

Combating the After Effects of COVID-19 by Investing in Individual Resilience



“Life doesn’t get easier or more forgiving, we get stronger and more resilient.”
— Steve Maraboli, *Life, the Truth, and Being Free*

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Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to investigate the effect that COVID-19 has had on employees in Local Government. It is predicted that COVID-19 will have a long-term impact on the mental health and well-being of employees. Resilience is believed to be one major improvement that can be made in Local Government within the next 18 months.

Key findings from research and Individual Resilience in Local Government survey (the survey) conducted for this report (refer **Appendix 1**) suggests that resilience is a trait, not a state and can be learned and developed over time. Highly resilient staff have greater job satisfaction, work happiness and organisational commitment, which is why investing in building employees' resilience over the next 18 months is crucial to Local Government.

The survey revealed that age was a contributing factor which impacted employees and how well they coped with the pandemic. Staff aged 45 years or above felt they were more resilient compared to their younger colleagues. Furthermore, senior and executive management staff felt more resilient in comparison to team members. The survey also found that 76 percent of respondents believe resilience is a skill that can be developed, and 80 percent of respondents thought that building resilience was the responsibility of both the individual, as well as Council. Results from the survey showed that the average level of resilience amongst staff was 4.14 out of 5 (very resilient), which gives the impression that employees are currently coping well with the pandemic. However, to optimise and future proof an individual's resilience capacity, tailored mental health and wellbeing programs by Council and the Local Government Association will aid further improvement and ensure employees do not have a sudden downturn in mental and physical wellbeing.

Research has shown that there are negative implications for an organisation if employees have low resilience and experience mental health issues. The outcome being, low employee morale, high levels of absenteeism, poor performance and workers compensation claims, which ultimately impacts on organisational productivity.

The role of Council and the Local Government Association in fostering employee's resilience is important and warrants a review of their current associated programs, consideration of new program and new policies. Local Government as a sector has been proactive in providing access to Employee Assistance Programs (EAP) however this format may not suit all staff. New programs that could be

investigated in the future could include Mentorships that are presented by senior and experienced employees, building connections with non-profit organisations such as the Wellbeing and Resilience Centre based in Adelaide, to help build resilience in the workplace. New flexible working arrangement policies such as Working from Home (WFH) could also be implemented to support staff to reach a greater work/life balance, whilst also meeting customer service commitments.

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Introduction

Through a quantitative and qualitative survey and literature review, this report will cover the after-effects of COVID-19 by investing in Individual Resilience within Local Government. Employee resilience has been identified as a major improvement that can be made within Local Government within the next 18 months. Resilience is one of the key factors that will enable employees to adapt, so they are able to continue to provide and maintain essential services to the best of their ability. The topic of resilience was chosen due to the current impact of COVID-19.

Each individual has experienced considerable disruption, where some have faced a time of trauma or hardship, while others felt social isolation. Ultimately this had an effect on their wellbeing, which has demonstrated a level of resilience. Although it is not possible to change the current circumstances, the Local Government sector has an opportunity to work collaboratively with their employees to ensure their staff are able to adapt to unexpected changes that are occurring now and in the future.

The consequences of COVID-19 will remain for some time, learning from the positive initiatives and ongoing resilience trainings will be valuable to all Local Government employees. Strengthening their mental health and wellbeing will secure productivity and efficiency for Council.

Analysis and Discussion

Background of Resilience

Southwick et al. (2014 p. 2) defines resilience as the process of adapting well in the face of adversity, trauma, tragedy, threats or even significant sources of stress. COVID-19 links directly to this, or any definition of resilience. It was an unexpected change which brought with it, many unprecedented challenges and in these times, we must rely heavily on our resilience to help get us through. COVID-19 has impacted all facets of the community and we need to realise and remember that we are not alone, as discussed by Vinkers et al. (2020) or societal ecosystems to overcome the effects of the pandemic, we need to utilise shared resilience. Internationally, countries are looking to their neighbours in need of support and there is no difference nationally, or locally. In any crisis, feeling like you are in control can help individuals cope better with the situation. Resilience can be promoted when people plan their day-to-day activities and encourage their own self-care along with exercising and eating a nutritional diet (Vinkers et al. 2020).

Local Government response

An article on building resilience, has theorised that traits associated with resilience can be ‘learned, developed and enhanced over time’ and that ‘small steps toward building resilience can have significant positive effects on an individual’s ability to cope’ (Saletnik 2018, p. 175). This is identified in the survey results with 76 percent of respondents indicating that they believe that resilience can be developed (refer **Appendix 2**) with a further 80 percent responding that building resilience was the responsibility of both Council and the individual. In order to assist this learning, the Local Government Association of South Australia (LGA) partnered with Corporate Health Group (CHG) who created and ran a 12 week COVID-19 Webinar Series from April to June 2020, (refer **Appendix 3**). In a discussion with Ms Tara Baldwin, Health Promotion Project Coordinator at CHG, it was advised that as of 22 September 2020, this series attracted approximately 2,500 local government employees across South Australia. The topic of mindfulness was most well received with participants enjoying the focus on responding rather than reacting when faced with situations similar to COVID-19.

In conjunction to this, the Local Government Association Workers Compensation Scheme (LGAWCS) initiated and funded a 90-minute Building Resilience Webinar offered to council’s and presented by CHG’s in house psychologists. This Building Resilience Webinar provides fantastic tools and advice focusing on the Resilience at Work or R@W Sustain 7 model (refer **Appendix 4**). The aim of this model is to provide workplaces with a common language that suits any organisation. The R@W Scale measures individual workplace resilience in the form of seven interrelated components that establish overall resilience, and is the basis for the R@W Sustain 7 model. Working with Resilience (WWR) have not only created R@W Individual but they also have scales for R@W Team and R@W Leader, all of which measure resilience in individuals and/or teams. Along with this, there are many models that Local Government has the option to adapt for their workplace. Each very similar but different in its own right.

Future-proofing resilience

While implementing these webinars has been effective in helping Council employee’s cope with the impacts of COVID-19, it is vital that this promotion of building well-being and resilience is maintained going forward. The survey asked respondents how resilient they think they are, which resulted in an average result of 4.14 out of 5 (5 being very resilient). An interview with the LGAWCS Manager for Injury Management, Matt Barton, has identified that psychological injuries take years to become apparent and therefore, the impacts from COVID-19 may not be apparent for at least another 12 months. As a result of this, it is crucial that organisations discuss and decide what resilience building measures they are going to implement over the next 18 months to ensure that their employees do

not have a sudden downturn in wellbeing. This could be as simple as promoting models such as R@W Sustain 7 throughout the workplace, through posters, monthly tips etc. and having these discussions during divisional or team meetings gives staff the opportunity to identify an area of improvement that they can then focus on to build up their resilience. Employees with higher levels of resilience and wellbeing are more likely to take early action and seek help rather than risk poor health and it is estimated workplace health programs can achieve an average of 25 percent reduction in worker's compensation and disability claim costs (Chapman 2003, p.6).

Workplace Support

It can often be forgotten that workplaces can foster or suppress resilience, even in the strongest of its employees. As mentioned, there is growing research to indicate that resilience is a skill that can be taught and developed, hence, when given the opportunity, organisations that promote 'proactive, adaptive and support-seeking behaviours' are enabling their staff to utilise and build their resilience (Näswall et al. 2019, p. 353). An important part of building and/or maintaining resilience and dealing with difficult situations is having the opportunity to talk to a professional about them. This can often be costly for organisations and, therefore, not a viable option. Local Government staff are fortunate to have access to Employee Assistance Programs (EAP) as an employee benefit. During March to August 2020, these programs had a focus on resilience and managing mental health as well as topics including stress management and supporting people through physical distancing challenges (refer **Appendix 5**). As a result of the survey, it was revealed that 97 percent of respondents are aware of their EAPs and although 41 percent of these people advised that they had experienced trauma, only 10 percent actually accessed this service.

To assist with employees' health and wellbeing, many Councils have implemented Flexible Working Arrangements (FWA) including working from home to allow staff to manage a healthy work-life balance. During COVID-19, FWA were an option that many Council's either offered or implemented amongst their staff. Results from the survey indicated that 50 percent of respondents had temporarily worked from home for a period of time during COVID-19. While there is support for both sides of the FWA argument, being given the opportunity for versatility and for Council's to allow FWA has the potential to double the 'psychological, physical and productivity benefits' (Kulik & Sinha 2020).

In addition to the above, a workplace with a climate of psychological safety is one which values the psychological health of its workers (Taylor et al. 2016, p. 10). In order for Local Government to enhance this, they must provide a supportive environment which adequately satisfies ones need for belonging. If all psychological needs have been satisfied, the self-determination theory indicates that people will

become inherently more motivated and an increase in psychological health and well-being will be evident (Taylor et al. 2016, p. 10-11).

Implications for the organisation

Rajgopal (2010, p. 63) has stated that employees mental wellbeing at the workplace is a crucial factor in their overall health and work output. Poor mental health can lead to burn-out amongst employees which affects their ability to contribute meaningfully in both their personal and professional lives. Consequently, it impacts on the organisation directly through increased sickness absence. Workplace stress or low resilience in the face of adversity is also a common cause of poor productivity and human error. This results in high staff turnover, poor performance, low employee morale, and increase in accidents/compensation claims due to human error.

Australian Public Service Commission (APSC) supports the aforementioned finding by Rajgopal and affirms that poor employee wellbeing has effect on organisational productivity through avoidable employee absence and through reduced employee engagement levels (APSC 2018). Hence, implications appear to be negative for the Local Government with high consequences if employees' mental health wellbeing and resilience decreases in these challenging times of working through COVID-19.

Consultation

Approach

The survey (refer **Appendix 1**) was distributed through the Local Government Professional network where it reached a large number of Council's across South Australia, resulting in 312 responses. Respondents were asked to consider the impacts of COVID-19 on their wellbeing and their Individual resilience from March 2020 to September 13 2020.

Outcomes

Based on the results of the survey (refer **Appendix 2**), it illustrates that the older you are the more resilient you become, this could be due to having more life experience and skills. An Overview of the Wellbeing and Resilience Centre suggest that *'Resilience is not one specific skill, but a set of resources and skills that promote: effective problem-solving; adaptability; positive coping; self-regulation; and social support. Research has shown that learning new skills—and practicing those skills—can increase resilience. In particular, focusing on positive coping skills, self-regulation, and social connections can build our resilience.'*

Figure 1, below, indicates that there is a steady incline in resilience levels from the 18-24 age bracket to 65 and above. There was very little difference between indoor and outdoor staff and the length of time employed in Local Government. This also correlates to how the respondents felt they coped during COVID-19. Hamilton (2018, p. 34) explains that it is not until we reach the age of 25 that our emotional brains are completely developed, which justifies why the older the respondents felt more resilient and therefore coped better with COVID-19.

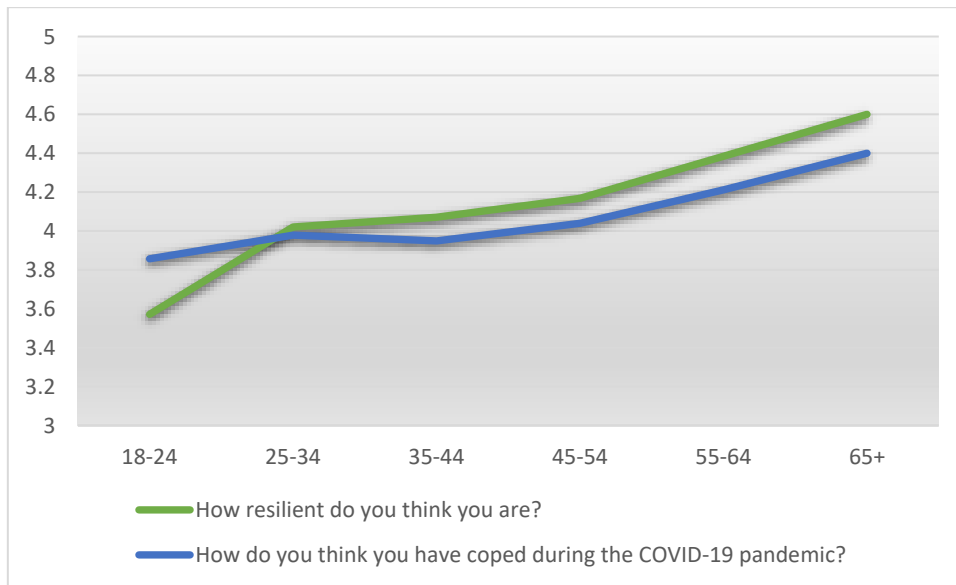


Figure 1: Level of resilience – Questions 6 & 22

When situations or circumstances change rapidly, the younger and older respondents found it more difficult to adapt than those between the ages of 45-64, which could be due to them having higher resilience. The 65 plus respondents while high in resilience, would face other roadblocks in being able to adapt such as technological changes. The 18-44 age bracket have a lower level of resilience, so are therefore not as adaptable as their older counterparts.

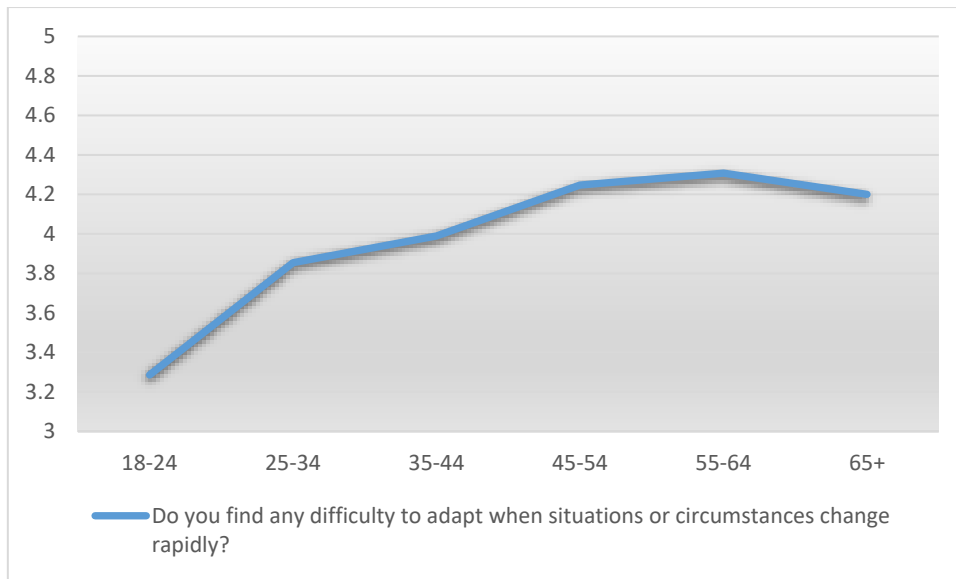


Figure 2: Ability to adapt - Question 19

In further analysing the survey results it denotes that Executive Management level staff are more resilient than their team members, as seen in Figure 3 below. Reasons for this can include having access to more information, greater communication, life experiences and skills as aforementioned and being part of the decision-making process.

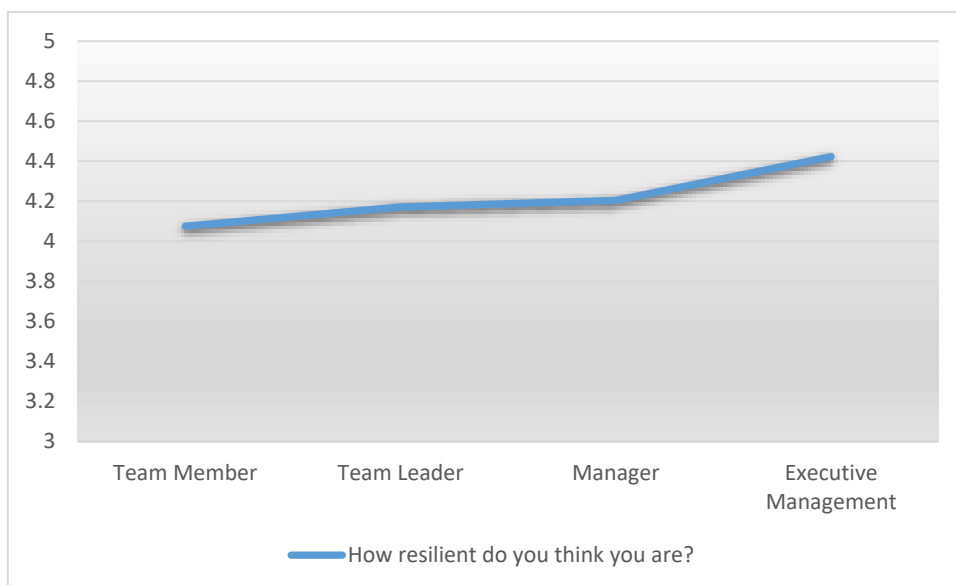


Figure 3: Level of Resilience - Question 22

Whilst 54 percent of respondents thought their direct supervisor cared about their physical and mental wellbeing, only 22 percent felt comfortable seeking support from others about any work or personal life problems they were facing. Figure 4 below, demonstrates that respondents found it difficult to discuss their personal or work issues with colleagues, this could indicate that there is a cultural or psychological safety issue that prevent employees feeling comfortable to have these

discussions. It is also interesting to note that only 10 percent of survey respondents have used the EAPs offered by Council's.

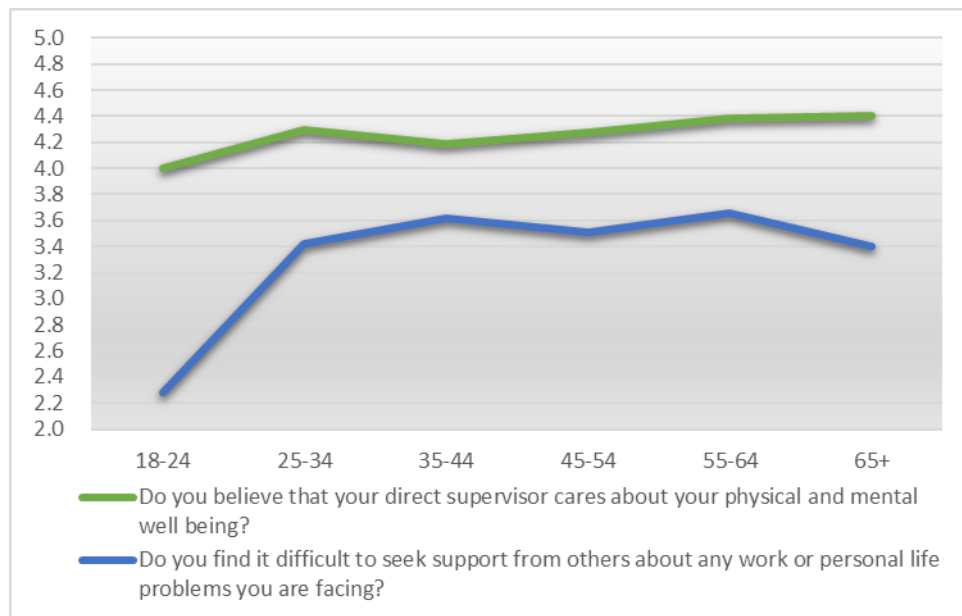


Figure 4: Level of care and seeking support - Questions 14 & 20

Positive Outcomes

It is apparent that most employees were happy with the flexibility around the ability to work from home, allowing more time spent with families and less stress caused by having to commute to work. Additionally, it was noted that staff also felt there was an increase in trust between them and Executive Management, as many moved to a Work from Home situation and had to perform their duties with little to no direct supervision. With no commute and less interruptions, they indicated that they felt more productive, but missed the face to face interactions with other colleagues.

It was also prevalent that with the help of technology and online meetings, staff felt that Managers and Team Leaders were doing more check-ins than usual creating a greater sense of psychological safety for staff. Councils also had to act quickly to introduce COVID safe plans and procedures.

Those that remained in the office or onsite indicated that they felt safer going to work as many Councils implemented rigorous cleaning routines, had greater awareness of personal hygiene and the culture change for staff for those who are sick to work from home.

Negative Outcomes

The most prominent theme was that staff missed personal interaction. Respondents missed face to face communication, whether this be meetings or general office conversation in the workplace. While some adapted easily and comfortably to a working from home lifestyle, many said they felt isolated.

Support Required from Council

Staff feel as though training and seminars are a preferable resource when it comes to Council's supporting their employee's journey to building and maintaining their resilience, but many comments also indicated that clear communication plays a major role in keeping resilience high. Flexible working arrangements provided to staff as an immediate response to COVID-19 has also been identified as something that Councils can continue to support in order for employees to maintain a healthy work-life balance and improved resilience.

Recommendations

The term resilience needs to be defined and understood by every Local Government employee with a strong awareness and knowledge that resilience is a skill that can be learnt. Councils should look to adopt ways to include resilience discussions as team norms, potentially as part of Work Health and Safety protocols and could even form part of Council's vision statements or corporate values.

From our analysis and findings, the following recommendations are made to increase individual resilience in Local Government employees:

Key Recommendations	Responsibility	Outcomes	Timeline
1. Council's to conduct climate survey of employees to find baseline resilience levels and traits (i.e. R@W Individual).	Each Council	Evaluation of where each employee's resilience lies to find starting point to determine appropriate training and workshops.	End of July, 2021
2. Provide tailored Resilience and Wellbeing Programs and Training to staff based on results of climate survey.	Each Council	Strengthening employee's mental health and wellbeing further ensuring productivity and efficiency for Council.	End of 2021
3. Consistently and continuously promote and encourage the availability of Employee Assistance Programs.	Each Council	Local Government staff are aware of these programs, but only a small percentage use them. Talking to a professional to seek guidance and support, will assist building resilient skills and attributes, fostering a healthier individual and in turn workplace.	Ongoing
4. Council's continue to develop and support flexible working arrangements for their employees.	Each Council	A positive outcome from COVID-19 is that Local Government staff have shown that having flexible working arrangements, including working from home, has improved not only their mental wellbeing, but also productivity. Moreover, there has been reduced sick or personal leave as employees are supported to remain productive, which makes it a good business case for the organisation.	Ongoing

Key Recommendations	Responsibility	Outcomes	Timeline
5. Through the Local Government Association or Local Government Professionals in partnership with Council's develop and implement a Mentorship Program.	Local Government Association or Local Government Professionals	Our research shows that the longer you have worked in the Local Government sector and the more senior your position, the more resilience you have. A Mentorship Program would accelerate skills and knowledge (within Local Government or their specific field) to new employees to Local Government. Consequently, boosting individual resilience skills and traits.	Mentorship Pilot Program to be implemented by end of 2021
6. Councils should introduce accredited Mental Health First Aiders within the workplace.	Local Government Association and Each Council	<p>Mental Health First Aiders will become the first point of contact in the workplace who can offer advice, resources or support. If required, Mental Health First Aiders can escalate matters in a prompt and appropriate fashion. Additionally, provides another level of psychological safety for employees.</p> <p>This will also demonstrate the Council's advocacy and commitment to reduce mental illness stigma while increasing mental health awareness and support employees to seek help sooner, recover faster and maintain productivity.</p>	End of July, 2021
7. Conduct a follow up climate survey to measure employee's individual resilience after adopting the above recommendations.	Each Council	Assess employee's resilience level, development and position on R@W Individual scale. Compare to baseline survey to evaluate training effectiveness and results.	End of 2022

Conclusion

The research and analysis has revealed that due to COVID-19, resilience is an aspect of wellbeing that has been impacted. Subsequently, the recovery of staff and building their individual resilience, should be considered as a major improvement in Local Government within the next 18 months. The degree of impact that individuals are affected by the same situation is subjective, therefore, it is difficult to be able to accurately interpret the results from the survey as each individual behaves and responds to unexpected changes differently.

The research and results from the survey indicate that resilience can be learnt, and it is the responsibility of both individuals and the Council as an organisation. Council must continue to provide and promote the use of support programs such as EAP and encourage all staff to attend regardless of their current circumstances as they could learn something new that could potentially help them deal with other issues better in future. In addition, further training, mentorship programs and FWA policies should be implemented, so that employees develop and enhance their resilience skills making them better equipped to deal with life challenges. It would be beneficial for Local Government employees to utilise the help and support that is already provided by the organisation, such as discussing issues with their line managers and/or Mental Health First Aiders.

If Local Government takes the time to reinforce the aforementioned strategies to better support employees through times of crisis, it will allow staff to communicate their struggles, experiences and opinions more freely. This will aid in determining the best way to recover from these hardships, which will ultimately lead to the improvement of their staff's resilience and general wellbeing. Council's must ensure staff are appropriately trained and skilled for future disruptions, allowing productivity to remain high and employees are flexible and prepared to minimise the impact on their resilience, mental health and wellbeing.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Individual Resilience in Local Government Survey

Individual Resilience in Local Government Emerging Leaders Program 2020

The Emerging Leaders 2020 cohort groups have been tasked with identifying and reporting on "one major improvement in Local Government in the next 18 months".

In these unprecedented times it is critical to understand the current and long term impacts of COVID-19 on the wellbeing of Local Government employees, and, whether personal resilience is the catalyst to not only surviving but adapting and thriving in to the future.

These survey results will assist to gauge the current mindset of Local Government employees across the state and will guide the direction of the report.

The report will provide the sector with the results of the survey, but will also aim to identify key findings and recommendations to prepare councils for the impacts on employees in the face of future emergencies.

Respondents are asked to consider the impacts of COVID-19 on their wellbeing and their personal resilience from March 2020 to current day. The survey will take approximately 15 minutes to complete.

* Required

Background Information

1. How old are you? *

- 18-24
- 25-34
- 35-44
- 45-54
- 55-64
- 65+

2. How long have you worked in local government? *

- 0-5
- 6-10
- 11-15
- 16-20
- 20+

3. Is your Council? *

- Metropolitan
- Regional
- Rural

4. Are you an office or field employee? *

- Indoor
- Outdoor

5. What level of employment are you at? *

- Executive Management
- Manager
- Team Leader
- Team Member

Impacts of COVID-19

6. How do you think you have coped during the COVID-19 pandemic? *

- not coped well at all 1 2 3 4 5 very well can cope with anything
-

7. How did your personal work situation change during the COVID-19 pandemic? *

- Worked from home
- Worked at a different site
- Redeployed to another section
- Work hours changed
- No change

Other

8. If you moved to Work From Home during the pandemic, are you now back in the office? *

- Yes
- No

Other

9. If you worked from home or are still working from home, did you or have you received any additional check ins? (ie to check on your well being) *

- Yes
- No
- Not applicable

10. Please describe any other flexible work or leave arrangement being offered to you by Council during this period *

11. How well do you think your Council/Senior management has kept you informed of changes and updates throughout the pandemic? *

- no communication 1 2 3 4 5 checked in regularly

12. Do you have any fears or concerns in regards to your employment post-COVID19? *

- fearful of losing job 1 2 3 4 5 feel secure

13. During the current year have you experienced a time of trauma or hardship that has impacted on your wellbeing? *

- Yes
- No

Workplace Support

14. Do you believe that your direct supervisor cares about your physical and mental well being? *

Not at all 1 2 3 4 5 100% Yes

15. Are you aware that your Council offers an Employee Assistance Program? (Counselling service for free) *

Yes
 No

16. Have you used the Employee Assistance Program during 2020? *

Yes
 No

17. Were you aware of the 12 week Covid-19 webinar series program delivered by LGA for both mental and physical well being for all Council employees? *

Yes
 No

18. Does your Council have a work from home policy? *

Yes
 No
 Maybe

Self awareness

19. Do you find any difficulty to adapt when situations or circumstances change rapidly? *

frustrated or anxious 1 2 3 4 5 very adaptable to change

20. Do you find it difficult to seek support from others about any work or personal life problems you are facing? *

reluctant 1 2 3 4 5 comfortable talking to others

21. Can you see how the work you are doing is making a positive difference at your council? *

Not at all 1 2 3 4 5 I make a difference

22. How resilient do you think you are? (Resilience is the ability to withstand, adapt to, and recover from stress and adversity. Think about how well you adapt to change or stressful events) *

Not very resilient 1 2 3 4 5 Very resilient

23. Tell us about a time where you believe Resilience was key to a positive outcome?

24. Do you believe Resilience is a skill that can be developed? *

- Yes
- No
- Maybe

25. Do you think that building resilience is your responsibility or the Councils? *

- Council
- My Responsibility
- Both

26. Do you have any other thoughts in regards to resilience?

Long Term

27. What have you seen as a positive outcome on your work conditions during the pandemic?
(example - safer, flexibility, productivity, trusted, innovation) *

28. What have you seen as a negative outcome on your work conditions during the pandemic?
(example - isolation, lack of productivity, job security, IT issues, cyber security) *

29. What do you feel your Council could of done during the pandemic to help support your mental health and wellbeing? *

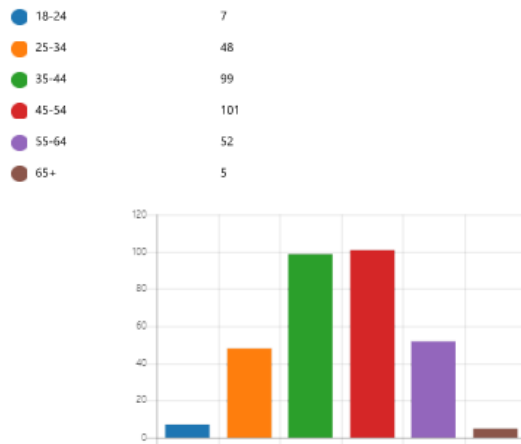
30. In order to help you to build your resilience, what can Council do to support this? *

Appendix 2: Individual Resilience in Local Government Survey Results

Individual Resilience in Local Government Emerging Leaders Program 2020

312 Responses 28:24 Average time to complete Closed Status

1. How old are you?



2. How long have you worked in local government?



3. Is your Council



4. Are you an office or field employee?



5. What level of employment are you at?



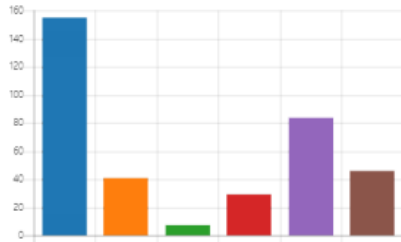
6. How do you think you have coped during the COVID-19 pandemic?

312 Responses

4.03 Average Number

7. How did your personal work situation change during the COVID-19 pandemic?

Worked from home	155
Worked at a different site	41
Redeployed to another section	7
Work hours changed	29
No change	84
Other	46



8. If you moved to Work From Home during the pandemic, are you now back in the office?

Yes	116
No	58
Other	138



9. If you worked from home or are still working from home, did you or have you received any additional check ins? (ie to check on your well being)

Yes	131
No	41
Not applicable	140



10. Please describe any other flexible work or leave arrangement being offered to you by Council during this period

311 Responses

Latest Responses
 "The freedom to work from home is suspicious of illness. In g...
 "COVID leave which was available for people who had to sel...
 "n/a"

11. How well do you think your Council/Senior management has kept you informed of changes and updates throughout the pandemic?

312 Responses

4.17 Average Number

12. Do you have any fears or concerns in regards to your employment post-COVID19?

312 Responses

4.17 Average Number

13. During the current year have you experienced a time of trauma or hardship that has impacted on your wellbeing?



14. Do you believe that your direct supervisor cares about your physical and mental well being?



15. Are you aware that your Council offers an Employee Assistance Program? (Counselling service for free)



16. Have you used the Employee Assistance Program during 2020?



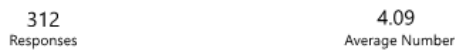
17. Were you aware of the 12 week Covid-19 webinar series program delivered by LGA for both mental and physical well being for all Council employees?



18. Does your Council have a work from home policy?



19. Do you find any difficulty to adapt when situations or circumstances change rapidly?



20. Do you find it difficult to seek support from others about any work or personal life problems you are facing?



21. Can you see how the work you are doing is making a positive difference at your council?

312 Responses 4.17 Average Number

22. How resilient do you think you are? (Resilience is the ability to withstand, adapt to, and recover from stress and adversity. Think about how well you adapt to change or stressful events)

312 Responses 4.14 Average Number

23. Tell us about a time where you believe Resilience was key to a positive outcome?

201 Responses Latest Responses
**Adapting to returning to the main offices at the beginning ...*
 ..

24. Do you believe Resilience is a skill that can be developed?



25. Do you think that building resilience is your responsibility or the Councils?



26. Do you have any other thoughts in regards to resilience?

161 Responses Latest Responses
**In terms of an individual, I believe resilience is 90% related ...*
**Human are resilience, most of the time people have difficult...*

27. What have you seen as a positive outcome on your work conditions during the pandemic? (example - safer, flexibility, productivity, trusted, innovation)

311 Responses Latest Responses
**Job security - assurance of extension of contract somewhat ...*
**Safer from a whole of community level. Trusted by senior m...*
**Flexibility"*

28. What have you seen as a negative outcome on your work conditions during the pandemic? (example - isolation, lack of productivity, job security, IT issues, cyber security)

311 Responses Latest Responses
**Large unsustainable workloads as a result of many actors c...*
**IT issues absolutely, loss of productivity as it was either mor...*
**Lack of trust from some management, IT issues"*

29. What do you feel your Council could of done during the pandemic to help support your mental health and wellbeing?

311 Responses Latest Responses
**Probably nothing. Maybe in an ideal world, employ / contra...*
**There were a number of health and wellbeing sessions on a...*
**None, I don't need any support"*

30. In order to help you to build your resilience, what can Council do to support this?

311 Responses Latest Responses
**Probably nothing further required. In an ideal world, perha...*
**Not sure."*
**None"*

Appendix 3 – Local Government Association COVID-19 Webinar Series

COVID-19 Webinar Series

12-Week Program

This series takes a holistic approach in caring for both mental and physical wellbeing in such difficult times, focusing on the anxieties and uncertainty that we all currently face. Each Member will be given a specific day of the week that this 30-minute webinar will be presented, with employees able to login from work or home. A recording will also be available each week for employees to watch if they missed the session.

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|---------------|--|----------------|---|
| Week 1 | Coronavirus Anxiety | Week 7 | Mental Health: The PERMA Philosophy |
| Week 2 | Dealing with Change and/or Uncertainty | Week 8 | Optimising Immunity |
| Week 3 | Working from Home: Ergonomics | Week 9 | Mindfulness |
| Week 4 | Stress Management | Week 10 | Working in Isolation |
| Week 5 | Maintaining Wellbeing During Social Isolation | Week 11 | Chair Yoga |
| Week 6 | Sleep Well | Week 12 | The Importance of Nutrition and Exercise |

Appendix 4 – Working With Resilience, Resilience at Work or R@W Sustain 7 Model



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Appendix 5 – Potential training providers in South Australia

- Corporate Health Group: LGA/CHG Building Resilience Webinar - 90mins (LGA/CHG Building Resilience Webinar - 90mins)
- Corporate Health Group
Corporate Health Group (CHG) offers 'Building Resilience' workplace training in addition to psychological, mental health safety and first aid training. CHG are a commonly used organisation by council to undertake health assessments and wellbeing programs.
- Wellbeing and Resilience Centre
The South Australian Health and Medical Research Institute has a Wellbeing and Resilience Centre which is a not for profit organisation whose aim is to build mental health and wellbeing in the community. Their mission is to build the positive mental health of individuals, organisations and communities by designing and implementing accessible evidence-based services. They offer two Wellbeing and Resilience Training Programs "Be Well Plan" and "Resilience Skills Training". The Be Well Plan teaches participants to use skills to build their mental health and wellbeing, while the Resilience Skills Training Program helps to develop new skills and knowledge in personal resilience and wellbeing. These skills can assist to increase positive mental health and help with stress, fatigue, relationships and work difficulties.
- Working with Resilience
Working with Resilience (WWR) is a consortium of international mental health practitioners and researchers who are committed to advancing research into measuring and building workplace resilience in organisations. Katheryn McEwen leads the WWR Consortium from South Australia, who has special interest in workplace resilience. She has authored three books on resilience at work as well as led development of the R@W Model/Toolkit, which is currently discussed in CHG's wellbeing webinars across the Local Government of South Australia to help build resilience and deal with stressors in a positive and healthy manner.

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Team Reflection

Following the start of the Project group each team member went through their Team Management Profiles (TMP). It was quickly identified that there was not a representation of all the sectors on the TMP wheel which meant that group members would need to step into roles that they were not completely comfortable with. Through the project planning tasks were distributed so that group members had both tasks that fit with their TMP and ones that did not.

The group from the beginning of the program arranged to meet weekly on a Wednesday to discuss the project and timelines for work and research to be completed by. To alleviate the pressure of the impending deadline a timeline was developed to identify each key date along the journey. This helped to keep everyone on the same page and made it easier to allocate tasks to individual team members and track progress.

We were able to keep minutes which were sent to the group identifying what was discussed for those that were not able to attend the Zoom meetings. The ability to utilise Zoom to meet with Group members in different parts of the state enabled us to have conversations more frequently and everyone be involved, we were able to share screens and used the ability of live Google documents to work together.

Using the 'My Team' – Project Performance Questionnaire to assess project progress at the halfway point of the group project, we found that there was a different perspective from each team member on how they felt the team was performing at that stage. Each team member scored above 75% in the advising category feeling that we were able to gather information well and felt that had identified the requirements we were required to meet. Something that needs work is identified in the Developing category identified as an average of 58% a vital category in being able to implement ideas into workable solutions.

Taking the time to complete the team reflection and questionnaire provided our team with valuable information to reflect on how we develop our report and use the information gathered. It has been a positive experience resulting in high levels of collaboration between group members.