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26 – 28 AUGUST 2025
Perth, Western Australia

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Radical transformation in local government: the pursuit of resilience through decision- making



Australian Government
National Emergency
Management Agency



Australian Institute for
Disaster Resilience



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Merimbula Bar Beach



Cobargo



Aftermath of the 19/20 Black Summer Bushfires



Bega Showground during the 19/20 Black Summer Bushfires



Flooding in Bega



Flooding blocking the road between Bega and Tathra in Jellat Jellat



Black Summer Bushfires 19/20 Facts and Figures

During..



**467 Homes lost +
1000 buildings and
outbuildings**

After..



**30 million
spent by LGA
to rebuild**

Since..



**13 declared
disasters between
2020 and 2025**



Embedding the Enabling Resilience Investment Approach in Bega Valley Supporting Regional Scaling (ERI)



ERI Overview



Pilot Project Delivered in Partnership by the CSIRO, Value Advisory Partners, and Bega Valley Shire Council



\$1.5 million Funded by the NSW Government Disaster Risk Reduction Fund (DRRF)



5 Workshops over 1.5 years with ~50 stakeholders.

Gaps in representation with little to no representation of First Nations people, young people, elderly people, and people experiencing entrenched disadvantages



Investment cases for the most resilient interventions in transport network- including economic modeling, hazard assessment, and cost-benefit analysis to advocate for multi-beneficiary outcomes and avoided costs.



Cuttagee Bridge on the Tathra Bermagui road

Why transport networks?



Aftermath of the Black Summer Bushfires at Mariah Creek Bridge



pg. 8 Meharg S, Ahmad ME, Box P, Heinmiller P, Wise R, Azevedo S, Mesic N, Gorddard R, Xenarios S and Flett D (2024) Enabling Resilience Investment. A summary of a practical manual for Bega Valley Shire Council. CSIRO, Australia. Copyright



BVSC staff and external stakeholders at W3



The ERI Approach



So.. What now?



The Politics of Planning



WHO: Whose job is it to 'do' resilience? And how much 'doing' do they become responsible for?



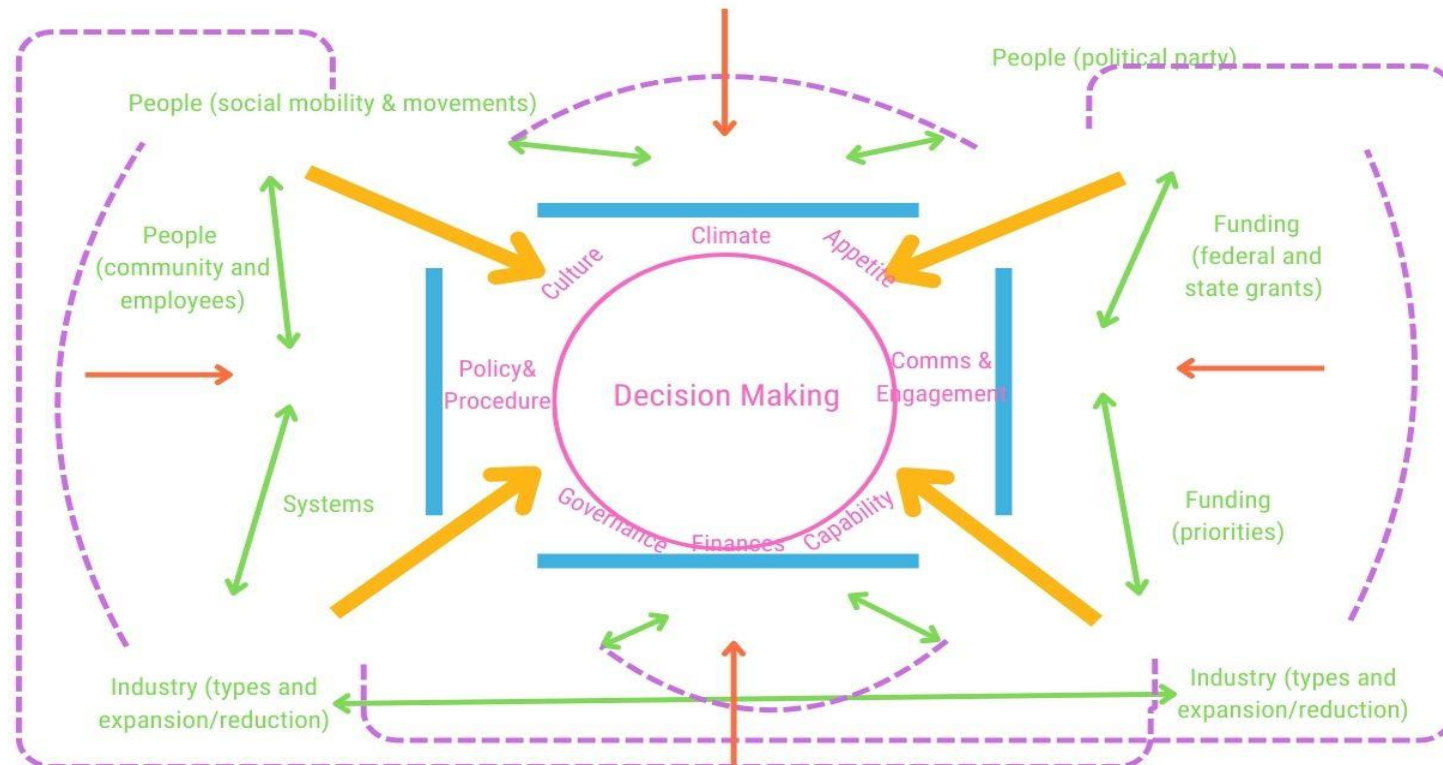
WHAT: What is actually required to 'do' resilience? What should we be focusing on?



WHERE, WHY, WHEN:

Where do we focus our resources? Why there, why that? When disaster strikes?







So What?



PROGRAM OF CHANGE

Objective 1:

**Improve organisations
competency and capability**

Operational Program

Objectives

- Simplify and streamline reporting and planning
- Ensure alignment in understanding and competency of processes through targeted training and clear documentation
- Enhance process efficiency by identifying and eliminating bottlenecks, automating repetitive tasks, and streamlining workflows.

Objective 2:

**Improve relationship with
community**

Strategic Program

Objectives

- Increase understanding of community expectations through regular engagement and feedback mechanisms
- Enhance community relations through effective expectation management
- Align organisation priorities cross departmentally to ensure agreed approach
- Formalise complex risk assessment pre/during/post projects
- Enable collaborative planning with cross-functional teams and shared tools

Objective 3:

**Improve consistency and proactive
risk management**

Cultural Program

Objectives

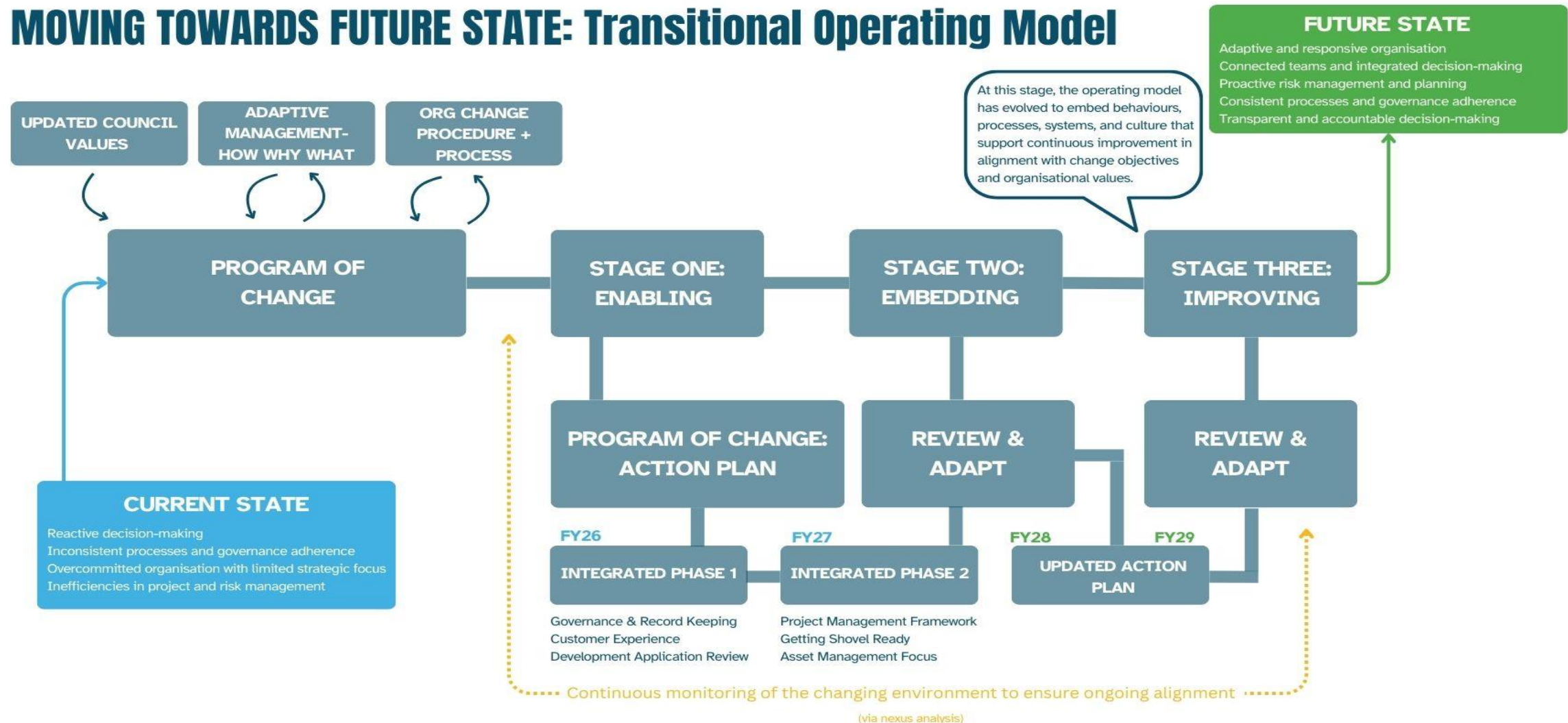
- Develop a culture of consistency and proactive risk management by standardising decision-making processes
- Foster connected and collaborative planning by integrating diverse perspectives and teamwork
- Cultivate responsiveness and adaptability through flexible practices and proactive change engagement
- Embed contextual consideration in decision-making, ensuring relevance to organisational and community contexts



BVSC Managers group attending the
Priorities Workshop in October 2024

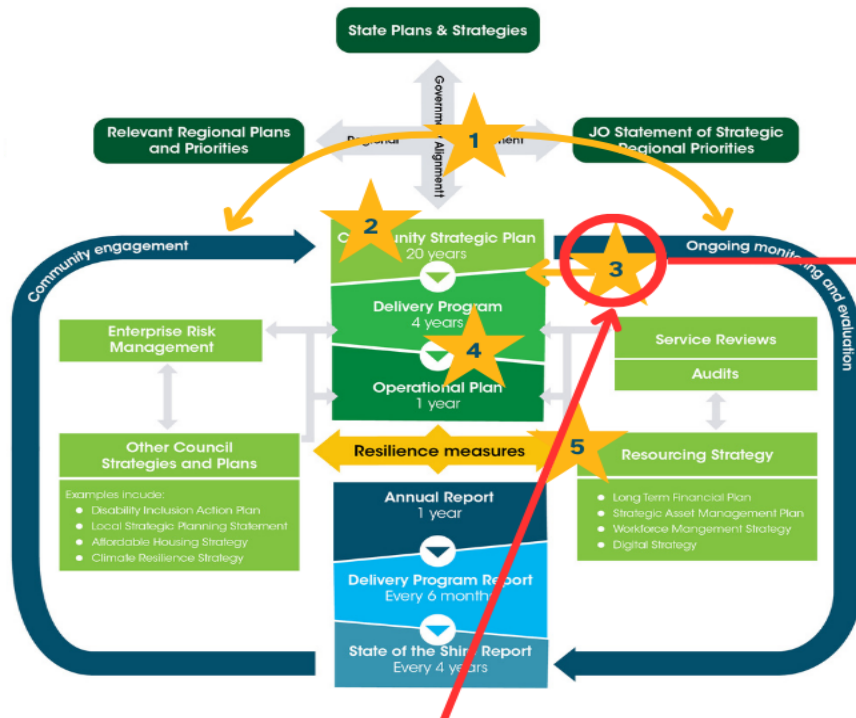


MOVING TOWARDS FUTURE STATE: Transitional Operating Model



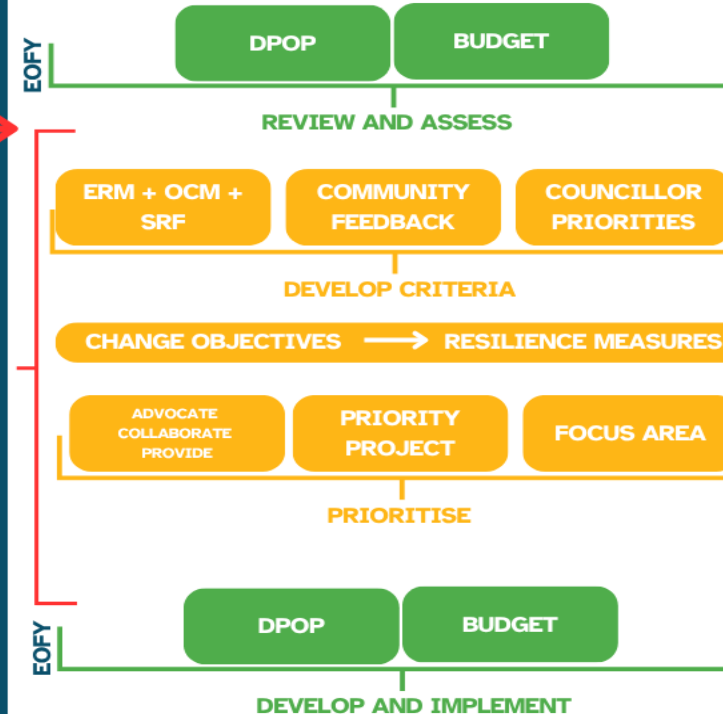


Using IPR to deliver future state operating model



Future state operating model in action, as a process that supports the IPR framework based on the transitional operating model. Through achieving objectives aligned with this future state we create opportunity to affect change in other identified intervention points.

Decision Making Framework to support IPR



OUTCOME

These reviews provide a baseline understanding of performance, resource availability, and gaps

OUTCOME

Transparent, criteria-led approach to decision-making that balances risk, resourcing, and community expectations

OUTCOME

Based on criteria, we collaboratively identify org priorities at 2 day workshop.

Day 1: Review & Synthesis

Day 2: Forward Planning

OUTCOME

Collective understanding of strategic priorities

- Whole-of-organisation focus beyond BAU.
- Justification framework for Councillors to communicate decisions.
- Demonstrated responsiveness and accountability to the community.



So Whats next?



Something different



Flexible and adaptive funding structures



Structural reform and systemic changes



Mindset, motivations, behaviour



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