



STATE EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE (SEMC)

1 DECEMBER 2015 MEETING: HIGHLIGHTS

The SEMC met on the 1 December 2015. Key discussion areas from the meeting are summarised below.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AMENDMENT BILL

On 4 August 2015 the SEMC endorsed the draft Emergency Management Amendment Bill 2015, with the exception of provisions relating to hazard declarations. This was done at the request of the SEMC Secretariat as the concept of declared hazards required further development and further discussions needed to take place with Parliamentary Counsel. Relevant provisions were subsequently redrafted to provide the following:

In the event of the occurrence of an event, situation or condition that is capable of causing or resulting in:

- loss of life, prejudice to the safety, or harm to the health, of persons or animals; or
- destruction of, or damage to, property or any part of the environment;

and its occurrence or imminent occurrence is of such a nature or magnitude that it requires a significant and coordinated response, the Minister or the State Emergency Coordinator may make a hazard declaration.

The declaration may be made verbally, but must be put in writing as soon as is practicable, and must be published for general information in any manner the person who made the declaration considers appropriate. It must also be published in the Western Australian Government Gazette. The declaration remains in force until revoked by the position who made it.

On 1 December 2015 the SEMC endorsed the Bill in its entirety for submission to the Minister.

NATURAL DISASTER RESILIENCE PROGRAM

The National Partnership Agreement for Natural Disaster Resilience (NPA-NDR) between the Attorney-General's Department (AGD) and the Western Australian (WA) government delivers the National Disaster Resilience Program (NDRP), which focuses on reducing communities' vulnerability to natural hazards.

The most recent two-year NPA-NDR expired on 30 June 2015. The AGD has proposed a one-year extension until 30 June 2016 which gives sufficient time to review and modify the forthcoming three-year NPA-NDR based on recommendations made in the Productivity Commission's report on natural disaster funding arrangements, due to commence 1 July 2016.

Western Australia is required to endorse the NPA-NDR accepting the conditions and focus of the funding and will be required to develop an Implementation Plan (IP) outlining the programs that will be funded under this arrangement. The IP must then be approved by the Minister. The programs allocated funding under the 2013-2015 NPA-NDR were:

1. State-wide Priority Hazard Risk Management Planning
2. State-wide Bushfire Risk Management Planning Program
3. Disaster Resilience Grant Program

Based on existing state priorities and the largely unchanged NPA-NDR, the SEMC Secretariat must consider how funds should be allocated in the proposed one-year extension.

The SEMC noted the pending signing of the one-year extension of the NPA-NDR for 1 July 2015 to 30 June 2016 and agreed to suggested allocations to the State-wide Priority Hazard Risk Management Planning and Disaster Resilience Grant Program. The SEMC will consider over the next 6 months the most adequate options for future NDRP allocations.

The SEMC also noted the final progress report for the 2013-2015 NPA-NDR.

NEW NAME FOR SEMC SUBCOMMITTEE

The SEMC Subcommittees are closely aligned to the National Australia-New Zealand Emergency Management Committee (ANZEMC) structure, policy directions and initiatives. The naming conventions of the ANZEMC Subcommittees (Community Engagement, Capability Development, Risk and Recovery) match the SEMC Subcommittee structure, except for the Response Subcommittee.

Due to the current objectives and function of the Response Subcommittee and in order to better align with the National ANZEMC subcommittees, the SEMC endorsed the name change of the Response Subcommittee to 'Response and Capability Subcommittee'.

SEMC SECRETARIAT EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR UPDATE

STATE RISK PROJECT

In 2015, as part of phase 3 of the project, the District risk assessment roll out investigated 20 district hazards in the Great Southern, Wheatbelt, Goldfields-Esperance, South West and Kimberley districts. The hazards included cyclone, storm, flood, earthquake, bushfire, human epidemic, animal and plant biosecurity, marine transport emergency and road transport emergency.

The program will continue in 2016 in the Goldfields, South West, Pilbara, Midwest-Gascoyne and Perth Metropolitan districts focusing on the top 5 to 6 hazards per district.

Preparation for the local level roll out is also underway. Various options and the most cost-effective roll out are being considered in conjunction with WALGA. Pilot workshops are planned for the first half of 2016.

STATE RISK PROJECT – TREATMENT DECISION FRAMEWORK

Now that the State Risk Project has an operational risk assessment model and is rapidly developing a risk register (currently 2671 records), planning is underway on the potential end-point, that is mitigation investment decisions.

SEMC member Richard Simpson will become the SEMC sponsor of this next phase of the State Risk Project. Literature reviews have commenced investigating other mitigation decision methodologies applied world-wide. It is also envisaged that consultations will take place with a variety of WA public and private sector senior decision makers commencing in early 2016 to help construct the most effective framework for the WA context.

OTHER UPDATES:

- The Australasian Natural Hazards Management Conference hosted by the SEMC in October was very well attended with over two hundred delegates attending. The quality of presentations and workshops was high and feedback extremely positive.
- The Policy and Governance Review is progressing well. A recent workshop with key stakeholders gathered valuable feedback and positive comments on the State Emergency Management (EM) Plan and the associated State EM Policy and Procedures.
- The Strategic Bushfire Stocktake report is in its final stages and is proposed the SEMC consider a draft out-of-session as soon possible.

RESILIENCE AUSTRALIA AWARDS

The 2015 National Resilient Australia Award was announced on 23 November by the Hon. Michael Keenan MP. The 2015 winner is a Brisbane-based company, GIVIT. GIVIT's sophisticated online platform provides a simple, proven, coordinated response to quickly match donations and ensure offers of assistance get to where they are most needed.

The 2015 'highly commended' recipients were:

- **City of Mandurah (WA)** - 'Beyond The Gate' Aged Care Emergency Support Network, from Western Australia, a project designed to improve the way aged care facilities deal with natural disasters.
- **Australian Red Cross (WA)** - The Pillowcase Project, also from Western Australia, which helped to raise awareness of disaster preparation in primary school children.
- **Insurance Australia Group (NSW)** – StormSafe: Doing a little could save the lot, from New South Wales, a public-private partnership to build public awareness of storm risk and help individuals make better decisions on disaster preparation.
- **Mansfield Shire (Victoria)** - Council Community Resilience Leadership Program, from Victoria which worked to bring together community members and leaders to build a greater understanding of emergency management planning and responses.

The SEMC noted WA recipients of the National Highly Commended Awards. The SEMC Chair presented certificates to the recipients following the SEMC meeting.

The Resilient Australia Awards are sponsored by the Attorney-General's Department in conjunction with the states and territories.

OTHER UPDATES

A range of projects and updates were discussed and noted by the SEMC:

- The District Emergency Management Committee (DEMC) overview report.
- The SEMC Subcommittee minutes.
- The Local Emergency Management Arrangements (LEMAs) report
 - the SEMC acknowledged the challenges of local governments in completing LEMAs. The SEMC Secretariat is developing renewed guidelines and templates to support local governments in the process.
- Progress made in completing the remaining recommendations of past major reviews and reports.
- Evacuation
 - discussions undertaken by the Response Subcommittee relating to evacuation including a strategic review by senior officers.
- Emergency Services Communication Strategy (ESCS)
 - consultation has continued concerning the review and update of the 2009 ESCS. A final report will be presented to the ESCS Committee on 16 December.

SEMC MEETINGS

The SEMC meetings scheduled for 2016 are 1 March, 10 May, 2 August, 11 October and 6 December. For further information, please contact the SEMC Secretariat on (08) 9482 1700 or visit www.semc.wa.gov.au.



The SEMC would like to take this opportunity to wish everyone a very happy and safe festive season.