



# Balranald Shire Council Adverse Events Plan

## About this release

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 Author:

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Ed 0 / Rev 1	17 March 2021	New Plan	

## Management Review

This Plan will be reviewed in accordance with Section 5(d), of NSW State Emergency and Rescue Management Act.

Planned Review Date	Scope	Review By	Review Record Ref no. Date
14 December 2025			
14 December 2029			

Endorsement of Balranald Shire Council Adverse Event Plan 2020

\_\_\_\_\_  
 General Manager

/ /  
 Date

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 Director of Infrastructure and Development

/ /  
 Date

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## BALRANALD SHIRE COUNCIL'S VISION, MISSION & VALUES

### OUR VISION

To create a better, more vibrant, more resilient and more engaged community, by capitalising upon its human, cultural, environmental and business assets and encouraging a strong sense of civic participation and pride.

### OUR MISSION

"Committed to Balranald Shire, Providing for our People, Protecting our Heritage, and Planning for our Future."

### OUR VALUES

**Honesty:** We will be transparent, frank and truthful to ourselves, each other and with other people we deal with.

**Respect:** We will treat others as we want to be treated ourselves, we will be tolerant of each other and accept that people have different opinions.

**Enjoyment:** We will create a pleasant and enjoyable working environment with satisfying jobs.

**Teamwork:** We will cooperate and support each other to achieve common goals.

**Openness:** We will collaborate openly and provide opportunities to communicate and network regularly with each other.

**Leadership:** We will provide a clear strategy and direction and support all to achieve organisational and community goals.

### CUSTOMER FOCUS

We will constantly strive to be responsive to our customers' needs and preferences by providing high quality services.



## Part 1 – Administration

### Authority

The Balranald Shire Council Adverse Events Plan has been prepared by the Balranald Shire Council in response to the requirements of the Federal Government's Drought Communities Programme.

This document responds to *'Drought in Australia' – Coordinator-General for Droughts advice on a Strategy for Adverse Event Preparedness and Resilience.*



## Purpose

The purpose of the Balranald Shire Council Adverse Events Plan is to provide detailed guidance for Council and the community to prepare for, and manage, adverse events that directly and indirectly affect Balranald Shire.

## Objectives

The objectives of this plan are to:

- Build community leadership capability and community resilience and capacity to adapt and cope with chronic stresses and acute shocks caused by adverse events.
- Identify key strategies and actions to be undertaken by Council and other relevant stakeholders, in order to prepare for and manage adverse events that affect Balranald Shire.
- Standardise the approach of Council to meet the needs of the community in dealing with adverse events.

## Scope

The plan describes the key strategies and actions at Local level to prevent, prepare for, respond to and recover from adverse events. These events may be events for which Balranald Shire Council has full or partial responsibility or external events which are the responsibility of another agency (eg. Rural Fire Service, Area Health Service) that may involve a commitment from Council.

This plan shall be considered in conjunction with other relevant plans and policies, including:

- Balranald Local Emergency Management Plan
- Local Support Plan for Balranald Shire Council
- Balranald Shire Council Risk Management Policy

## Definition

An adverse event means an event or incident that has a negative impact on the wellbeing of the community.

## Principles

The following principles are applied in this plan:

- a) Responsibility for preparation, response and recovery rests initially at Local level. If Local agencies and available resources are not sufficient they are augmented by those at State and Federal level.
- b) Control of adverse event response and recovery operations is conducted at the lowest effective level.

## Level of Response

The response of Council will vary in relation to adverse events depending on the:

- Seriousness of the event
- Numbers of people involved
- Risk exposure
- Financial impacts
- Media interest
- Need to involve other stakeholders

Therefore, the response to each adverse event should be proportionate to its scale, scope and complexity.

## Communication

Communication in relation to any adverse events shall be in accordance with Council's media policy. Council will use a variety of communication media to provide the community with relevant information in relation to adverse events including print, radio and social media.

## Test and Review Process

The Balranald Local Emergency Management Committee (LEMC) will review this Plan every three (3) years, or following any:

- activation of the Plan in response to an adverse event
- legislative changes affecting the Plan; and
- exercises conducted to test all or part of the Plan.



## Part 2 – Community Context

### Major Features

#### Land Use:

Land in Balranald Shire is predominantly used for cropping and/or grazing, with intensive agriculture in southern parts of the Shire close to the Murray and Murrumbidgee Rivers, and distinct urban areas in and around the townships. Almost 98% of Balranald Shire is zoned RU1 Primary Production zone, reflecting Balranald Shire's dependence on agriculture as the major area of employment and income.

#### Economy and Industry

Principal employment within Balranald Shire overwhelmingly revolves around agricultural and supporting industries, including transport, wholesale trade and trade services. In addition to this there exists growing employment in mining, aged care, education and health services. Notable employers include Balranald Shire Council, Australia Farming Services (almond production) and table grape growers in Euston

#### Services

Balranald is serviced by a Police Station, local hospital/medical campus, two schools, St John Ambulance, Rural Fire Service, NSW Fire & Rescue and State Emergency Service (SES).

Euston is predominantly serviced from Robinvale (Vic).

The nearest major centres for services beyond the capacity of local facilities are Swan Hill (Vic, 95km) and Mildura (Vic, 160km).

#### Major Roads:

Sturt Highway (National Highway 20), Adelaide to Wagga Wagga

Yanga Way/Mallee Highway, Talem Bend (SA) to Balranald

Wool Track (Ivanhoe Road), Cobar to Balranald

#### Airport:

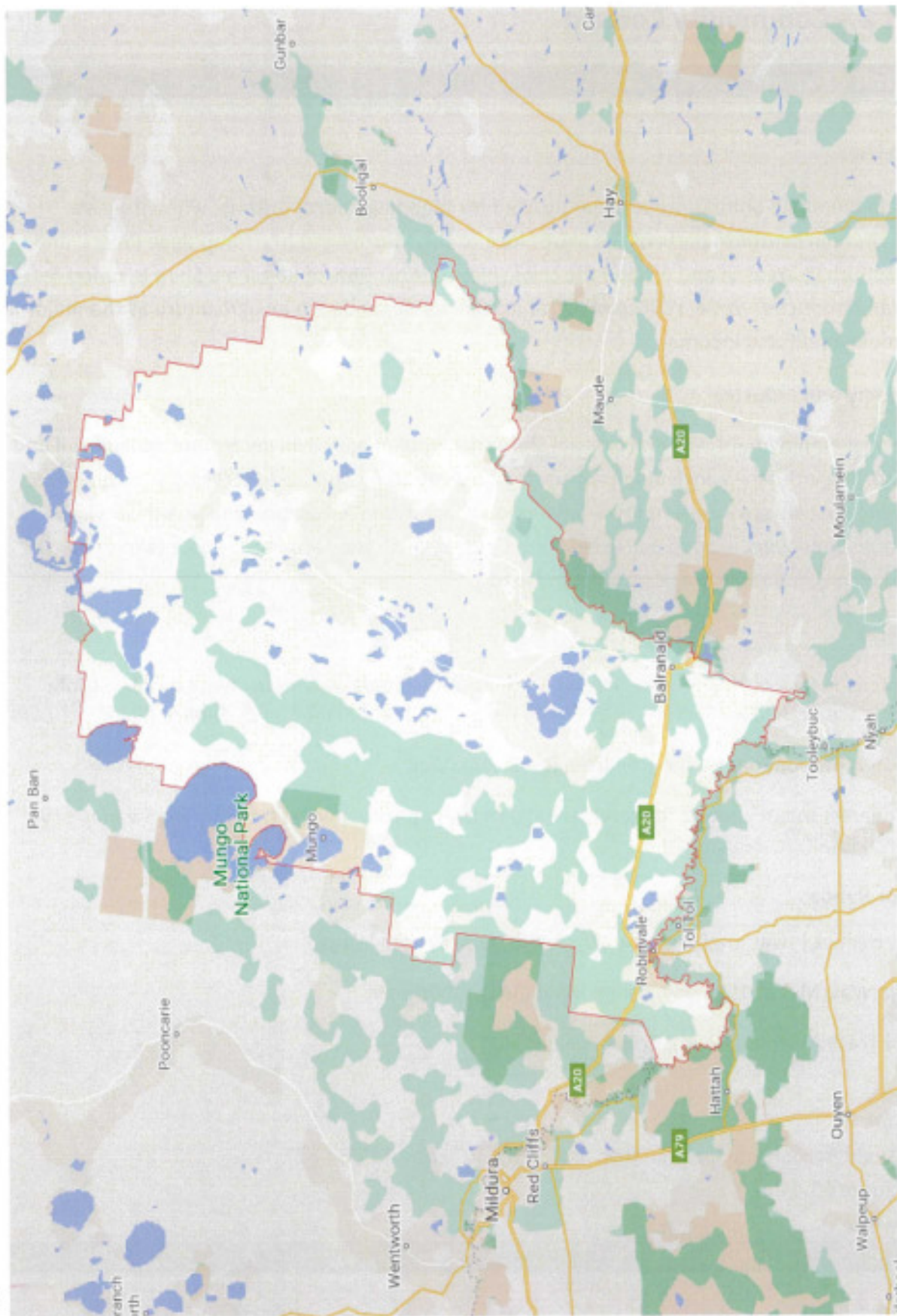
Balranald Aerodrome Coordinates: Lat 34°37'30" Long 134°34'37"

Elevation: 63.44 m

Runways:

Direction	Length (m)	Construction
18/36	1,185	Asphalt
08/26	650	Grass

## Transport Routes and Facilities



## Hazards and Risks Summary

The Balranald Shire Adverse Events Plan identifies the following hazards as having risk of causing loss of life, property, utilities, services and/or the community's ability to function within its normal capacity. These hazards have been identified as having the potential to create an emergency. The Balranald Emergency Risk Management Study should be referenced to identify the complete list of consequences and risk descriptions.

Hazard	Risk Description	Likelihood Rating	Consequence Rating	Risk Priority	Combat / Responsible Agency
Agricultural Disease (Animal/Animal)	An agriculture/horticulture incident that results, or has potential to result, in the spread of a communicable disease or infestation.	Likely	Major	Extreme	Department of Primary Industries
Communicable Disease (Human)	Pandemic illness that affects, or has potential to affect, large portions of the human population	Possible	Major	Extreme	Department of Health
Drought	A prolonged serious or severe rainfall deficiency.	Likely	Major	High	Office of Drought Response (DPIE)
Earthquake	Earthquake of significant strength that results in localised or widespread damage.	Rare	Major	High	LEOCON

Explosion	Potential for explosion present in bulk materials storage and imminent threat may cause localised evacuations.	Possible	Moderate	High	LEOCON
<b>Hazard</b>	<b>Risk Description</b>	<b>Likelihood Rating</b>	<b>Consequence Rating</b>	<b>Risk Priority</b>	<b>Combat / Responsible Agency</b>
Flood (Riverine)	River flows exceed the capacity of normal river systems resulting in flood waters escaping and inundating river plains	Possible	Minor	Extreme	NSW SES
Fire (Bush or Grass)	Major fires in areas of bush or grasslands.	Likely	Major	Extreme	NSW RFS FRNSW
Fire (Urban & Residential)	Serious commercial fires in shopping centres residential housing, aged persons units, nursing homes and hospitals.	Possible	Major	Extreme	FRNSW NSW RFS
Hazardous Release	Hazardous material released as a result of an incident or accident.	Likely	Moderate	High	FRNSW
Heatwave	A sequence of abnormally hot conditions having the potential to affect a community adversely.	Possible	Major	Extreme	SEOCON
Storm	Severe storm (including tornado) with accompanying lightning, hail, wind, and/or rain that causes severe damage and/or localised flooding.	Likely	Major	Extreme	NSW SES

Transport Emergency (Air)	Aircraft crashes in LGA resulting in a number of fatalities, injuries and/or damage to property.	Possible	Major	Extreme	LEOCON
<b>Hazard</b>	<b>Risk Description</b>	<b>Likelihood Rating</b>	<b>Consequence Rating</b>	<b>Risk Priority</b>	<b>Combat / Responsible Agency</b>
Transport Emergency (Road)	A major vehicle accident or bridge failure that disrupts one or more major transport routes that can result in risk to people trapped in traffic jams, restrict supply routes and/or protracted loss of access to or from the area.	Possible	Major	Extreme	LEOCON Transport NSW
Transport Emergency (River)	A major accident that results in environmental damage and major recovery operations	Unlikely	Minor	Low	FRNSW NSW Maritime
Utilities Failure (Power, communications)	Major failure of essential utilities for unreasonable periods of time as a result of a natural or man-made occurrence	Possible	Major	Extreme	LEOCON
Utilities Failure (Water, sewer)	Major failure of essential utilities for unreasonable periods of time as a result of a natural or man-made occurrence	Possible	Major	Extreme	Balranald Shire Council

Balranald Shire Council Adverse Events

Weir Failure	A weir is compromised that results in localised or widespread flooding	Rare	Major	High	NSW SES Water NSW
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## Part 3 – Delivery

### Context

The key strategies and actions within the Balranald Shire Adverse Events Plan respond to the objectives of the plan to build community leadership capability and community resilience and capacity to adapt and cope with chronic stresses and acute shocks caused by adverse events. These adverse events in particular, drought as well as the potential for floods and bushfires, and other adverse events, affect businesses and communities<sup>1</sup>. These events impact upon the productivity and profitability of farms, which is the main employment area within Balranald Shire.

When farming experiences, a downturn, local services and businesses suffer as less money is spent locally. This may lead to staff unemployment, some businesses closing, fewer new employment opportunities and some people leaving the community to access employment elsewhere.

Adverse events also have significant social and environmental impacts. Stress affects health and wellbeing of the whole community. Farmland and natural areas can become degraded as a result of adverse events.

The Balranald Shire Adverse Event Plan is intended to assist the Council and the community to prepare for adverse events.

The support of Federal and State Governments is essential to this process, as Local Councils do not have the capacity to respond to the full extent required to prepare their communities for future adverse events.

The outcome of responding to the key strategies and objectives is a stronger rural community and stronger local economy.

***Vision:*** *The Balranald Shire community is prepared for, and is capable of managing adverse events, to remain prosperous and sustainable into the future*

### Key Strategies and Actions

Balranald Shire Council has identified the following key strategies and actions in order to prepare for and manage adverse events that affect Balranald Shire. The key strategies and actions are presented within the Federal Government's priorities framework.

<sup>1</sup> Drought in Australia, Major General Stephen Day DSC AM April 2019

Priority	Key Strategies and Actions
Council staff are trained and prepared to assist in managing the impacts of adverse events	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Council staff have received training relevant to their area of work to assist and protect the community in adverse events, such as clearing fallen trees from roads as a result of storms, and managing road access during flood events and traffic incidents</li> </ol>
Council owned resources are well maintained to manage the impacts of adverse events on facilities	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Continue to maintain Council facilities including roads and buildings in accordance with Council's maintenance schedules to manage impacts of minor adverse events, including minor storm events through drainage work maintenance</li> <li>2. Respond to major repairs incidents in accordance with Council works procedures, including road and building repairs</li> <li>3. Maintain Emergency Operations Centre and Evacuation Centre in good condition and readiness</li> </ol>
Stewardship of important natural resources	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Support and encourage workshops and seminars organised by Government agencies, including Local Land Services to assist farmer and farm businesses, including feed and pest management</li> <li>2. Actively manage water assets within Balranald Shire, including use of recycled water for irrigation purposes</li> </ol>
Incentives for good practice	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Promote and advocate for local training opportunities to support the provision of additional skills for both on and off farm work opportunities</li> </ol>
Improving planning and decision making	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Support awareness of, and encourage access to, the Rural Financial Counselling Service</li> <li>2. Connect local people to relevant services through the Bes Murray Community Centre and provide contact details for relevant organisation and service details through Councils social media and website</li> <li>3. Support awareness of available Government support measures</li> </ol>

	<p>assistance, including the farm household allowance</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promote communication with local financial institutions and accounting firms to provide advice and work cooperatively with clients during times of adverse events</li> <li>Provision of Council policy that allows for deferral of Council rates with no penalty for those landholders experiencing genuine hardship as a result of an adverse event, who have a good rates payment history.</li> </ol>
Building community resilience	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continued advocacy by Council towards Federal and State Government members of parliament in the interests of the Balranald Shire Community</li> <li>Actively pursue new economic opportunities and pursue grant opportunities for Balranald Shire that will strengthen the local economy and diversify the Shire's economic base to minimise impacts of adverse events</li> <li>Support a proactive Council that is innovative and progressive in responding to opportunities to diversify the local economy and improve the provision of local infrastructure, facilities and services</li> <li>Support capacity and resilience of individuals to support others through mental health training and counselling services</li> <li>Build and maintain strong connection with other Councils and Regional Agencies for the mutual benefits of this connection</li> <li>Support and participate in (within statutory procurement requirements) the Buy Local and Buy from the Bush campaigns to support local businesses</li> </ol>
Informing farmers, communities and government	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promote the delivery of local projects, programs and services to the community through a range of media sources, particularly through social media</li> </ol>

### Local Sub Plans, Supporting Plans and Policies

Responsibility for the preparation and maintenance of appropriate sub and supporting plans rests with the relevant Emergency Operations Controller or the relevant Functional Area Coordinator.

The sub/supporting plans are developed in consultation with the Balranald Local Emergency Management Committee (LEMC) and the community.

The plans listed below are supplementary to this Adverse Events Plan. The sub/supporting plans have been endorsed by the LEMC and public release versions are available on the Council Website.

Plan/Policy	Purpose	Combat / Responsible Agency
<b>Balranald Local Emergency Management Plan</b>	Details arrangements for, prevention of, preparation for, response to and recovery from emergencies	Balranald Local Emergency Management Committee (LEMC)
<b>Balranald Local Bushfire Risk Management Plan</b>	Bush & Grass Fire Response Plan (EOC support in a Section 44 level event)	NSW Rural Fire Service
<b>Balranald Local Flood Plan</b>	Emergency management arrangements for flood operations	NSW State Emergency Service Balranald Shire Council
<b>Balranald Aerodrome Plan &amp; Emergency Manual</b>	Provide Aerodrome information, administrative procedures and standards necessary for safe & efficient operations of Aerodrome	Local Emergency Operations Controller (LEOCON) Balranald Shire Council
<b>Balranald Local Support Plan</b>	Ensure the coordinated response to emergencies by all agencies	Balranald Shire Council
<b>Balranald Risk Management Policy</b>	Document Council's commitment to adopting risk management principles	Balranald Shire Council
<b>Balranald Shire Local Disaster Plan (DISPLAN)</b>	Details arrangements for the preparation for, response to and recovery from natural disasters within the Shire	Balranald Shire Council