

The Great Southern District Emergency Management Committee (DEMC) met on the 7th July 2016. The DEMC was provided a number of presentations and considered a number of items; this is a summary of key issues from the meeting.

Presentations

Department of Planning – Local Planning Scheme Regulations, State Planning Policy 3.7 Planning in Bushfire Prone Areas and Guidelines

The Department of Planning provided a presentation on recent changes to the *Planning and Development (Local Planning Schemes) Regulations 2015*, the Regulations are a major part of Western Australia's planning reform agenda, affecting arrangements for local planning strategies, schemes and amendments. A new State planning policy, *State Planning Policy 3.7 Planning in Bushfire Prone Areas* (SPP 3.7) was also gazetted with accompanying *Guidelines for Planning in Bushfire Prone Areas* (the Guidelines) on 7 December 2015.

SPP 3.7 and the Guidelines apply to all higher order strategic planning documents, strategic planning proposals, subdivision and development applications located in designated bushfire prone areas.

All planning proposals within designated bushfire prone areas are now required to undertake upfront bushfire risk assessment, identify bushfire hazards and how they can be mitigated using either the performance principles or acceptable solutions within the Guidelines.

Department of Defence – Joint Operations Support Staff WA

Department of Defence provided a presentation starting with an overview of Defence in WA, the roles and functions of the Joint Operations Support Staff (JOSS), JOSS WA liaison, what Defence can provide and examples of past support. This included the Defence Aid to the Civil Community (DACC) and Defence Force Assistance to the Civil Authority (DFACA).

Shire of Katanning AWARE Project

The Shire of Katanning obtained an AWARE Grant in 2015/2016 to conduct a workshop to examine "How can agencies work together to assist CaLD communities in the Shire of Katanning to understand and reduce the risk of emergencies?" The one day workshop was well attended and used a range of methods to understand the CaLD community and how government and non-government support groups interact with each other and emergency services to support each other. The workshop heard from a range of presenters, and group activities to identify current treatment options, prioritise current and future treatment options and mapped out a plan to continue the conversation.

New SEMC Website and State EM Policy

In May 2016 the SEMC released its [new website](#) and a new [State EM Policy](#) structure. The DEMC was presented with an overview of the State EM Policy and Governance Review Project which highlighted;

Legislation

Policy

Plan

Procedure

Guidelines

Glossary

- Divided into Prevention, Preparedness, Response and Recovery sections.
- **State EM Policy** – roles and responsibilities and EM principles and objectives.
- **State EM Plan** – NEW – outlines State arrangements for the EM of hazards and support functions and incorporates SEMP 4.1 and aspects of former Support Plans.
- **State EM Procedures** – step by step process.
- **State EM Guidelines** – proposes methods for activities.
- **Hazard Westplans** – statement of fact amendments incl. references to Policy and Plan.
- The current Hazard Westplans have been updated to reference appropriate sections within the State EM Policy and State EM Plan.
- Westplan – Freight Subsidy (Isolated Communities) has been revoked.
- A “Mapping Sheet” has been developed – this details where former policy statements and procedures are now located within the new documents – available on the SEMC website
- Use the Mapping Sheet to update operational plans and SOPs.
- LGs – file the Mapping Sheet in front of LEMA or, if reviewing their LEMA, refer to sections in State EM Policy and Plan and renamed/renumbered procedures.

The new [SEMC website](#) features a host of new features, of particular interest to the DEMC is the new Portal page for each DEMC. The website also contains a new [Knowledge Hub](#) where new hazard information and videos are available.



The State Emergency Management Committee (SEMC)

- The State Emergency Management Committee (SEMC) is Western Australia's peak emergency management body. The SEMC, supported by the State Government, aims to develop the best emergency management (EM) arrangements in Australia through:
- Coordinated leadership across community and government that matches the EM risk as closely as practicable
 - Building and maintaining an emergency management framework based on a risk management approach
 - Resourcing preparedness for emergencies to minimise their impact and accelerate recovery and
 - Providing advice to government on any matter in relation to EM
- The SEMC's key objectives include developing a comprehensive risk and capacity profile for Western Australia and identifying capability gaps through incident analysis. Read more on EM: [Capacity - impact](#)

Great Southern Risk Assessment: Results and Discussion

As part of the [State Risk Project](#), in 2015 the DEMC undertook a series of risk workshops to examine the risk from;

- animal and plant biosecurity
- bushfire
- earthquake
- flood
- marine transport emergency
- storm

During the risk assessment workshops, the impacts of these six hazards on five key impact areas (economy, public administration, people, environment, social setting) were assessed through 316 risk statements. Over the course of the workshops, 27 agencies were represented. The workshops followed the methodology and criteria outlined in the [WA Emergency Risk Management Guide 2015](#) and the National Emergency Risk Assessment Guidelines 2015 (NERAG).

The DEMC is planning to host a risk treatment workshop in September/October 2016 to commence work on developing risk treatment strategies for the identified risks.

Local Emergency Management

The DEMC noted the excellent work being done by LEMCs in the District. In particular the DEMC noted the LEMA for six LEMCs. The six LEMA noted at this DEMC and the five sets noted at the previous DEMC have been sent to SEMC for noting at the August SEMC meeting.

The DEMC considered the outcomes from a number of LEMC exercises after they had submitted their post exercise reports. The Committee recognised some of the challenges faced by LEMCs in delivering exercises and discussed a range of strategies it will be putting into action to support LEMCs.

DEMC Annual Report and Business Plans

The DEMC noted the submission of its Annual Report to SEMC and the completion of the 2015-2016 Business Plan. The Committee further considered a new Business Plan to take it to 2018. The new Business Plan aligns to the SEMC Strategic Plan, particularly by using the Risk, Capability and Impact pillars to drive its business into the future.

AWARE Grants

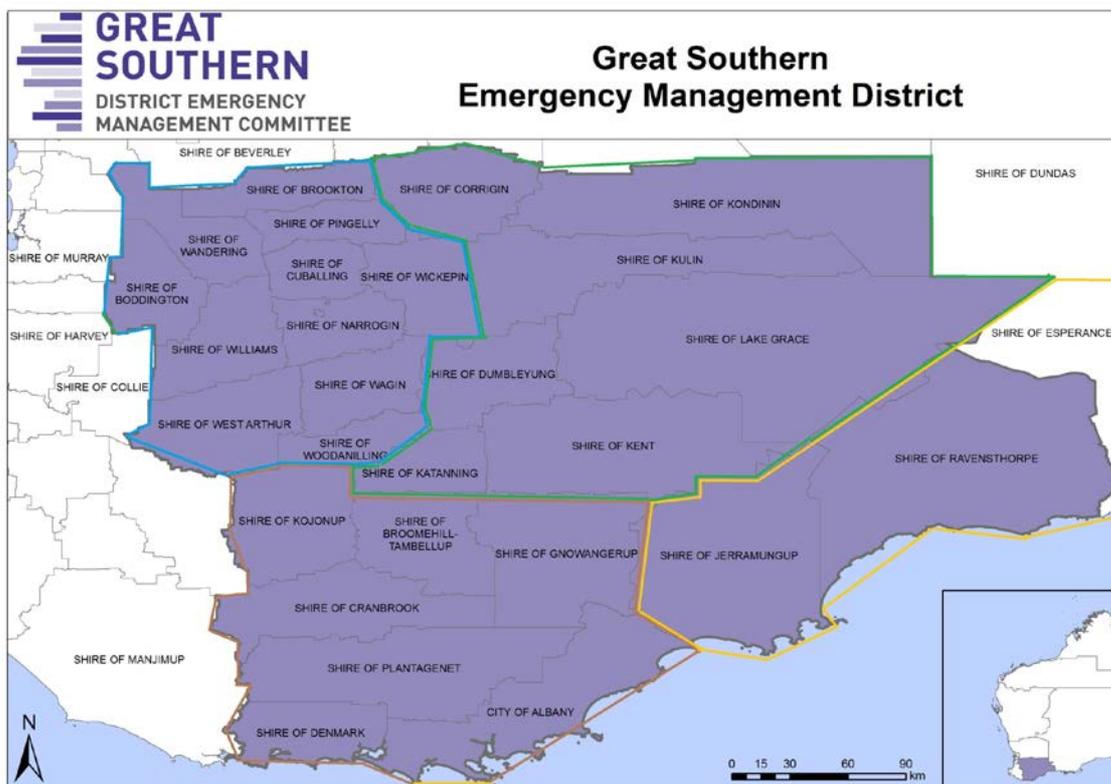
The [All West Australians Reducing Emergencies Grant](#) aims to enhance Western Australia's emergency management arrangements by building emergency management capacity and knowledge at both the local and district level.

This year three successful submissions were made by local governments. These were;

- City of Albany – Building Local Community Awareness and Resilience
- City of Albany – Recovery Exercise and Workshop
- Shire of Plantagenet – Fire – Know Your Risks, Know Your Brigade Campaign

Emergency Management Clusters

For some time the DEMC has been considering a range of strategies it can employ to more effectively support local government and local emergency management committees. The concept of the clusters is to provide development and communication opportunities for local government and LEMs and in particular assist with the rollout of programs such as the Local Risk Project. The DEMC identified exercises, MOU's and agency redundancy capability as subjects for the first round of workshops.



District Emergency Management Exercise

Exercises are an essential component of preparedness and should be used to enhance capability and contribute to continuous improvement.¹

The [Major Incident Review of the Esperance District Fires](#) (March 2016) noted;

The district emergency management arrangements enabled a broader set of agencies to plan for the response, although differences in agency boundaries constrained this to some extent

However, one breakdown in this broader level of regional inter-agency coordination was identified. There are differences in the boundaries of emergency management response and support agencies, which are different again from the emergency management district boundaries. Esperance is in the Goldfields-Esperance emergency management district. This meant that the Esperance DEMC agencies were not included in the DEMC briefings that took place in Albany on 16 and 17 November, although all affected Shire CEOs in the DFES Great Southern region were briefed by the regional office. This may have resulted in a less coordinated response across the whole of the region, with Esperance disconnected from the actions being taken at a regional level by the DEMC.

As a result the Goldfields-Esperance DEMC has invited the Great Southern DEMC to take part in a joint exercise to improve cross boundary emergency coordination arrangements between agencies in major emergencies and to explore, verify and bold inter-agency and inter-EM District relationships. The DEMCs have agreed on the aim and objectives for the exercise which is now moving into the development phase. The exercise is aimed to be delivered in October ahead of the next fire season.

¹ Handbook 3, Managing Exercises, Australian Emergency Management Institute