

East Gippsland Shire Council

Heatwave Plan 2014 Version 2



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VERSION CONTROL

The East Gippsland Shire Council Heatwave Plan, is a sub plan of the Municipal Emergency Management Plan. Major changes to the Heatwave Plane must be approved and authorized by the Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee (MEMPC).

This document will be reviewed by the Heatwave Planning Working Group annually or after an event. Any changes to the document will be forwarded to the MEMPC for adoption.

The record below is to be completed by the person making the amendment(s). Each new page will have a revision number and date of issue printed on it.

Version	Page Number	Date	Description	Amended by
Version 1	All	2010-2013	Original	Committee annually
Version 2	All	30 April 2015	Rewrite	committee

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Heatwave events are becoming increasingly frequent and prolonged across Victoria and as we move forward it is expected that increased levels of greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere will continue to influence the intensity of heat periods in Victoria. This Heatwave Plan for the East Gippsland community sets out the rational for heatwave planning and describes Council's response to minimise the adverse effects of extreme heat on the community in general and vulnerable individuals in particular.

"Our Environment Our Future Sustainability Action Statement 2006" sets out the Victorian Government's policy in relation to heatwave planning and identifies the need for state and local governments to work together on a heatwave response.

East Gippsland Shire has had a Heatwave Plan in place from 2009. This plan is updated annually to ensure that it continues to meet the needs of the East Gippsland community. The Heatwave Plan is identified as a Risk Treatment Strategy document in part 2.12 of the Municipal Emergency Management Plan (MEMP) it is also a sub-plan identified in appendix 26 of the MEMP and is to be read in conjunction with this plan.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 PURPOSE

The purpose of the East Gippsland Shire Council Heatwave Plan is to provide a guide to preparing for and responding to heatwave conditions, and includes the following information:

- Identification of potential effects of climate change;
- Identification of vulnerable groups within the East Gippsland community identified in part 2.5 of the MEMP;
- Outline of health, community and emergency service actions and response arrangements to heatwave conditions;
- Key stakeholder roles and responsibilities as outlined in Part 3.2, 3.3 and Appendix 7 of the MEMP; and
- A communication strategy identified in parts 5.5, 6.2.6 and Appendix 26 of the MEMP..

1.2 WHAT IS A HEATWAVE



There is no internationally accepted definition of a heatwave. The Victorian Government defines a heatwave as a *“period of abnormally and uncomfortably hot weather that could impact on human health, community infrastructure and services”* for East Gippsland a heatwave may be declared where the average of the daily maximum temperature and the overnight temperature of the following day is 30°C or greater.

1.3 WHY HAVE A HEATWAVE PLAN

Victoria and Australia in general, is experiencing rising temperatures and longer and more frequent periods of extreme heat. In response Councils and other Government and Health Agencies are required to respond to these severe weather occurrences to ensure that the community, particularly it's most vulnerable members are supported and that suitable measures are in place to deal with the impact of these severe heat events, particularly over an extended period of time.

1.4 WHAT IS THE AIM OF A HEATWAVE PLAN

The aim of East Gippsland Shire Heatwave Plan is to:

- Ensure that Council's Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee (MEMPC) is able to respond to heatwaves and extreme heat events efficiently and effectively.

1.5 OBJECTIVES

East Gippsland Shire's objectives are to:

- Advise our community of the dangers of heatwaves through the distribution of Heatwave awareness information as outlined in Part 6.9 of the MEMP
- Develop and enhance partnerships with local organisation to better coordinate a response to heatwaves;
- Ensure that Heatwave alerts are distributed to relevant service providers to ensure that our “vulnerable” community members are informed of extreme and prolonged temperature changes.

2. UNDERSTANDING HEATWAVES AND THEIR IMPACT

2.1 HEALTH IMPLICATIONS

When the surrounding temperature is higher than skin temperature the only effective heat-loss mechanism is sweating. Factors such as dehydration, obesity, lack of breeze, thick or tight-fitting clothes and certain medications will reduce the effectiveness of sweating and cause the body to overheat. **Above 42°C serious heat stroke and even death can occur in a relatively short period of time.** It is important for individuals to be aware of the dangers of extreme heat and to take precautions for their health.

Those most susceptible to heat related illness are:

- babies and young children:
- elderly people,
- those people suffering financial hardships,
- pregnant women,
- homeless people
- those living alone and heavily reliant on outside assistance to carry out every day functions
- people who are frail and/or disabled and unable to make an independent decision due to cognitive and other impairment.

These individuals would not be in a position to activate or implement a personal survival plan.

The exacerbation of asthma and other pulmonary illnesses may also result from heat stress. **For a comprehensive list of people who may be affected by heat refer to References on page 16 for a link to Council’s website.**

It is important for the community to respond to heatwave conditions quickly. Suitable responses include:

- Keeping cool
- Drinking plenty of water
- Staying out of the sun
- Look after yourself and others.



For more information about appropriate heatwave precautions go to **Council's website which provides a link to tips about staying healthy in the heat. Refer to references on page 16.**

2.2 HEAT HEALTH THRESHOLDS

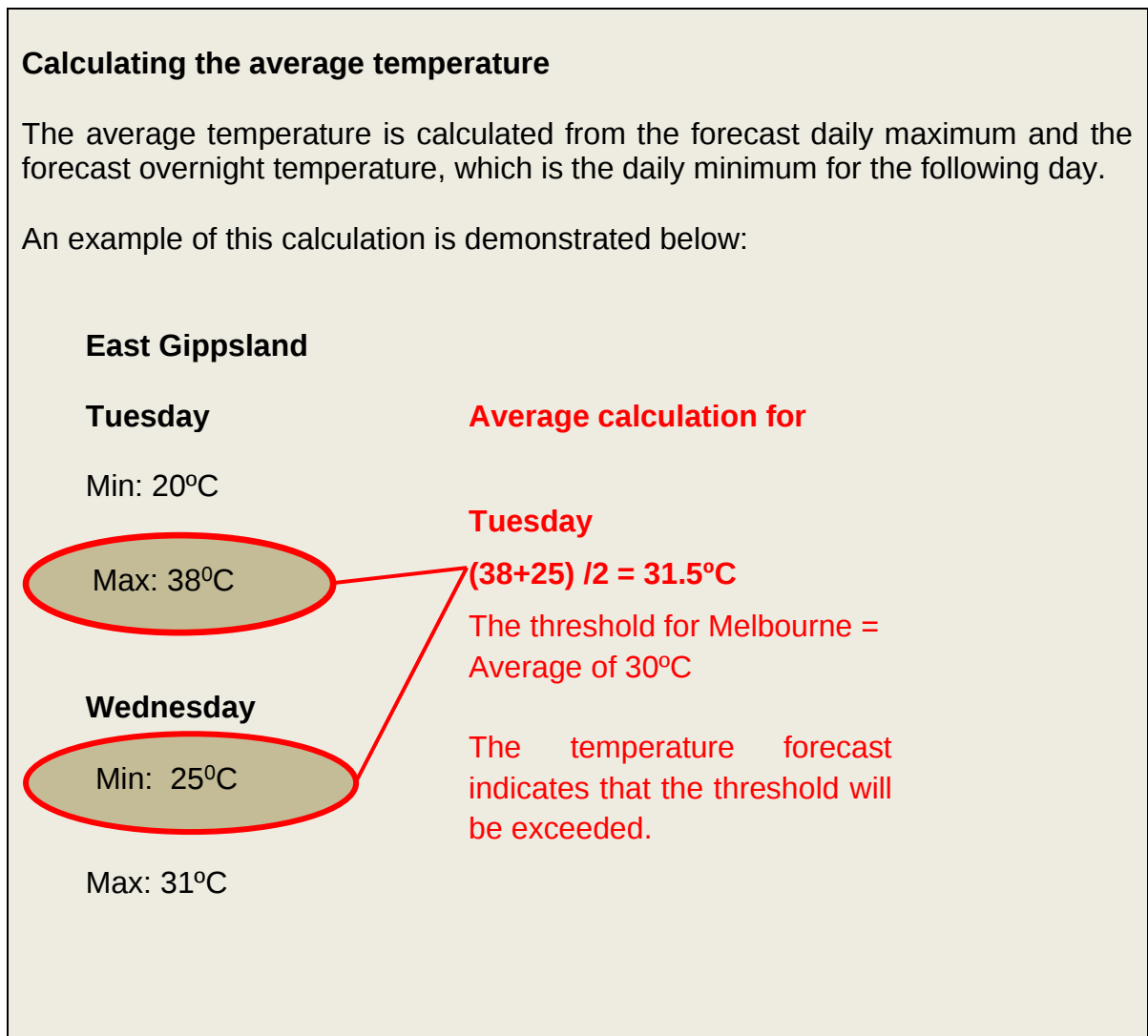
When the Bureau of Meteorology forecast "heatwave conditions" Council is notified by the Chief Health Officer of the Department of Health. A Heat Health alert is emailed out approximately 3-4 days prior to the heatwave to inform councils, hospitals and health and community service providers of forecast heatwave conditions which are likely to impact on human health.

East Gippsland has a heat health threshold of 30°C and is aligned with the Victorian Country Fire Authority's (CFA) boundaries for total fire ban and fire danger ratings. The Department of Health will issue a **Heat health alert** to advise when the forecast temperatures meet or exceed the heat health threshold for any given area.

The Department of Health will monitor Bureau of Meteorology forecasts and send heat alerts when the threshold is triggered.

For more information on the heat health temperature thresholds for Victorian districts see **reference page 16 for East Gippsland Shire Council's link to heat health alert systems.**

Figure 1: Department of Health – Basis for Heat Health Alerts



This calculation will be repeated for each of the seven days included in the daily forecast.

2.3 VULNERABLE PERSONS

An East Gippsland Community profile is outlined in the East Gippsland Municipal Emergency Management Plan Part 2.5 Vulnerability Profile & 5.7.6 Vulnerable Community Members, which identifies the following as the most vulnerable:

- frail/aged/disabled residents
- individuals who are socially isolated
- individuals living with a disability

These residents are heavily reliant on local service providers, community and/or family to assist in the provision of various services. As these groups are most at risk during an



emergency situation they have been included when assessing our risks.

In emergency situations a list of the most vulnerable people can be accessed via the Vulnerable Persons Register, which should provide their location and specific evacuation information. Council, in collaboration with the Department of Human Services and service providers maintain the list of vulnerable facilities and people. During an emergency Victoria Police will have access to these lists and may choose to evacuate residents.

The details of aged and disability support services and accommodation are also identified in the MEMP. This allows for early warning and arrangements to limit the impact of an emergency on these people. A list of aged and disability support services and community service organisations working with vulnerable individuals at the local level is contained in **Appendix 5 of the MEMP**.

2.4 MUNICIPAL EVENTS AND FACILITIES

Organisations utilising council facilities and/or organizing community events need to be made aware of impending heatwave events. Council staff involved in the daily operation of facilities and/or events during the summer period are included in the Heatwave Alert distribution list to ensure facilities and/or event organisers consider potential risk factors during the heatwave event.

2.5 PETS, ANIMALS & WILDLIFE

Pets and animals are also susceptible to heat-related stress and illness. Information about animal health is included on the DEPI Website for link **see reference page16**.

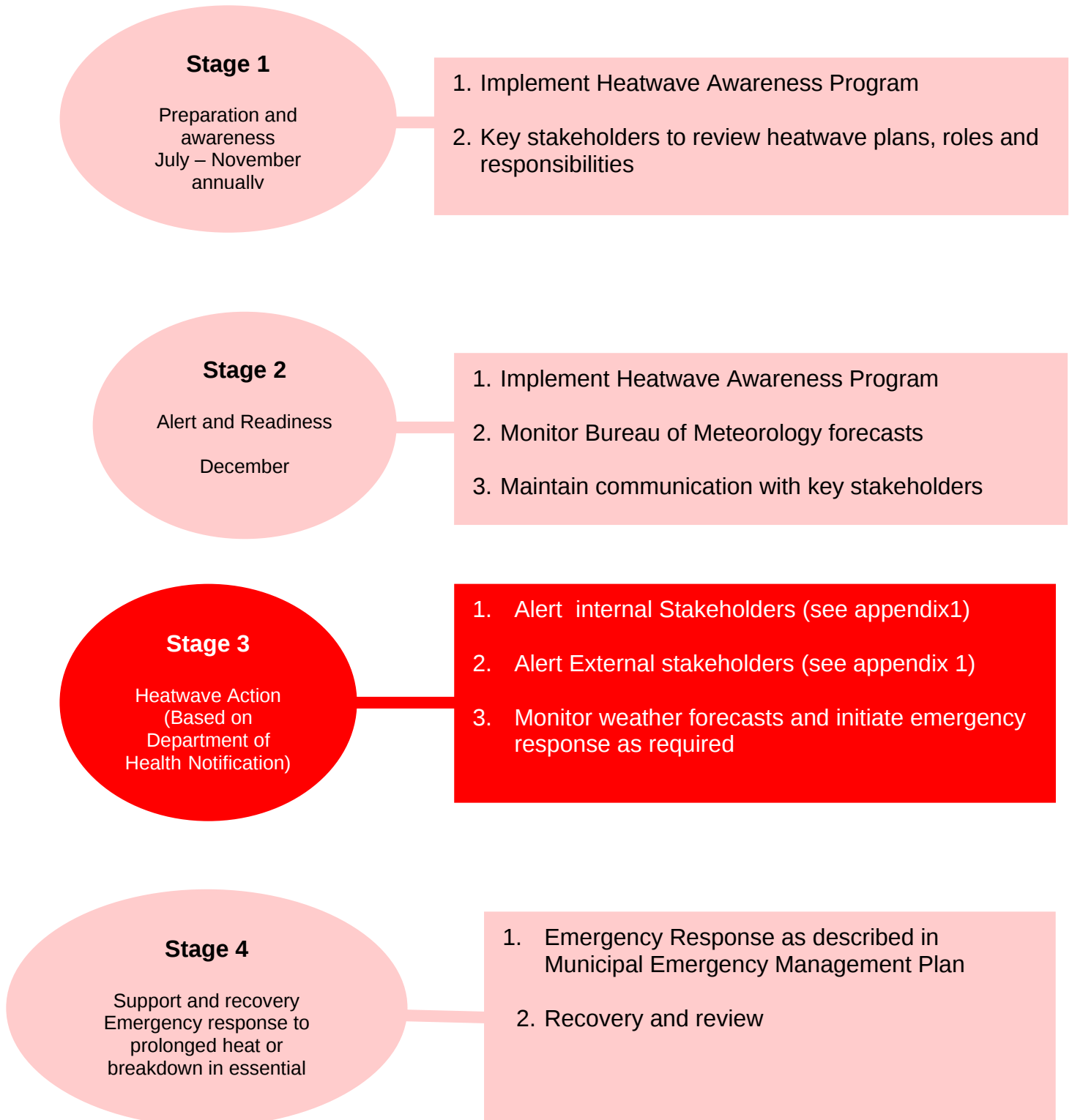
3 HEATWAVE ACTION PLAN

3.1 PREPAREDNESS AND PREVENTION

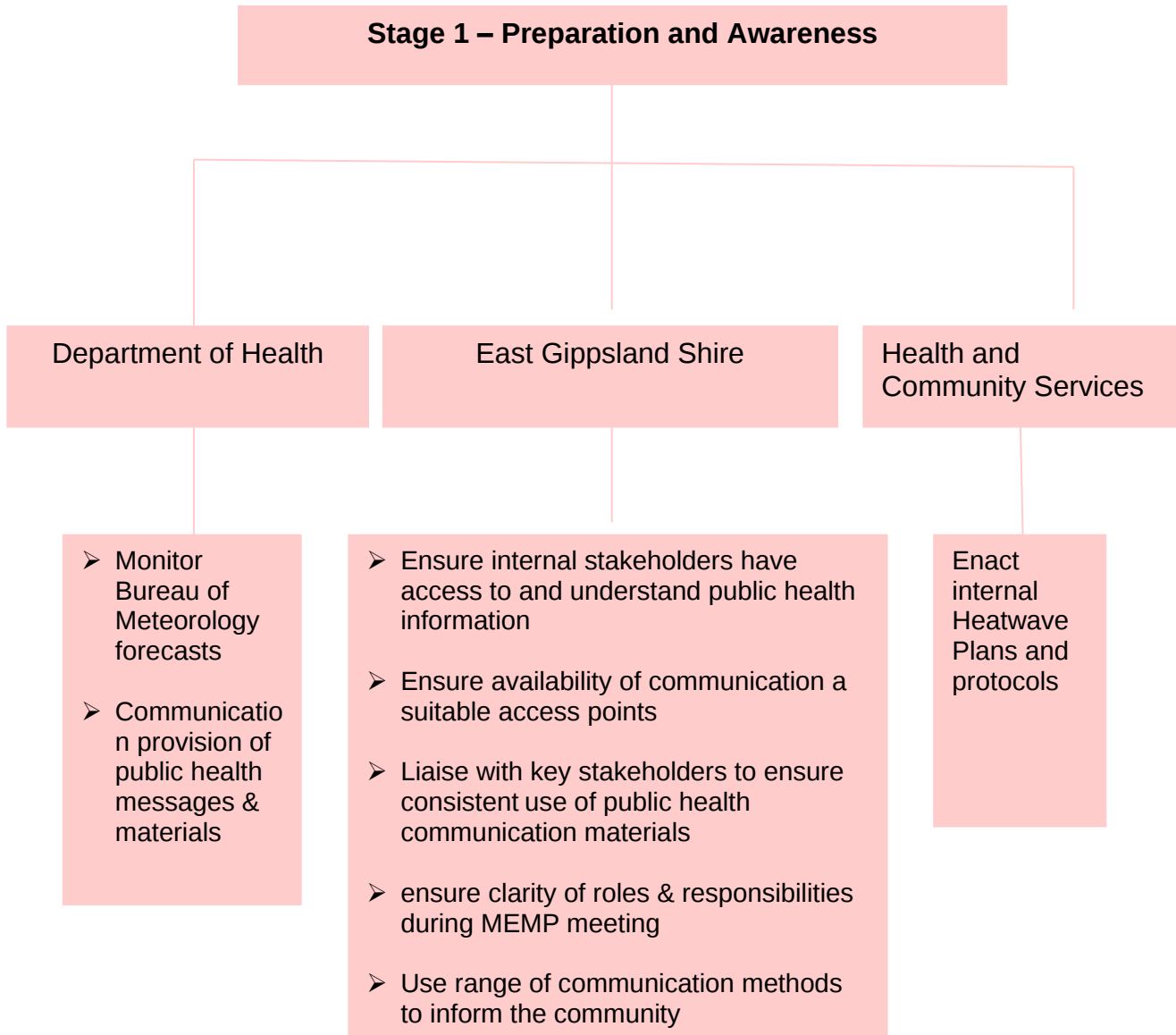
East Gippsland Shire does not have sufficient infrastructure to provide and host “Cool Zones” or Hot Day Out Centres”. Consequently the plan focuses on community awareness of the dangers of high heat days and providing support which will allow them to respond appropriately to reduce the effects of a heatwave event.

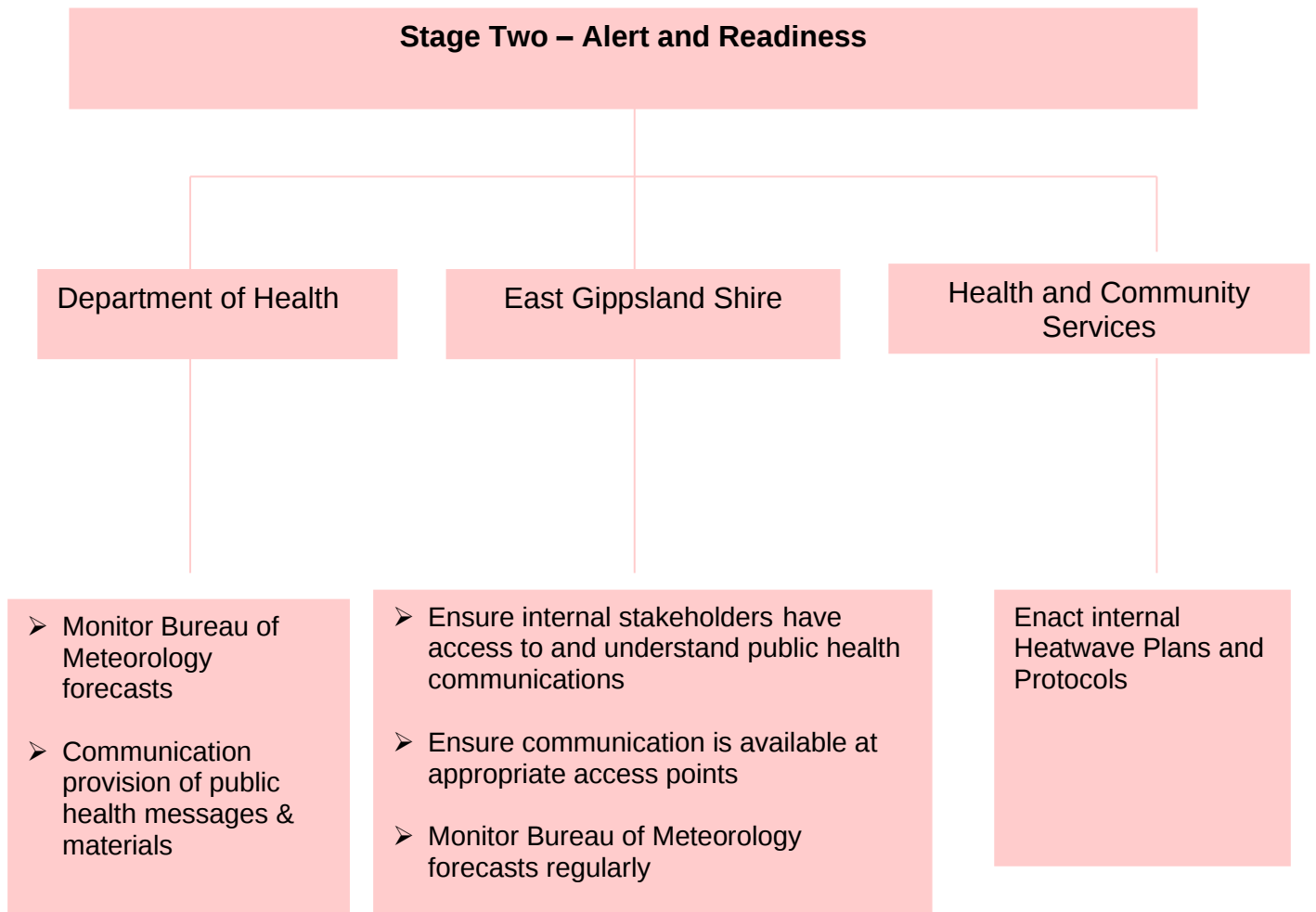
The appendix to this document lists suitable websites providing suitable information to assist individuals to care for themselves, family, friends and neighbours who may need help coping with the heat.

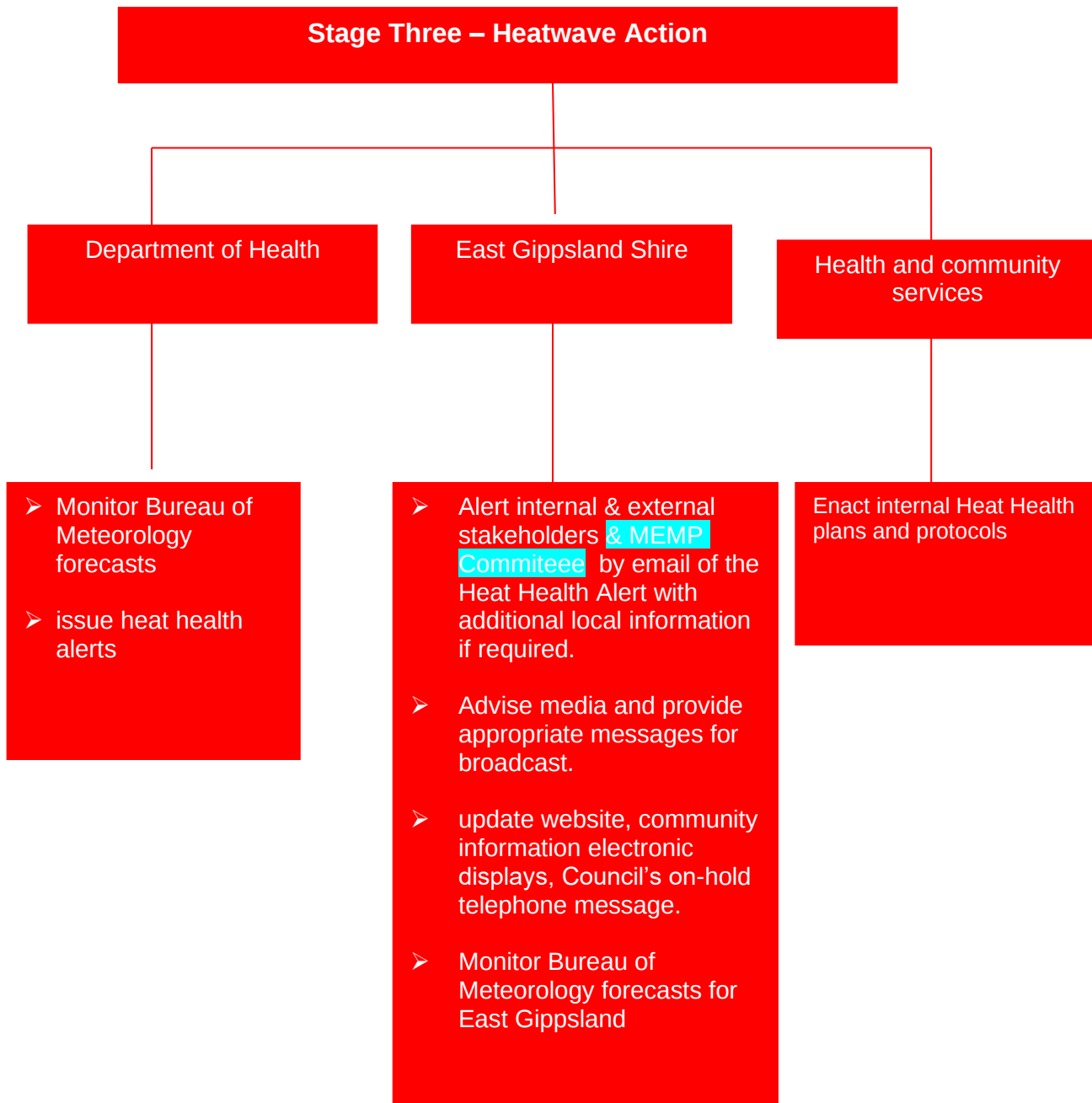
3.2 4 STAGES OF PREPARATION (OVERVIEW)

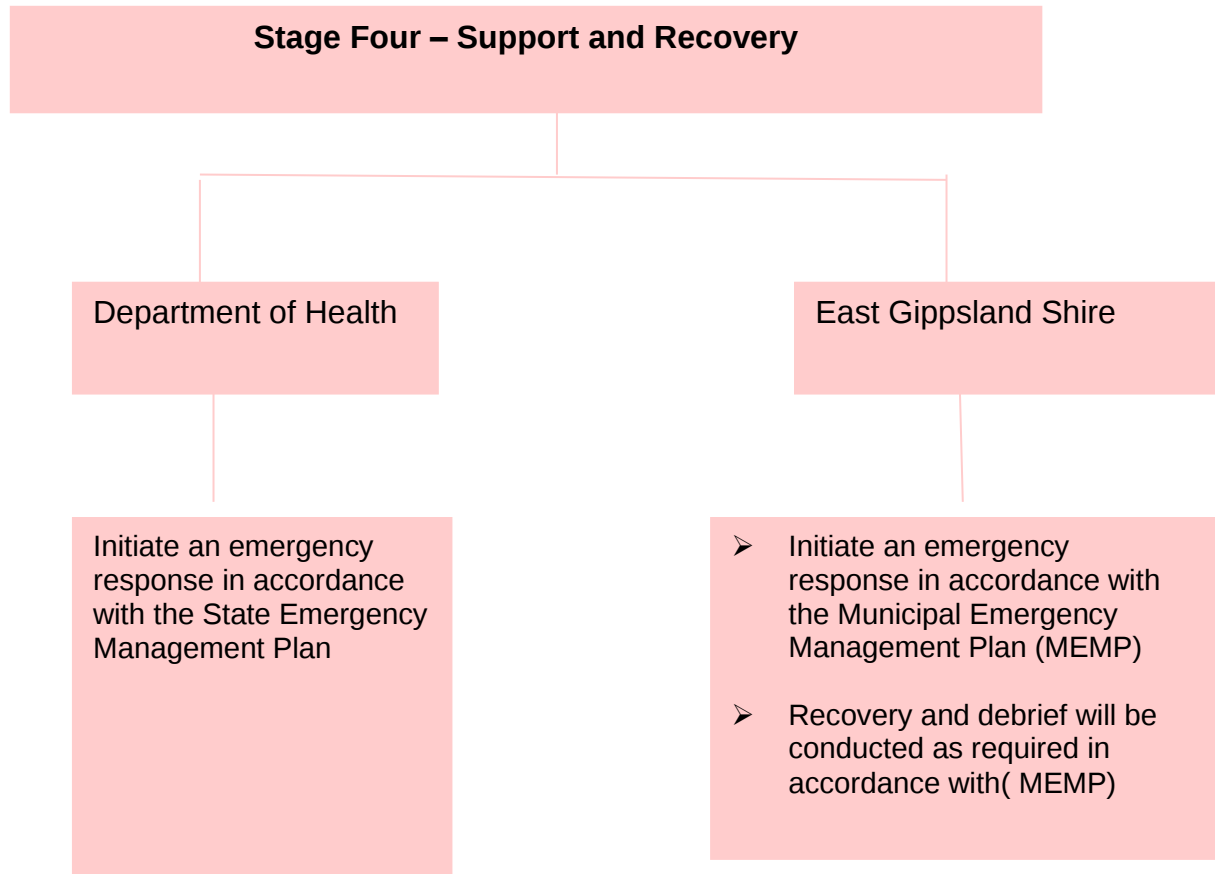


3.3 KEY STAKEHOLDERS RESPONSIBILITIES AND ACTIONS



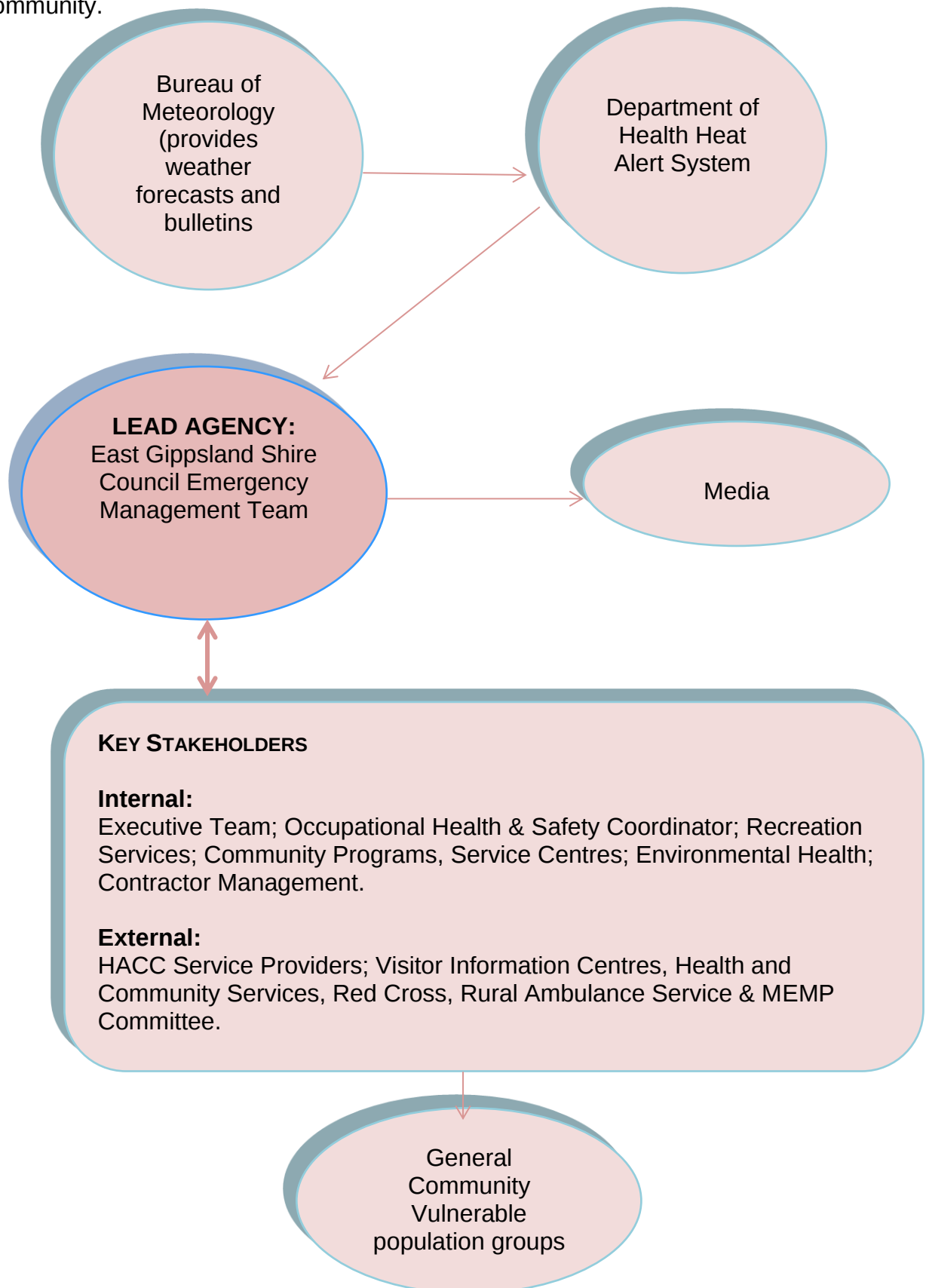






4. COMMUNICATION PLAN

Flow of information between Gippsland Shire Council, key stakeholders and the community.



5. REFERENCES

- Department of Environment and Primary Industry.
<http://www.depi.vic.gov.au/fire-and-emergencies/animals-in-emergencies>
- East Gippsland Shire Council Staff Policy: Extreme Temperature Policy – Reference – The Hive Policy Directorate – Extreme Temperature Policy
- Redcross Readiness Plan – be prepared
http://www.redcross.org.au/files/REDiPlan_booklet.pdf

Appendix 1: Heatwave Distribution Alert List

External List

Organisation	Contact	Email	Contact Number
Baptcare	Kay Jarvis	kjarvis@baptcare.org.au	0439 039 588 5658 3202
Baptcare	Judy Pryse	jpryse@baptcare.org.au	0439 039 161 5126 6903
GEGAC	Julie Hawke	jhawke@gegac.org.au	5150 0700
GEGAC	Tammy Trundle	ttrundle@gegac.org.au	5150 0700
GEGAC	Robyn Adams	radams@gegac.org.au	5150 0700
SNAP	Chris McNamara	chris.mcnamara@snap.org.au	0407 884 3465153 1823
SNAP	Fran Shield	fran.shield@snap.org.au	5153 1823
Orbost Mental Health	Birgit Schaedler	Bschaedler@lrh.com.au	5154 6721
Yooralla	Helen Bassanese	Helen.bassanese@yooralla.com.au lucknow@yooralla.com.au	0407 870 150 5153 0831
E W Tipping Foundation	Pauline Bowman	ligar@tipping.org.au pauline.bowman@tipping.org.au	0429 452 004
Opal Lakeview Aged Care Facility Lakes Entrance	Ruth Newman	ruth.newman@opalagedcare.com.au	5155 3995
Opal Aged Care Paynesville	Thea Oosthuizen	thea.oosthuizen@opalagedcare.com.au	5155 3995
Opal Specialist Care Village Bairnsdale	Janice Ford	janice.ford@opalagedcare.com.au	5153 7209 0407 631 179
Bairnsdale Regional Health Service Planned Activity Groups	Elizabeth Brown	elizabeth.brown@brhs.com.au	5152 0277 0423 552 829

Internal List – East Gippsland Shire Council

Rural Access	feedback@egipps.vic.gov.au	5153 9500
Library Services Team Leader	feedback@egipps.vic.gov.au	5153 9500
Social Planner	feedback@egipps.vic.gov.au	5153 9500
Emergency Management	feedback@egipps.vic.gov.au	5153 9500
Executive Group - Director Corporate	feedback@egipps.vic.gov.au	51539500
Executive Group - Director Development	feedback@egipps.vic.gov.au	5153 9500
Executive Group - Director Operations	feedback@egipps.vic.gov.au	5153 9500
Executive Group - Director Planning & Community	feedback@egipps.vic.gov.au	5153 9500
Workplace Health & Safety Co-ordinator	feedback@egipps.vic.gov.au	5153 9500
Co-ordinator Tourism & Visitor Services	feedback@egipps.vic.gov.au	5153 9500

Senior Environmental Health Officer	feedback@egipps.vic.gov.au	5153 9500
Community Programs Co-ordinator	feedback@egipps.vic.gov.au	5153 9500
Co-ordinator Service Centres		5153 9500
Manager Council Enterprises	feedback@egipps.vic.gov.au	5153 9500
Team Leader Citizen Services	feedback@egipps.vic.gov.au	5153 9500