develop and inform their recovery.

Our role is to support the effective preparedness, establishment and delivery of Aboriginal community-led recovery processes.

Community-led recovery is about ensuring there are strategies in place to amplify the Aboriginal community voice in government. By listening, engaging and collaborating with Aboriginal communities, we build on existing community strengths. This work is not about separating or isolating recovery approaches, it is about enhancing our current systems to be inclusive and responsive and benefit all of community.

The Strategy for Aboriginal Community-led Recovery (the Strategy) is critical to influencing recovery support processes that assist Aboriginal Victorians. This is grounded in the resilience Aboriginal communities possess to withstand the effects of a disaster, with culture being a significant protective factor in their response to trauma.



We aim to work creatively and strategically with Aboriginal communities to overcome the unique challenges and acknowledge opportunities recovery presents. This includes the commitment to building trust with Aboriginal Victorians. This work guides ERV in meeting the Victorian Government commitment to enable and address barriers to Aboriginal self-determination in recovery processes.

ERV is committed to ensuring overall recovery efforts consider and safeguard a culturally appropriate and safe recovery for Aboriginal Victorians. The Strategy guides ERV in supporting Aboriginal communities to lead their recovery, acknowledging their inherent connection to culture and Country. The Strategy is vital to educating Victorian communities of this connection and the mutual benefits gained by whole of community recovery.

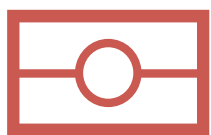
Mariela Diaz,
Chief Executive Officer
Emergency Recovery Victoria

Executive summary

This Strategy for Aboriginal Community-led Recovery (the Strategy) describes how Emergency Recovery Victoria (ERV) supports Victorian Aboriginal communities and Traditional Owners in their efforts to plan and deliver recovery in their communities. It provides an approach to realise culturally responsive Aboriginal community-led outcomes in recovery in coordination with government, councils and delivery partners.

The Strategy supports the Recovery Framework², its outcomes and outlines the key areas of focus for the Victorian Government as system steward in planning, coordinating and supporting emergency recovery with strong and resilient Victorian Aboriginal communities.

ERV acknowledges and respects Aboriginal expertise is central to recovery efforts for Aboriginal communities, while recognising the ongoing impacts and intergenerational trauma resulting from past policies of governments at all levels. This work provides a path to build trust with Aboriginal people and navigate complexities in meeting the Victorian Government commitment to enable and address barriers to Aboriginal self-determination in recovery processes. The key enablers of self-determination³ are to:



Prioritise culture



Address racism and cultural healing



Transfer power and resources to communities



Address trauma and support healing

The Strategy is informed through the generous contribution and insights shared by members of Victorian Aboriginal communities impacted by disaster and emergency in Victoria. An extensive consultation process with Victorian Aboriginal communities impacted by the Eastern Victorian Fires 2019-20 was led by the Federation of Victorian Traditional Owner Corporations throughout 2022. Further insights were gathered following subsequent disaster events and shaped by key expertise from staff in the ERV Aboriginal Culture and Healing team. This work also draws on key findings, experiences and stories from those impacted by Victoria's most devastating bushfire season in more than a decade, as documented in *After the flames – Community Reflections*⁴ and through key recommendations of the Inspector General for Emergency Management in Victoria⁵.

The Strategy is a roadmap for ERV to support Aboriginal community-led recovery by embedding the principles and enablers of self-determination in our work. It is supported by a Strategic Framework (p.15) and template for annual implementation planning, under the following four domains:

1. Foundations of culturally responsive recovery

Informed by the enablers and principles of self-determination, ERV strategy and delivery is culturally safe and responsive.

2. Strategic reform and operational needs for Aboriginal community-led recovery

Systems and processes are reformed to enable and support Aboriginal community-led recovery

3. Aboriginal expertise and decision-making inform government accountability

ERV decision-making processes respond to Victorian Government commitments including cultural rights and self-determination.

4. Monitoring and evaluating for success

Processes to monitor and evaluate are informed by the ERV Outcomes Framework. Indicators for success are identified by Aboriginal community in local recovery plans.

Key to realising the outlined strategies and approaches is a commitment to understand and respond to the unique and diverse needs of Aboriginal communities across Victoria; a long-term commitment to realise Aboriginal community-led recovery in Victoria in response to increasing disaster events; and a sustained focus and efforts by ERV and the Victorian Government to achieve the Aboriginal Culture and Healing (ACH) recovery outcomes, enabled by principles of self-determination.

Introduction

The Strategy is a result of extensive engagement with Victorian Aboriginal communities impacted by the Eastern Victorian Fires 2019-20 that identified a state-wide need to put Aboriginal communities at the centre of their recovery processes.

2019/20 Bushfire Burnt Area with Local Government Areas

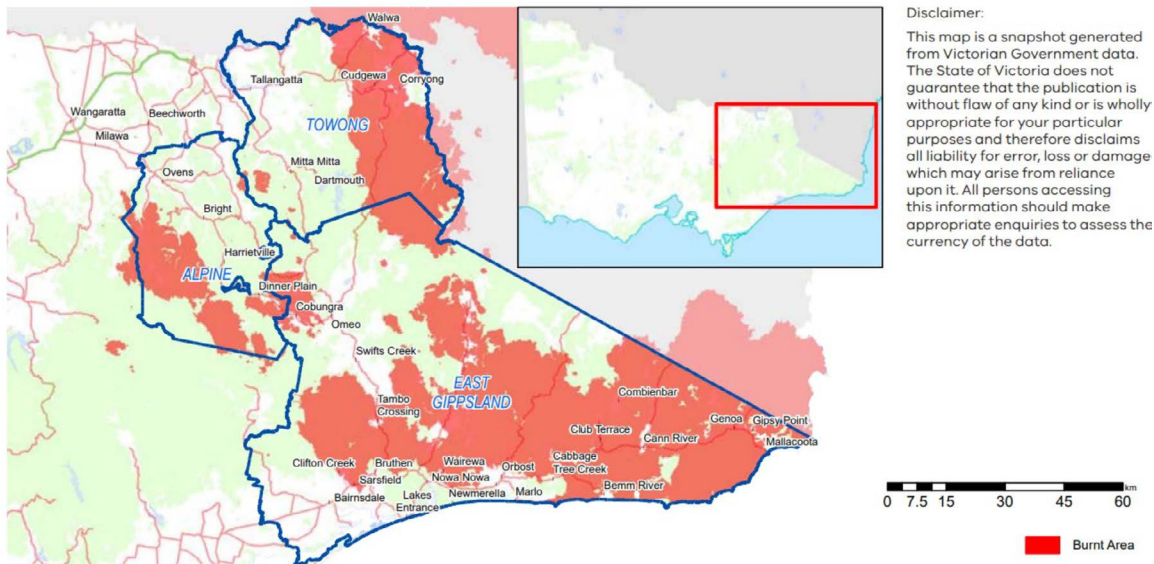


Figure 1 State-wide Recovery Plan - Eastern Victorian Fires 2019-20 (BRV, August 2020)

Broad impacts experienced by Victorians in the 2019-20 fire were:

- economic (to agriculture, industry, tourism, forestry, retail, homes, businesses, community facilities, roads, fences)
- physical (direct injury, smoke inhalation)
- mental health and well-being (distress, anxiety, ongoing psychosocial health issues for individuals and flow on impacts to communities), and
- environmental (area burnt, severity and frequency of the fires, loss of species, impacts on waterways).

After the flames – Community Reflections⁶ found that Aboriginal people were disproportionately affected by bushfires due to a higher proportion living in bushfire areas, their existing financial and structural inequalities, historical and intergenerational trauma, associated impacts to their connection and rights on Country and cultural heritage.

ERV is focussing its efforts to develop a roadmap for embedding Aboriginal community-led processes in recovery – from decision making and planning through to design, delivery and evaluation⁷.

This Strategy embeds Aboriginal communities' voices at its centre and is consistent with the whole of Victorian Government effort to enable self-determination, prioritise culture and support Aboriginal and trauma-informed approaches to healing.

The Strategy sets out the key domains, focus areas and priorities for ERV to:

- better align with pre-existing emergency recovery governance functions and influence required system reform
- increase Aboriginal community engagement with service providers in health, human service and land management organisations, or other specific areas of recovery expertise
- embed clear monitoring, reporting and oversight functions into Aboriginal community engagement practices of recovery efforts
- influence and inform practices for Aboriginal community preparedness, relief and recovery efforts considering the wide range of existing sector specific Aboriginal strategies
- leverage off existing mechanisms targeting service delivery to Aboriginal communities.

Case for change

Self-determination⁸ is about choice. Embedding the recognised self-determination enablers within recovery processes will establish requirements for Aboriginal people to be at the centre of decisions impacting them. Australian and international evidence demonstrate transferring power, decision-making and resources is the most effective policy approach in producing lasting and sustainable outcomes for Aboriginal people⁹.

It is also recognised that knowledge and capability gaps exist within the emergency management sector about the legislative and policy obligations to ensure Aboriginal communities' self-determination and fundamental Traditional Owner rights are met. This has led to continued systemic barriers and practice failures in enabling self-determination and in upholding Traditional Owner rights. This affects the ability for systems and services to adequately address Aboriginal community recovery. Highlighting a need to develop and assess the capability requirements to effectively service Victorian Aboriginal communities.

Reforming emergency systems, process and elevating capability will support alignment with the Victorian Government's commitment to enable self-determination and formalise responses to Aboriginal peoples' unique rights and needs – particularly for Traditional Owners¹⁰.

The State Emergency Management Plan identifies four recovery environments (Social, Economic, Built and Natural), whereas the Recovery Framework has established five lines of recovery, with the addition of an Aboriginal Culture and Healing line of recovery¹¹.

The Recovery Framework's inclusion of the Aboriginal Culture and Healing line of recovery seeks to better address the identified needs of Aboriginal communities affected by emergencies and is consistent with the whole of Victorian Government commitments to Aboriginal people. ERV acknowledges that bushfires and other emergencies cause challenges for Aboriginal people and communities and their unique relief and recovery needs.

ERV will work with Aboriginal communities to maximise opportunities for operating under the Victorian Aboriginal Affairs Framework 2018-2023 and the Self-Determination Reform Framework to ensure Aboriginal individuals, families, communities, businesses and Traditional Owner groups are supported to self-determine appropriate recovery responses.

What this means

Self-determination is described as the ability for indigenous people to freely determine their political status and pursue their economic, social and cultural development.

Victorian Government agencies and departments have a key role in advancing systemic and structural reform to enable and address barriers to Aboriginal self-determination.

Traditional Owners in Victoria have unique rights under section 19 of the *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 (CHRR)* as decision-makers, protecting and maintaining cultural rights and interests in their Country. The Victorian Public Sector is committed to embedding these rights to meet public sector obligations in the CHRR.

In Victoria, eleven Traditional Owner corporations also act as the authorised statutory bodies or Registered Aboriginal Parties (RAPs) to protect Aboriginal culture and heritage in their respective Countries.

Aboriginal peoples' experiences of recovery

For Aboriginal people, relationships to Country, culture and community are interconnected and intrinsically linked to identity. This means when one of these foundations is impacted by a disaster, Aboriginal Victorians experience unique pain and loss¹². Damage on Country, culture and community ultimately impact on identity and can exacerbate existing intergenerational trauma and vulnerabilities.

"...the recovery of Aboriginal people from emergencies such as bushfires is influenced by a history of intergenerational trauma. Contemporary discrimination is a further barrier to recovery. The wariness some Aboriginal people have of government and its agencies means it is crucial that those involved in emergency management [and recovery] learn to work with the communities in a way that is culturally sensitive and appropriate."¹³

Findings in recent recovery efforts also highlight the resilience and strength of Aboriginal communities through the protective factors provided by culture¹⁴, Country and community in healing from the trauma of disaster and emergencies.

Roles and responsibilities in recovery

In the state of Victoria, the Emergency Management Commissioner is responsible for recovery coordination under the *Emergency Management Act 2013*.

Emergency Recovery Victoria (ERV) was established in October 2022 as Victoria's dedicated recovery agency responsible for recovery coordination at the state and regional level, and relief coordination at the state tier, partnering with all levels of government, business and service delivery partners to support community recovery outcomes¹⁵.

ERV's vision is to support stronger and more resilient communities after emergencies and is focused on:

1. Expert coordination through leading and enabling integrated coordination of recovery activities across the state. This coordinates recovery services to the community where there is an evident gap in accountability, capability or capacity.
2. Standard setting and assurance through evidence-based standards for strategy, policy, investment and decision making as communities prepare for and recover from emergencies. ERV assures government that community recovery needs are managed.
3. Advocating and advising on improved capability and capacity in the recovery system using expert insights and evaluation, ERV functions as a standalone business unit within a broader Department of Justice and Community Safety (DJCS) Emergency

Management Group. ERV is designed to fit within the existing Victorian emergency management governance arrangements.

ERV has key responsibilities that include operational recovery coordination; leading and coordinating recovery strategy, policy, planning and investment across the emergency management sector; assurance that community recovery needs are managed; and delivery of recovery services as required including state-coordinated clean-up operations.

The State Emergency Management Plan (SEMP) identifies the four recovery environments of social, economic, built and natural. The Recovery Framework builds on this framework through the five lines of recovery and its response to whole of Victorian Government and sector specific Aboriginal frameworks and strategies (as below). ERV coordination and partnership development are crucial to influencing relief and recovery practices that acknowledge and uphold obligations outlined in the frameworks and strategies. Key to which has been the establishment of intergovernmental working groups for each recovery pillar with relevant departmental leads.

Roles and responsibilities in recovery

People & Wellbeing	Aboriginal Culture & Healing	Environment & Biodiversity	Business & Economy	Buildings & Infrastructure
DFFH (lead) DH DE DJSIR DJCS DJCS (ERV)	DJCS (ERV) (lead) DPC DE DEECA DFFH DH DJSIR	DEECA (lead) DJCS (ERV)	DJSIR (lead) DJCS (ERV) DEECA	DTP (co-lead) DEECA (co-lead) DJSIR DE DJCS (ERV)
WoVG - Victorian Aboriginal Affairs Framework 2018-2023 & Victorian Government Self-Determination Reform Framework Victorian Government sector aligned Aboriginal strategies & frameworks				
Korin Korin Balit-Djak Aboriginal health, wellbeing and safety strategic plan 2017-2027 (DFFH) Balit Murrup Aboriginal social and emotional wellbeing framework 2017-2027 (DH)	All Aboriginal WoVG and sector frameworks and strategies	Pupangarli Mammarnepu 'Owning Our Future' Aboriginal Self-Determination Reform Strategy 2020-2025 (DEECA)	Yuma Yirramboi Victorian Aboriginal Employment and Economic Strategy (DJSIR)	Transport Portfolio Aboriginal Self-Determination Plan (DTP)

N.B. Refer to Appendix for department abbreviations.

Recovery Phases

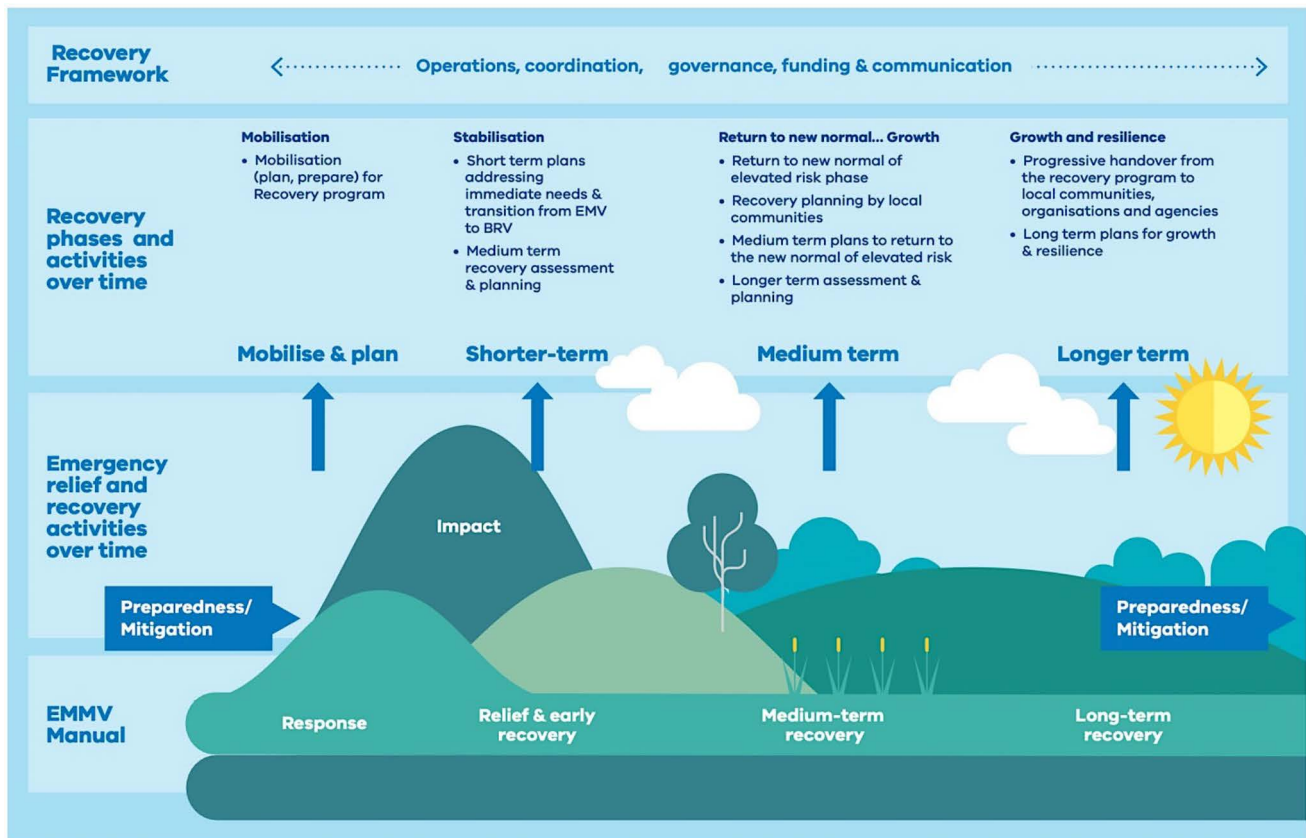


Figure 2 Recovery phases (Bushfire Recovery Victoria, 2020)

Recovery is a long process requiring planning in stages across multiple levels¹⁶. The phases include:

1. Mobilise and plan: Planning and preparing for recovery begins immediately.
2. Shorter term: 3 months +/- . This is the stabilisation phase when immediate needs are addressed while medium term recovery assessment and planning is completed, and activities progressively transition from emergency response to recovery.
3. Medium term: 12 months +/- . Further assessment and planning is underway, especially at a local community level, while medium to long-term recovery activities start.
4. Longer term: 3 to 5 years. Progressive handover from ERV to local communities, organisations and agencies; and long-term plans for growth and resilience.

These phases work with consideration and connection to place-based systems and processes that support Victorian Aboriginal communities every day. Aboriginal community-controlled organisations (ACCOs)¹⁷ and Traditional Owner

corporations (TOCs)¹⁸ are leading this work in their communities. ACCOs are the main providers of health and community services in their respective communities, while Traditional Owner corporations represent the cultural rights and interests of Traditional Owners in their area or Country¹⁹.

ERV coordinates with ACCOs and TOCs to ensure Aboriginal communities are central to recovery decisions about their communities and to respect the cultural rights and practices specific to the Country impacted by emergencies. The leaders and staff of these community-controlled organisations are best place to inform what services and responses will work in their communities.

Key to success across the phases is targeted and planned approaches at the preparedness and mitigation phase that consider each communities' unique circumstances. This enables ERV to elevate, support and resource Aboriginal community-led processes in broader recovery efforts across the recovery phases.

Overview of recovery planning

Recovery planning occurs across multiple levels in collaboration and partnership with departments, agencies and delivery partners including ACCOs and TOCs²⁰. ERV has a critical role to ensure planning is integrated and Aboriginal community voices are at the centre of their recovery to support healing and reduce trauma.

Lead	Plan	Description
Community	Aboriginal-led Recovery Plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shaped and owned by Aboriginal community-controlled organisations, Traditional Owner corporations and supported by ERV, departments and councils. Identifies Aboriginal community priorities, goals and aspirations. Includes recovery-related initiatives likely to benefit from government support. Complements and builds on existing ACCO/TOC organisational and community plans. Could be led by an Aboriginal-led community recovery group. Development of plans is supported by ERV Aboriginal Culture and Healing. Informs Municipal, Regional Recovery Plans and State Recovery Plans.
Municipal	Municipal level/ Regional Recovery Plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Address needs, challenges and recovery activities within a Local Government Area or region. Where in place, responds to Traditional Owner agreements. Include council funding decisions. Developed independently at the municipal level within existing processes, with support from ERV and Victorian Government departments as required. Recovery Framework (or key elements of) caters for complexity of recovery issues through consistency and alignment. Where it makes sense to do so, planning for a line of recovery may occur across adjacent Local Government Areas.
State	State Recovery Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focuses on state recovery activities. Integrates recovery plans across five lines of recovery in the Recovery Framework with consideration to key Traditional Owner-related and Victorian Government First Peoples frameworks and strategies. Input from all relevant agencies and other tiers of government as required.

Aboriginal-led community recovery planning

Community-led recovery is at the centre of recovery decisions and effort when working with Aboriginal communities in Victoria²¹. ERV's role is to support the effective preparedness, establishment and delivery of Aboriginal community-led recovery processes. This is consistent with whole of Victorian Government approach²² displayed below:



Figure 3 ERV community-led recovery model (Community Recovery Toolkit (2023))

Aboriginal community-led recovery is further supported by ERV's work to embed the principles and enablers of self-determination – guided by the Self-Determination Reform Framework (Victorian Government, July 2019).

ERV recognises the devastating and lasting effects of disasters on Aboriginal Victorians due to ongoing intergenerational trauma and the social disparity experienced by many Aboriginal people in Victoria today. Aboriginal communities continue to deal with the unresolved impacts of colonisation and intergenerational trauma – highlighting their innate strength and resilience.

Aboriginal communities ask us to consider the ongoing effects of colonisation, but to do so in a way responding to their strengths and human right to be self-determining. What this means is Aboriginal people are best placed to culturally inform, where they choose to, their own place-based approaches to recovery.

This is self-determination in action.



Case study

Lake Tyers relief centre project

The Lake Tyers community relief centre project is an example of collaboration between government and community for recovery. Since the 2019-2020 bushfires the Lake Tyers Aboriginal Trust (the Trust) has worked with Bushfire Recovery Victoria to develop a structured plan to build a dedicated community relief centre. Lake Tyers community is in a remote location with only one access road into and out of the community. The population is primarily made up of elders and other vulnerable groups, that deal with financial inequalities and intergenerational trauma.

The stress of evacuating, and the direct experience of the devastation the community witnessed, has left a lasting impact on many residents. The Trust proposed funding for a community shelter to support its residents in future events. The Trust noted that the community shelter would function primarily as an evacuation point, and its installation would build its residents' self-reliance and social capacity.

"A safe, relaxed building that mob, the community could come and feel safe"

Terylene Hood, community member.

The project will develop local capacity in emergency management through enacting planning; delivering education and training; establishing collaborative partnerships; and building community leadership.

Local roles and responsibilities in emergency management practices will be designed to support the community and increase their participation and sense of responsibility.

The initial proposal for funding was modified to deliver a feasibility study on the construction of the relief centre. This feasibility study was led by an emergency management consultant and reported to both ERV and Department of Premier and Cabinet - First Peoples State Relations. This work would create a stable partnership to develop the proposal for the community relief centre build and assisted in identifying the Gunaikurnai Land and Waters Aboriginal Corporation (GLaWAC) as an auspice to oversee the project.

"Community's assurance that they're going to have a place that they can actually go to, in the case of any event that would cause evacuation of the community."

Grattan Mullet, GLaWAC

ERV, DPC - First Peoples-State Relations, GLaWAC and the Lake Tyers Aboriginal Trust have established a solid foundation for agreed goals for the community, built by an effective collaborative approach based on trust and shared knowledge.

Aboriginal Culture and Healing Outcomes

The ERV Outcomes Framework outlines the changes required for successful recovery work with Aboriginal communities. The outcomes are integrated across ERV decisions and lines of recovery. The strategic priorities (pp.15-22) align to the ACH outcomes, and will shape adaptable, annual actions.

“Change and policy is needed for implementation – a lot to unpack. Steps can be made in the right direction through respectful engagement.”

Aboriginal Elder consultation response.

The ERV ACH outcomes set direction to support efforts to achieve change. To enable self-determination ERV will need to enact flexible and adaptive approaches to incorporate success factors defined by each Victorian Aboriginal community.

1. Aboriginal people’s unique experiences of trauma are addressed, and healing supported.

- 1.1. Increased integration of trauma-informed healing, recovery and resilience initiatives that are designed for Aboriginal people’s unique experiences of trauma.
- 1.2. Increased capacity and capability of Aboriginal community-controlled health organisations and other Aboriginal-led community services to deliver healing services.
- 1.3. Increased cultural capacity and cultural responsiveness of government agencies and service providers involved in recovery.
- 1.4. Increased awareness of government and service providers about their responsibility to create culturally safe environments and ensuring their everyday practice is culturally safe.

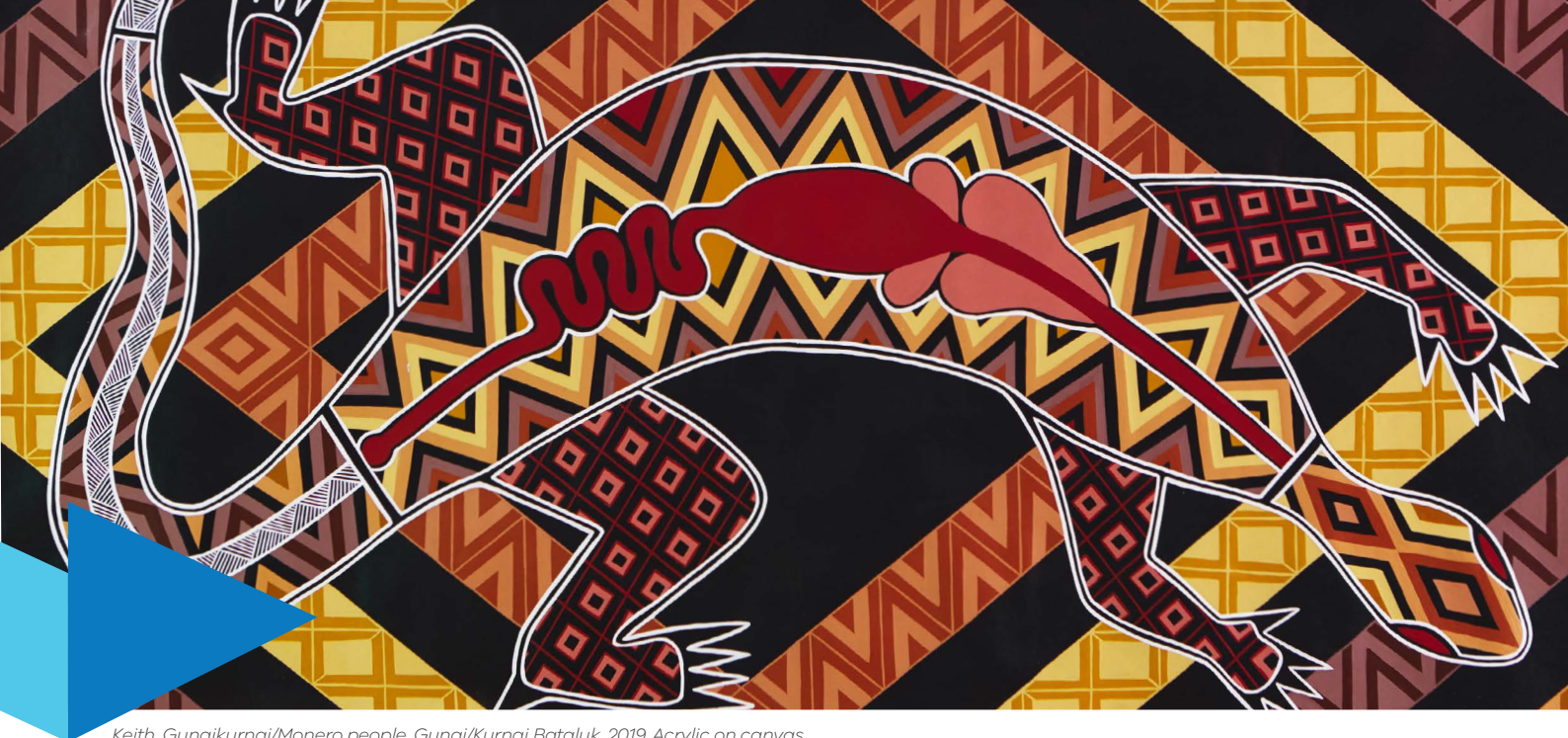
2. Recovery and resilience of the whole community are strengthened through Aboriginal culture, knowledge, traditions, and connection to country.

- 2.1. Recovery and resilience of the whole community are strengthened through Aboriginal culture, knowledge, traditions, and connection to Country.
- 2.2. Increased use of formal and informal mechanisms to listen to Aboriginal people’s voices and deep knowledge of resilience, healing and how to restore Country.
- 2.3. Increased Aboriginal community led resilience initiatives that facilitate connection to culture, Country and community.

- 2.4. Increased number of assessments undertaken to support the registration and recording of previously unidentified Aboriginal heritage places and to understand the impacts on already registered Aboriginal heritage places.

3. Aboriginal communities have increased capability to lead recovery and healing.

- 3.1. Prioritisation of funding to Aboriginal organisations for recovery.
- 3.2. Increase in decision making by Aboriginal people in matters that affect Aboriginal people, families and communities.
- 3.3. Increased contribution of Aboriginal people to strategic government decision-making about recovery.
- 3.4. Increased capability of Aboriginal people to make informed decisions about their futures, with respect to living in areas of high risk.



Keith, Gunaikurnai/Monero people, Gunai/Kurnai Bataluk, 2019, Acrylic on canvas.

Monitoring and evaluation

To measure success in its Aboriginal Culture and Healing line of recovery ERV must be guided by the principles of self-determination and draw on existing Victorian Government frameworks to embed Aboriginal community-defined monitoring and evaluation methodology. The ERV monitoring and evaluation approaches align with the National Monitoring and Evaluation Framework for Disaster Recovery Programs (v2 2018)²³ and, provides a consistent approach to the evaluation of any individual disaster recovery program.

The ERV outcomes and their indicators provide the description for the future state and should be driven by Aboriginal communities. In developing the monitoring and evaluation approaches, ERV should practice iterative co-design²⁴ that seeks partnership and is validated by the affected Aboriginal community.

As part of implementing a monitoring and evaluation plan, a localised focus could develop outcome indicators specific to the local Aboriginal community's recovery. Any approach should be driven by the three Aboriginal Culture and Healing line of recovery outcomes and integrate local Aboriginal community informed indicators. It is crucial to acknowledge that Aboriginal communities that know their recovery needs may have already identified appropriate measures of success that should be embedded to the monitoring and evaluation strategy and plan. This includes assessing any existing Victorian Government frameworks, strategies and policies that indicate Aboriginal communities' measures for success.

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Keith (Gunaikurnai/Monero people)

Keith is a Gunaikurnai/Monero artist with cultural ties to East Gippsland in Victoria. Keith's paintings are defined by a bold use of colour and the diamond-shaped line work that is characteristic of south eastern Aboriginal designs.




Keith has been painting for only three years. He finds the painting process very calming, soothing and relaxing. When he paints he feels at ease and more deeply connected to his ancestors.

Strategic Framework

Domain 1











FOUNDATIONS OF CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE RECOVERY

Key
 Office of the Chief Executive Officer (OCEO)
 Strategy Policy and Evidence Division (SPED)
 State Coordination and Operations Division (SCOD)
 Transformation Team and Finance (TTF/Corporate)
 People and Wellbeing (PW)
 Aboriginal Culture and Healing (ACH)
 Environment and Biodiversity (EB)
 Business and Economy (BE)
 Buildings and Infrastructure (BI)

Focus Area	STRATEGIC PRIORITIES (ERV lead area)	RECOVERY OUTCOMES	GUIDED BY VICTORIAN GOVERNMENT FIRST PEOPLES FRAMEWORK, STRATEGY OR PLAN	SELF-DETERMINATION ENABLERS ²⁵
1.1 Cultural safety & capability	1.11 Increase cultural capacity and responsiveness of government agencies and service providers involved in recovery (OCEO & SCOD)	Aboriginal people's unique experiences of trauma is addressed, and healing supported (ACH Outcome 1.3)	Victorian Aboriginal Affairs Framework 2013-2023 (p. 11) [DPC – First Peoples State Relations] Victorian Government Self-Determination Reform Framework (p. 7) [DPC – First Peoples State Relations]	 <p>Address racism and cultural healing</p>
	1.12 Develop an ACH recovery capability implementation plan with a focus on ERV, recovery agencies, Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations and Traditional Owner Corporations, that embeds ACH into the Relief and Recovery Sector Capability Framework (to be developed) (SCOD)	Aboriginal communities have increased capability to lead recovery and build resilience (ACH Outcomes 1.2, 1.3)	Korin Korin Balit-Djak: Aboriginal health, wellbeing and safety strategic plan 2017-2027	
	1.13 Develop and embed cultural safety provisions in funding and procurement contracts and related processes (ALL)	Aboriginal communities have increased capability to lead recovery and build resilience (ACH Outcome 1.4)		
1.2 Recognition of rights and access to Country to support healing.	1.2.1 Develop a guide to Traditional Owner rights and statutory responsibilities in recovery to support ERV policy, coordination, and delivery. Focus areas: cultural heritage and settlement agreements (SCOD & SPED)	Recovery and resilience of the whole community are strengthened through Aboriginal culture, knowledge, traditions, and connection to country (ACH Outcome 2.2, 2.3)	Victorian Aboriginal Affairs Framework 2013-2023 [DPC – First Peoples State Relations] Victorian Government Self-Determination Reform Framework [DPC – First Peoples State Relations] Pupangarli Marnmarnepu 'Owning Our Future' Aboriginal Self-Determination Reform Strategy 2020-2025 [DEECA]	 <p>Prioritise culture</p>  <p>Address trauma and support healing</p>

Domain 2

STRATEGIC REFORM AND OPERATIONAL NEEDS FOR ABORIGINAL COMMUNITY-LED RECOVERY

Focus Area	STRATEGIC PRIORITIES (ERV lead area)	RECOVERY OUTCOMES	GUIDED BY VICTORIAN GOVERNMENT FIRST PEOPLES FRAMEWORK, STRATEGY OR PLAN	SELF-DETERMINATION ENABLERS ²⁶
2.1 Systemic and policy reform	2.1.1 ERV work with EMV and government recovery partners to identify opportunities for increased formal recognition of Aboriginal rights ²⁸ and interests across emergency management arrangements and structures (SCOD)	Recovery and resilience of the whole community are strengthened through Aboriginal culture, knowledge, traditions, and connection to country (ACH Outcome 2.1)	Victorian Government Self-Determination Reform Framework [DPC – First Peoples State Relations]	 Address trauma and support healing
	2.1.2 ERV influences the need to elevate Traditional Owner rights within the emergency management structures and process (SPED)	Recovery and resilience of the whole community are strengthened through Aboriginal culture, knowledge, traditions, and connection to country (ACH Outcome 2.1)	Victorian Government Self-Determination Reform Framework	 Transfer power and resources to communities
2.2 Aboriginal informed funding & projects	2.2.1 Elevate Aboriginal needs and priorities in recovery and inform decisions about Aboriginal needs through data and evidence (SPED & SCOD)	Aboriginal communities have increased capability to lead recovery and healing (ACH Outcomes 3.1, 3.2)	Victorian Government Self-Determination Reform Framework [DPC – First Peoples State Relations]	 Address trauma and support healing  Transfer power and resources to communities
2.3 Resources to Aboriginal communities	2.3.1 ERV prioritise Aboriginal needs in funding allocation (SCOD & SPED)	Aboriginal communities have increased capability to lead recovery and healing (ACH Outcome 3.1)	Victorian Government Self-Determination Reform Framework [DPC – First Peoples State Relations]	 Transfer power and resources to communities
2.4 Engagement with Aboriginal communities	2.4.1 Build and maintain relationships with ACCOs and TOCs (RCOD)	Recovery and resilience of the whole community are strengthened through Aboriginal culture, knowledge, traditions, and connection to country (ACH Outcome 2.2)	Guidance on engaging Traditional owners [DPC – First Peoples State Relations]	 Prioritise culture
	2.4.2 Ensure guides on ERV intranet continue to support ERV staff to meet legislative and statutory requirements related to Aboriginal cultural heritage and Traditional Owner agreements	Recovery and resilience of the whole community are strengthened through Aboriginal culture, knowledge, traditions, and connection to country (ACH Outcome 2.1)		 Prioritise culture  Transfer power and resources to communities
2.5 Communication	2.5.1 ERV to embed appropriate and effective communications practices that address the needs for Aboriginal community recovery. (SCOD, RCOD & TTF/Corporate)	Aboriginal people's unique experiences of trauma is addressed, and healing supported (ACH Outcome 1.1)	Victorian Government Self-Determination Reform Framework	 Prioritise culture  Address trauma and support healing


Domain 3

ABORIGINAL EXPERTISE AND DECISION-MAKING INFORM GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY

Focus Area	STRATEGIC PRIORITIES (ERV lead area)	RECOVERY OUTCOMES	GUIDED BY VICTORIAN GOVERNMENT FIRST PEOPLES FRAMEWORK, STRATEGY OR PLAN	SELF-DETERMINATION ENABLERS ²⁵
3.1 ERV accountability	3.1.1 Embed Aboriginal Culture and Healing recovery outcomes in executive decision-making (OCEO)	Aboriginal people's unique experiences of trauma is addressed, and healing supported (ACH Outcome 1.3)	Victorian Aboriginal Affairs Framework 2013-2023 [DPC – First Peoples State Relations] Victorian Government Self-Determination Reform Framework [DPC – First Peoples State Relations]	 Address trauma and support healing  Transfer power and resources to communities  Prioritise culture  Address racism and cultural healing
3.2 Community-led governance	3.2.1 ERV ACH support mobilisation and stand-up of Aboriginal community forums in early recovery linked to State Recovery arrangements (SCOD and RCOD)	Recovery and resilience of the whole community are strengthened through Aboriginal culture, knowledge, traditions, and connection to country (ACH Outcome 2.1)	Aboriginal governance and accountability framework [DH]	 Address trauma and support healing  Address racism and cultural healing

Domain 4

MONITORING AND EVALUATION FOR SUCCESS

Focus Area	STRATEGIC PRIORITIES (ERV lead area)	RECOVERY OUTCOMES	GUIDED BY VICTORIAN GOVERNMENT FIRST PEOPLES FRAMEWORK, STRATEGY OR PLAN	SELF-DETERMINATION ENABLERS ²⁵
4.1 Monitor, evaluate and report	4.1.1 Develop an ERV Aboriginal Culture and Healing monitoring, evaluation and reporting framework (SPED)	Aboriginal communities have increased capability to lead recovery and healing (ACH Outcomes 3.3)	Aboriginal governance and accountability framework [DH]	 Transfer power and resources to communities
	4.1.2 Report annually to the Victorian Government Aboriginal Affairs Report (OCEO and SPED)	Recovery delivery is efficient, coordinated and evidence informed (System Level Outcome: ERV outcomes framework)		

Appendix

Abbreviations

Acronyms	Description
ACH	Aboriginal Culture and Healing – ERV line of recovery
ACCHO	Aboriginal community-controlled health organisation
ACCO	Aboriginal community-controlled organisation
AGAF	Aboriginal governance and accountability framework
BM	Balit Murrup Aboriginal social and emotional wellbeing framework 2017–2017
DE	Department of Education
DEECA	Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action
DFFH	Department of Families, Fairness and Housing
DH	Department of Health
DJCS	Department of Justice and Community Safety
DJSIR	Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions
DPC	Department of Premier and Cabinet
DTP	Department of Transport and Planning
EMV	Emergency Management Victoria
ERV	Emergency Recovery Victoria
KKBD	Korin Korin Balit Djak: Aboriginal health, wellbeing and safety strategic plan 2017-2027
MEMP	Municipal Emergency Management Plan
PV	Parks Victoria
RAPs	Registered Aboriginal Parties
REMP	Regional Emergency Management Plan
SDRF	Self-determination Reform Framework
SEMC	State Emergency Management Committee of Cabinet
SEMP	State Emergency Management Plan
SRCC	State Recovery Coordination Committee
SRP	State Recovery Plan
SRWG	State Recovery Working Group
TOC	Traditional Owner Corporation
VAAF	Victorian Aboriginal Affairs Framework

Appendix

[ERV Recovery Framework](#)

www.vic.gov.au/bushfire-recovery-framework

[Self-Determination Reform Framework](#)

www.aboriginalvictoria.vic.gov.au/self-determination-reform-framework

[Victorian Aboriginal Affairs Framework 2018-2023](#)

www.aboriginalvictoria.vic.gov.au/victorian-aboriginal-affairs-framework-2018-2023

[Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006 \(Vic\)](#)

www.legislation.vic.gov.au/in-force/acts/aboriginal-heritage-act-2006

[Constitution Act 1975 \(Vic\)](#)

www.legislation.vic.gov.au/in-force/acts/constitution-act-1975

[Native Title Act 1993 \(Cth\)](#)

www.legislation.gov.au/Details/C2019C00054

[Traditional Owner Settlement Act 2010 \(Vic\)](#)

www.legislation.vic.gov.au/in-force/acts/traditional-owner-settlement-act-2010

[Aboriginal governance and accountability framework \(health.vic.gov.au\)](#)

www.health.vic.gov.au/sites/default/files/migrated/files/collections/policies-and-guidelines/a/aboriginal-governance-accountability-framework.pdf

[Emergency Management Plans \(eastgippsland.vic.gov.au\)](#)

www.eastgippsland.vic.gov.au/community/emergency-management-plans

[Korin Korin Balit Djak: Aboriginal health, wellbeing and safety strategic plan 2017-2027](#)

www.health.vic.gov.au/sites/default/files/migrated/files/collections/policies-and-guidelines/k/korin-korin-balit-djak.pdf

[Balit Murrup Aboriginal social and emotional wellbeing framework 2017–2017 \(apo.org.au\)](#)

apo.org.au/sites/default/files/resource-files/2017-10/apo-nid264326.pdf

[Pupangarli Marnmarnepu 'Owning Our Future' Aboriginal Self-Determination Reform Strategy 2020-2025 \(DEECA\)](#)

www.delwp.vic.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0038/483887/Pupangarli-Marnmarnepu-Owning-Our-Future-Aboriginal-Self-Determination-Reform-Strategy-2020-2025.pdf

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6. Lay, After the flames: Community Reflections – Voices from the 2019/2020 bushfire season.
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