

SEMC COMMUNIQUE

AUGUST 2021 HIGHLIGHTS



The State Emergency Management Committee (SEMC) met on 13 August 2021.

The SEMC welcomed new member Mr Mike Rowe, Director General, Department of Communities.

The Chair, Dr Ron Edwards extended his appreciation to Ms Linda Savage, as the August meeting was her last as an independent SEMC member. Ms Savage has been a SEMC member for 3 years as both Chair and Sponsor of the Lessons Management Reference Group during this time. Dr Edwards thanked Ms Savage for her wonderful contribution to SEMC and for bringing the lessons management area to life.

The key items from the SEMC August 2021 meeting are summarised below.

Discussion Items and Outcomes

- The SEMC received presentations from the Australian Defence Force regarding their presence in Western Australia (WA) and the Department of Communities who updated the committee on their continuing work in the WA emergency welfare environment.
- State Recovery Controllers Ms Mel Pexton and Dr Ron Edwards presented to the committee on their observations and insights regarding TC Seroja and Wooroloo bushfire recovery.
- The SEMC acknowledged the emergency welfare support provided in response to the Wooroloo bushfires, TC Seroja and COVID-19 by Department of Communities. Throughout the multi-agency response, the Department of Communities provided emergency accommodation, food, clothing and personal requisites, financial assistance, personal supports and registration and reunification to those effected.
- The SEMC noted a successful trial of the Emergency NBN Satellite WiFi service at 20 locations and 108 mobile base station battery upgrades funded by the Strengthening Telecommunications Against Natural Disasters (STAND) Mobile Network Hardening Program (MNHP).
- The SEMC accepted the Fuel Management Activities Summary 2019-2020. The summary is annually compiled by the Department of Fire and Emergency Services (DFES) Office of Bushfire Risk Management (OBRM) and indicates the management of bushfire risk and fuel management activities undertaken across the State.
- The SEMC approved the closure of all remaining Ferguson report recommendations and opportunities for improvement.
- The SEMC endorsed the Community Disaster Resilience Strategy Discussion Paper for the purpose of stakeholder and community engagement to inform the development of a final strategy.

Next meeting of the SEMC

The next meeting of the SEMC will be held on Friday 1 October 2021. Agenda item submissions open on Friday 27 August 2021 and will close on Friday 10 September 2021.

SEMC HIGHLIGHTS

State Emergency Management Framework

- The SEMC approved two State Hazard Plans – Animal and Plant Biosecurity and Hostile Act. The Committee noted the Communication and Marketing Strategy for both plans.
- The SEMC approved changes to the incident level criteria descriptors and incident declaration process within the State Emergency Management Plan and Procedure. The amendments ensure the incident level descriptors are consistent across the suite of State Emergency Management Framework documents, and the criteria for each incident level are contemporary and fit for purpose.

A summary of all amendments made to the State Emergency Management Framework can be found on the SEMC website by viewing the [State Emergency Management Document Amendments and Review Schedule](#).

Consultation

The following emergency management related documents are scheduled for consultation in the coming period:

Currently consulting on:

- State Hazard Plan – Maritime Environmental Emergencies, consultation closes 11 September 2021.

To give feedback on the above plan [click this link](#), scroll to the relevant item and click ‘Get Involved’.

September/October:

- State Emergency Management Plan; Roles and Responsibilities
- State Emergency Management Response Procedure 20; Australian Government Physical Assistance/Defence Assistance to Civil Communities.

For further information on the State Emergency Management Framework consultations, please contact semc.policylegislation@dfes.wa.gov.au

GENERAL UPDATES

Subcommittee’s and Reference Groups

SEMC Subcommittee and Reference Groups proposed meeting dates for the upcoming period are:

Recovery and Community Engagement	8 October 2021
Lessons Management Reference Group	14 October 2021
Essential Services Network Reference Group	14 October 2021
Public Safety Communications Subcommittee	20 October 2021
Risk Subcommittee	21 October 2021
Response Capability Subcommittee	27 October 2021

Grant Updates

The National Disaster Risk Reduction (NDRR) Fund competitive grant round closed on 6 August. The second round for this grant opened on 20 August 2021. Further information is available on the [SEMC website Grants page](#).

SEMC Annual and Preparedness Report Capability Survey

The SEMC Annual and Preparedness Report Capability Survey (the capability survey) opened on Monday 12 April and closed on Wednesday 23 June. The survey was open for longer than usual this year to provide organisations impacted by the Wooroloo Bushfires and TC Seroja with additional time to respond.

Of 164 surveys sent out, 154 were completed and on time, giving an extraordinary response rate of 94 per cent. The DFES State Capability and Risk Team is currently analysing the survey data to inform the 2021 Emergency Preparedness Report for the Minister for Emergency Services.

The DFES State Capability and Risk Team will also be creating individual capability summary reports for Hazard Management Agencies (HMAs) and local governments, to be released later in 2021. These summary reports are a tool for the HMAs and local governments to review their Emergency Management capability and inform on areas of success and improvement. These areas include:

- Identifying strengths and gaps for further attention;
- Informing exercise planning;
- Supporting Local Emergency Management Committees and Local Governments in their emergency management planning activities;
- Contributing to business cases and rationales; and
- Assisting with education and awareness raising.

The DFES State Capability Team would like to extend a huge thank you to all our emergency management stakeholders who contributed their valuable information to the survey. Your time and input are greatly appreciated and together we will make WA a safer State.

For more information, please contact semc.capability@dfes.wa.gov.au.

2021 WA Emergency Management Conference

The Shire of Dardanup is hosting the 2021 WA Emergency Management Conference, a full-day event that offers insight, reflection, understanding and motivation over a wide range of cutting edge topics relevant to Emergency Management in WA. Funding assistance has been provided through the State Emergency Management Committee's AWARE Grants Program. The Conference will be held at Bunbury Regional Entertainment Centre on Wednesday 13 October 2021, which is International Day for Disaster Risk Reduction.



For more information and to register, [click here](#).

Australian Warnings System: Changes to bushfire warnings

WA is joining with other Australian states and territories to deliver nationally consistent emergency information through the Australian Warning System (AWS).

AWS is an easy-to-understand warning system to help you stay safe during an emergency, no matter where in Australia you are. The new framework is being introduced using a phased approach, starting with an update to the way bushfire warnings appear on [Emergency WA](#).

From late 2021, the bushfire warning colours and icons will change to align with the AWS standard. Bushfire *Advice* warnings will appear yellow and *Watch and Act* warnings will appear orange. Bushfire *Emergency Warnings* will remain red.



Over time, there will be more changes to emergency information across bushfire, cyclone, flood, storm and extreme heat as we continue to achieve national consistency. For further information and resources, contact the DFES Public Information Branch on statepublicinfo@dfes.wa.gov.au