



## COMPREHENSIVE IMPACT ASSESSMENT (CIA) FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

October 2016

### **1. Is the requirement to conduct a Comprehensive Impact Assessment (CIA) new?**

No. The requirement to undertake a CIA already exists within State Emergency Management (EM) Recovery Procedure 4. This CIA template completes this procedure.

### **2. What is the purpose of the CIA?**

The purpose of the CIA is to facilitate the transfer of responsibility for management of an emergency from the Controlling Agency to the impacted local government/s, once the situation is deemed suitably stable.

The information in the completed assessment should provide the impacted local government/s with a good understanding of the current circumstances arising from the emergency. This in turn should facilitate the local government/s to undertake management of the emergency and progress more smoothly with full recovery efforts, including aiding prioritisation of activities.

### **3. Is the CIA applicable to all-hazards?**

Yes.

### **4. Who is responsible for completing the CIA?**

The Controlling Agency for the emergency is responsible for coordinating completion of the CIA, in consultation with members of the Incident Support Group and the State Recovery Coordinator.

### **5. Who contributes information to the CIA?**

Many agencies and organisations may contribute information to the CIA, depending on the type of emergency and the type of impacts it creates. Agencies in the Incident Support Group are highly likely to be approached for information.

The Departments of Agriculture and Food, Child Protection and Family Services, Education, Fire and Emergency Services, Health and Parks and Wildlife, as well as agencies responsible for public utilities, Main Roads WA, Red Cross, WA Police and the affected local governments, are highly likely to contribute to most/all CIAs. Additional organisations will be approached as required.

A list of the agencies who have contributed to each CIA is found at Appendix A within the CIA document.

### **6. When is a comprehensive impact assessment undertaken?**

As a general rule, a CIA is to be completed for all Level 2 and 3 emergencies. However, a CIA is not required in circumstances where there are no significant impacts requiring recovery activity (this will be determined through the initial impact assessment and in consultation with the State Recovery Coordinator).

In line with State EM Recovery Procedure 4, a CIA will be completed prior to the cessation of the response phase (i.e. prior to the responsibility for management of the emergency being transferred from the Controlling Agency to the affected local government/s).

**7. Can a CIA be undertaken earlier in the emergency?**

Yes. While State EM Recovery Procedure 4 only requires a CIA to be completed prior to withdrawal of responding agencies, it is considered a useful tool to assist with early impact assessment, overall multi-agency coordination and record keeping. As such, Controlling Agencies may wish to start using it from commencement of the incident.

The CIA includes space to record date, time and version number of each CIA to assist with version control.

**8. When will the completed assessment be provided to the affected local government(s)?**

At a minimum, the local government will receive the completed CIA prior to the meeting where transfer of responsibility for management of the emergency is negotiated. Exactly when this will happen will depend on the circumstances around individual emergency events. However, it will not be provided much in advance, perhaps only a day or two, as the information contained within it will become out of date.

However, it is expected that the impacted local government/s will be involved in the emergency's management from early on through the Incident Support Group or Operational Area Support Group, as well as undertaking their own emergency response activities. As such, the information contained within the CIA should not be a surprise.

**9. What is the 'transfer of responsibility' meeting?**

At the point where the Controlling Agency considers it appropriate to transfer responsibility for management of the emergency to the affected local government/s, the Controlling Agency is to convene a meeting with the CEO/s of the affected local government/s and the State Recovery Coordinator. This is the 'transfer of responsibility' meeting.

**10. What will happen at the 'transfer of responsibility' meeting?**

At the 'transfer of responsibility' meeting, the completed CIA and the status of the emergency situation will be discussed. The appropriateness (or otherwise) of transferring responsibility for management of the emergency to the affected local government/s will be considered and agreed by all parties. This may include agreeing and documenting any additional activities to be undertaken by the Controlling Agency, or other organisations, in support of full recovery efforts.

**11. Why is the role of the State Recovery Coordinator at the 'transfer of responsibility' meeting?**

The State Recovery Coordinator is to be present at the 'transfer of responsibility' meeting. Their role is to help facilitate discussions between the Controlling Agency and the affected local government/s. This includes considering the appropriateness of transferring responsibility for management of the emergency to the local government/s, considering if the local government/s is adequately resourced to take on this role and negotiating the provision of State support for aspect of the recovery process, if required.

**12. Is the information in the CIA likely to change?**

Yes. By their nature, emergency situations and the response to them continue to evolve and change over time. It is acknowledged that the information within the CIA will represent one point in time and will be the best information available to agencies at that time, though may contain some inaccuracies or incomplete information due to the complexities in gathering some of the data.



### **13. What if information in the CIA is incorrect?**

As previously mentioned, it is acknowledged that the information within the CIA will represent one point in time and will be the best information available to agencies at that time, though may contain some inaccuracies or incomplete information. If the receiving local government/s feel there may be inaccuracies in the information provided, they are free to follow up with the appropriate data source for clarity.

The purpose of the CIA is to assist local governments with taking on management of the emergency; it is not to hold people to account.

### **14. How was the CIA developed?**

Different versions of the CIA have been available for at least the last two bushfire/cyclone seasons. This version of the CIA has been developed by the SEMC Secretariat. It has been informed by extensive stakeholder consultation and review of previous versions.

### **15. What are the NIAM indicators?**

The National Impact Assessment Model, or NIAM, indicators have been developed at the national level to assess the severity of an emergency event. This is to help standardise the way emergency events are considered across Australia and to facilitate negotiations with the Commonwealth around the provision of emergency relief funding.

The NIAM is still a theoretical model. Over the next two to three years, all Australian States and Territories are required to collect information using the NIAM indicators for all their emergency events, as part of a national project. In Western Australia, this project is being coordinated by the SEMC Secretariat.

The NIAM indicators have been incorporated into the CIA to facilitate their collection in WA. They can be found throughout *Appendix B – Detailed Impact Summary*, marked with an asterisk. When a CIA is undertaken, information must be provided for all NIAM indicators even if it is a NIL response.

As they are nationally agreed the NIAM indicators cannot be changed for the time being. However, feedback on their appropriateness is being gathered for feeding in to the national review process in the future.

### **16. How do I provide feedback on the CIA?**

The CIA will undergo a formal review process at the end of the 2016/17 bushfire and cyclone season with the aim of further refining and improving the template. As a part of this process, those who had practical experience of using the CIA will be contacted and asked for feedback.

In addition, comments and feedback can also be sent directly to the SEMC Policy and Legislation Team via [policy@semc.wa.gov.au](mailto:policy@semc.wa.gov.au) or by contacting Peta Turner, Principal Policy Officer, SEMC Secretariat, on (08) 9482 1710.