

State and Regional Emergency Management Committees

Part 5: Emergency Management Manual Victoria

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5.1 Introduction

This part of the manual sets out Victoria's committee structure for emergency management governance and planning at state and regional levels. Guidelines for municipal emergency management planning are in Part 6 of this Manual.

5.2 Committees in Emergency Management

The system for governance in emergency management is based on networked arrangements across a wide range of agencies accompanied by an obligation to participate. Committees are a key element in the emergency management governance arrangements. The other main governance element is the implementation of statutory roles assigned to agencies or positions, such as the Emergency Management Commissioner. These roles are detailed in Part 7 of this Manual.

The committee structure at the top level is designed to support the development and implementation of whole of government emergency management policy and strategy. It streamlines decision-making and creates clear lines of accountability.

In addition, planning at all levels is undertaken through committees to ensure the contributions of all relevant parties and to support robust partnerships and networks that will operate during emergencies. The planning system operates at the state, regional, municipal and local levels and across the components of emergency management, mitigation, response and recovery.

Figure 5.1 below shows the principal emergency management governance, planning and advisory committees in Victoria at state, regional and municipal levels.

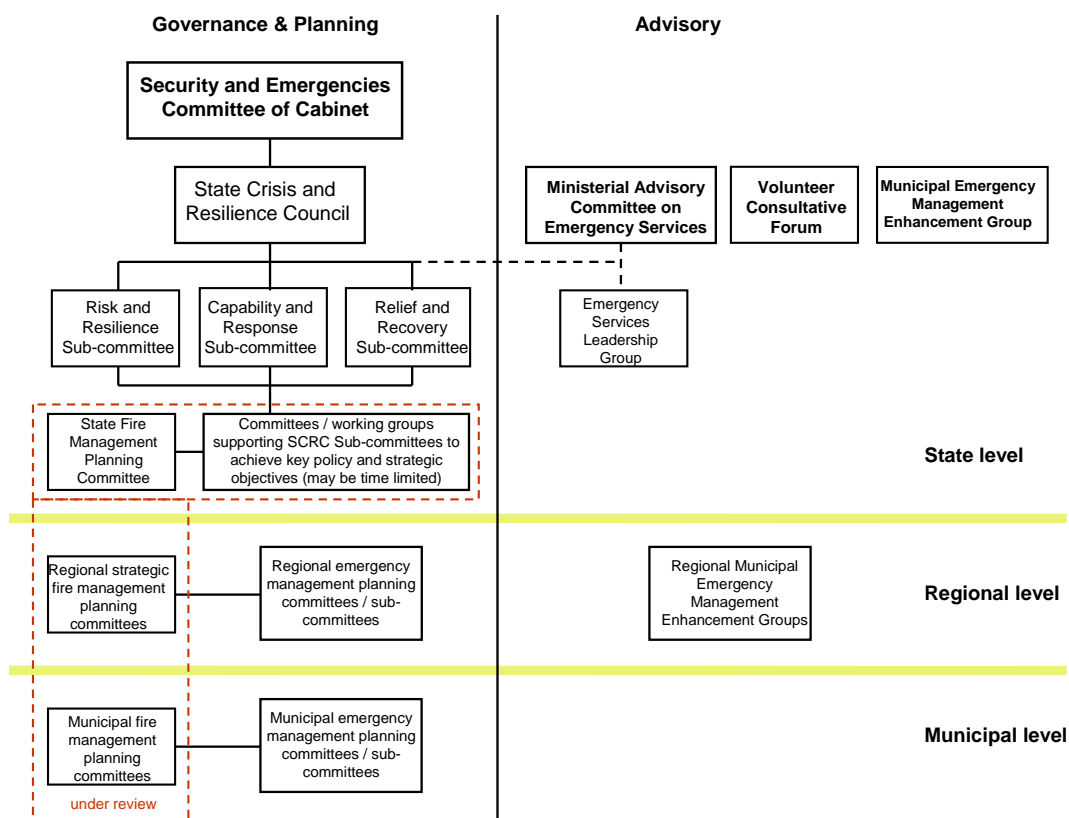


Figure 5.1 Principal Emergency Management Governance, Planning and Advisory Committees

5.3 State Crisis and Resilience Council

The State Crisis and Resilience Council (SCRC) is Victoria’s peak body to develop and coordinate policy and strategy across the emergency management spectrum and to oversee its implementation.

The SCRC is required to develop a three-year rolling Strategic Action Plan (SAP) with a medium to long-term outlook for emergency management reform. It identifies priority areas for action and specific implementation plans to be undertaken within agreed timeframes.

The SCRC oversees the work of its standing sub-committees (Risk and Resilience, Capability and Response, and Relief and Recovery) and the implementation of the Strategic Action Plan

The membership of the SCRC includes:

- The Secretaries of each Government Department
- The Chief Commissioner of Police
- The Chief Executive of Emergency Management Victoria
- The Emergency Management Commissioner
- The Inspector General for Emergency Management (observer)
- The Chief Executive Officer of the Municipal Association of Victoria (representative of local government).

5.4 SCRC Sub-Committees

The SCRC is supported by three sub-committees; Risk and Resilience, Capability and Response, and Relief and Recovery and the Emergency Services Leadership Group.

The SCRC and its sub-committees ensure integration and coherence across the sector and enable the Government to deliver its broader emergency management reform agenda.

Risk and Resilience Sub-Committee

The Risk and Resilience Sub-committee is the peak advisory body to SCRC on emergency management matters relating to risk and resilience, and shares responsibility for ensuring the delivery of the emergency management SAP.

A key role of the Risk and Resilience Sub-committee is to oversee the implementation of the State Risk and Mitigation arrangements.

Capability and Response Sub-Committee

The Capability and Response Sub-committee is the peak advisory body to SCRC on emergency management matters relating to capability and response, and shares responsibility for ensuring the delivery of the emergency management SAP.

A key role of the Capability and Response Sub-committee is to oversee the implementation of the State Emergency Response Plan.

Relief and Recovery Sub-Committee

The Relief and Recovery Sub-committee is the peak advisory body to SCRC on emergency management matters relating to recovery, and shares responsibility for ensuring the delivery of the emergency management SAP.

A key role of the Relief and Recovery Sub-committee is to oversee the implementation of the State Emergency Relief and Recovery Plan.

Emergency Services Leadership Group

The Emergency Services Leadership Group (ESLG) contributes to the development of the emergency management SAP, and ensures delivery of relevant elements to achieve the most effective and efficient outcome for the State. The group reports to the SCRC.

The ESLG has a particular focus:

- training
- procurement
- Information and communications technology
- workforce systems and management
- major infrastructure

The role of ESLG is to:

- endorse project plans developed by the agency assigned responsibility for delivery under the Strategic Action Plan
- oversee such projects or functions (or establish specific purpose project control boards to manage projects and report to it) and remove 'blockages', and
- advise the Ministerial Advisory Committee on Emergency Services (MACES) on implementation progress

In partnership with MACES, promote a sector culture of community focus, interoperability and public value, and embed Strategic Action Plan reform outcomes within member organisations.

5.5 Committees/Working Groups Supporting SCRC Sub-Committees

Functional committees/working groups provide advice, plans and guidance to support SCRC sub-committees. Such committees/working groups are usually established for a specific purpose or task, at the discretion of the relevant SCRC sub-committee.

SCRC sub-committees apply the following criteria when creating a new committee/working group:

- it will provide strategic advice on capability and response, risk and resilience or recovery emergency management reform priorities, or
- it will develop whole of government emergency management capability and response, risk and resilience or recovery policy advice, or
- it will directly contribute to the implementation of capability and response, risk and resilience or recovery policy and strategy, or
- it will meet a legislated emergency management obligation.

Current Committees/Working Groups

The committees/working groups currently supporting SCRC sub-committees are under review. Following this review, relevant details will be published in this section.

State Fire Management Planning Committee

The State Fire Management Planning Committee will continue to manage the implementation of the Integrated Fire Management Planning framework. This committee now reports to the Risk and Resilience Sub-committee.

5.6 State Level Advisory Committees

Ministerial Advisory Committee on Emergency Services

The Ministerial Advisory Committee on Emergency Services (MACES) oversees and monitors the implementation of relevant segments of the SCRC Strategic Action Plan by the emergency services agencies and inform the Minister for Police and Emergency Services on the progress of implementation.

Key roles of MACES include:

- providing high level strategic advice to Government to support coordinated Government investment in the emergency services
- promoting a sector culture of community focus, interoperability and public value.

Volunteer Consultative Forum

The Volunteer Consultative Forum (VCF) provides a forum for direct volunteer input and advice to the Minister on a range of issues affecting Victoria's emergency management volunteers, including:

- the capacity of volunteers to deliver emergency management services in Victoria
- strengthening the culture of volunteerism in Victoria and building a shared understanding of, and respect for, the critical role that volunteers play in emergency management.

Municipal Emergency Management Enhancement Group

The Municipal Emergency Management Enhancement Group (MEMEG) provides support for local government emergency management practitioners.

Key roles of MEMEG include:

- Raising awareness of local government roles, capabilities and capacities in municipal emergency management across all relevant agencies
- Promoting good practice in municipal emergency management.

5.7 Regional Emergency Management Planning

Planning for both response and recovery at the regional level is required because many emergencies traverse municipal boundaries, and because many services provided by State government agencies are administered and delivered at a regional level. Both response planning and recovery planning are aligned to the State's geographic regions as detailed in Part 8, Appendix 8 of this Manual.

Regional plans must address inter-agency issues such as coordination of activities and programs. Regional plans may also address in detail, if considered appropriate, the provision of particular services and programs, and will also include details of contact arrangements and resource availability. Regional planning should identify resources and services:

- which can be made available from local resources, in accordance with municipal plans; and
- which must be obtained from elsewhere.

The practice for emergency management planning at regional level has been to convene separate planning committees for response and recovery (as detailed below). A number of regions have recently adopted an integrated approach to emergency management planning, combining the response and recovery planning committees into a single regional emergency management planning committee (REMPC). This section is currently under revision to incorporate detailed information regarding REMPCs and regional emergency management planning.

Regional Emergency Response Planning Committee

Terms of Reference

The role of each regional emergency response planning committee is to:

- Ensure that a regional emergency response plan is prepared, maintained and adopted;
- Ensure that all relevant control and support agencies are consulted as the plan is developed and maintained;
- Advise the Emergency Management Commissioner regarding the region's response capability;
- Ensure that planning and co-ordination arrangements are regularly exercised and reviewed to ensure the effectiveness of the regional response plan;
- Review and comment on municipal emergency management plans as part of the statutory audit program conducted by the Director of Operations, Victoria State Emergency Service.
- Participate in the process for the approval and audit of Road Rescue Units, determination of service area boundaries and the resolution of disputes and grievances under the Victorian Road Rescue Arrangements.

Membership

Agencies represented include the following:

- Communications provider
- Department of Human Services
- Fire Services
- Medical Services
- Regional emergency response coordinator (Chair)
- VicRoads
- Victoria Police
- Victoria State Emergency Service
- Water Authorities

Meeting Frequency

Each committee should meet at least twice yearly and following debriefs of major incidents. Minutes of meetings are forwarded to the State Emergency Response Co-ordinator.

Preparation of Regional Emergency Response Plans

Emergency response commences at the local or municipal level, and, if necessary, advances to regional and state levels. It is vital that regional emergency response plans be frequently exercised, amended and re-tested to ensure effective response to emergencies.

The activities of the designated control and support agencies are not necessarily concurrent, nor of equal emphasis throughout an emergency. These activities must be effectively co-ordinated irrespective of the degree of input of the various agencies. The responsibility for co-ordination will always rest with the emergency response co-ordinator (with the exception of emergencies involving Defence Force aircraft or vessels).

The broad objectives of regional emergency response plans are to:

- identify control and support agencies for different types of emergencies;
- coordinate arrangements for the utilisation of regional resources in support of the emergency response plans of specialist agencies;
- identify support available from adjoining regions;
- identify support available to adjoining regions.

Each regional plan should be specifically tailored to the individual needs of the region, and should address the subjects below.

Emergency Risk Assessment

This section of the plan should include a brief description of the risks to the community. History and existing municipal risk assessments conducted by Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committees will often indicate them. Typical headings are:

- Bushfires
- Floods
- Windstorms

- Agriculture (exotic animal diseases, plagues)
- Transportation
- Public utility
- Special: e.g. hospitals, industrial complexes.

Agency Roles

The roles of each agency should be clearly identified based on agency role statements in Part 7, State plans and assurances that each agency has the capacity to fulfil roles within the region.

Arrangements

The description of the regional emergency response arrangements should include a chart that clearly identifies control agencies for different emergencies and their areas of operation. Information in the plan should also include details of telephone numbers and contact points.

Communications Arrangements

Reliable communications are essential, and must be clearly described in the plan. Information should include:

- primary and alternative means of communications to co-ordinate the response to the emergency;
- primary and alternative means of communication for command and control of field operations. (Many municipal councils, businesses and public authorities have radio communications that may be utilised in emergencies.);
- means of communications with adjoining municipal councils and regional headquarters.

Information Arrangements

To enable information to be disseminated, plans should give details of centres where the media and public can obtain official information. It should be made clear who is authorised to release information.

Post Emergency De-briefing

Regional plans should contain provisions for a de-briefing conference convened by the regional co-ordinator as soon as practicable after the emergency is contained. All agencies that participated in the emergency response should be represented to enable assessment of the adequacy of the response and the regional plan, and to improve future responses.

Special Information

Plans should include any special information relevant to the region, such as:

- reference to any other specific plans, e.g. industrial complexes, hospitals, airports;
- any special instructions, e.g. special procedures to be followed for a specific threat like a flood on a given stream.

Regional Emergency Recovery Planning Committee

Terms of Reference

The role of each regional emergency recovery planning committee is to:

- develop and maintain a regional recovery plan;
- plan for the establishment and support of community recovery committees when required;
- provide a regional forum to ensure that the plans of individual agencies complement each other;
- monitor and review recovery operations and the effectiveness of the regional recovery plan;
- make recommendations to the State Emergency Recovery Planning Committee, through the Department of Human Services, on matters of recovery policy and planning;
- review and comment on municipal emergency management plans as part of the statutory audit program conducted by the Director of Operations, Victoria State Emergency Service.

Membership

Regional emergency recovery planning committees should include representatives of:

- Department of Human Services (Chair)
- Victoria State Emergency Service;
- Government, private and voluntary agencies with a significant recovery role;
- Municipal councils in the region;
- Representatives of appropriate regional response planning committees.

Meeting Frequency

Regional emergency recovery planning committees should meet at least twice a year.

Preparation of Regional Emergency Recovery Plans

The format and content of each regional emergency recovery plan depends on local conditions, and is decided by the regional recovery planning committee. The plan should take account of regional emergency response plans, municipal emergency management plans and the plans of individual agencies. Relevant community groups should be involved in the plan's preparation, testing and review.

The Department of Human Services provides detailed guidance on the preparation of regional emergency recovery plans.

Community Recovery Committees

The plan should cover the establishment and purpose of community recovery committees, including their role, composition and support. (Refer to Part 6 – Guidelines for Municipal Emergency Management Planning.)

Regional Strategic Fire Management Planning Committee

The role of the Committee is to plan for fire management, considering preparation, prevention, response and recovery and the use of fire as a tool across boundaries, including legal, land tenure and use, administrative and municipal borders. The Committee provides a critical communication link between Municipal and State Fire Management Planning Committees.

The functions of the Committee will satisfy the obligations for regional fire prevention committees specified in Section 53 of the *Country Fire Authority Act 1958*.

Terms of Reference

In addition to its role in facilitating fire management planning within the region, the Committee will have the responsibility for a number of activities. These activities are listed below:

- Produce the integrated Regional Strategic Fire Management Plan.
- Identify and promote the priorities and possible treatments for fire risk within the region.
- Provide a regional forum to build and sustain organisational partnerships, generate a common understanding and shared purpose with regard to fire management and ensure that the plans of individual agencies are linked and complement each other.
- Oversee municipal fire management planning within the region.
- Monitor and review the implementation of fire management plans and treatments within each of the municipal districts within the region.
- To ensure risk environments that cross regional boundaries are treated in a seamless manner with regard to risk and treatments.
- Advocate and monitor to ensure that a consistent community engagement process is in place during planning at the regional and municipal level.
- Advocate to the State Fire Management Planning Committee for municipal and regional fire management needs.
- Report to the State Fire Management Planning Committee on fire planning issues affecting that region.
- Provide advice and support to municipal fire management planning.

The Committee will provide fire management planning advice to the Regional Emergency Response and Regional Recovery Committees.

Membership

- Local municipal councils
- Country Fire Authority
- Department of Sustainability and Environment
- Metropolitan Fire and Emergency Services Board (for the metropolitan fire district only)

- Department of Human Services
- Department of Primary Industry
- Parks Victoria
- Rail Authority/ies
- Utilities
- VicRoads
- Victoria Police
- Victoria State Emergency Service
- Other members required.

Structure

The Committee will be chaired by a member of the committee elected by the Committee.

The organisations listed above will provide representation at the appropriate level to enable decisions and commitment to be made on behalf of their organisations. The Committee may appoint new members as required.

Report

The Chair on behalf of the Regional Strategic Fire Management Planning Committee will report quarterly to the State Fire Management Planning Committee which will in turn report relevant information to the Chair.

Support

Executive support to the Committee will be provided by the State Fire Management Planning Support Team and the Chair will arrange administrative support.

A number of the activities outlined in the Role of the Committee will be coordinated by the State Fire Management Planning Support Team for endorsement by the Committee.

Schedule of Meetings:

The Committee will meet at least once every quarter unless otherwise required.

Regional Municipal Emergency Management Enhancement Groups

Terms of Reference

The purpose of regional municipal enhancement groups is to:

- promote, facilitate and advocate for continuous improvement in the municipal emergency management sector
- provide a link between regional local government emergency management practitioners and MEMEG
- provide opportunities for discussion, development and information sharing on emergency management between/within local government
- advocate on behalf of local government in the area of emergency management
- provide a forum for emergency management agencies to meet with local government practitioners
- form action groups as required to manage identified issues

Membership

Membership is open to all local government emergency management practitioners. This includes:

- Municipal Emergency Managers (or delegate)
- Municipal Emergency Resources Officers (or delegate)
- Municipal Emergency Recovery Managers (or delegate)
- Municipal Fire Prevention Officers (or delegate)
- Observers, guests and visitors are welcome and encouraged to attend meetings.

Meeting Frequency

Minimum meeting frequency is twice per year.

Chair

The Chair is appointed by consensus of the members at the first meeting of the year biennially (by ballot if more than one nomination is received).