DECEMBER 2012

VICTORIAN EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT REFORM

WHITE PAPER

State Government Victoria

Published by the
Victorian Government,
Melbourne, December 2012

© State of Victoria 2012

This publication is copyright. No part may be reproduced in any process except in accordance with the provisions of the *Copyright Act 1968*.

Authorised by the Victorian Government Melbourne

Printing managed by Finsbury Green

For more information visit **dpc.vic.gov.au**

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

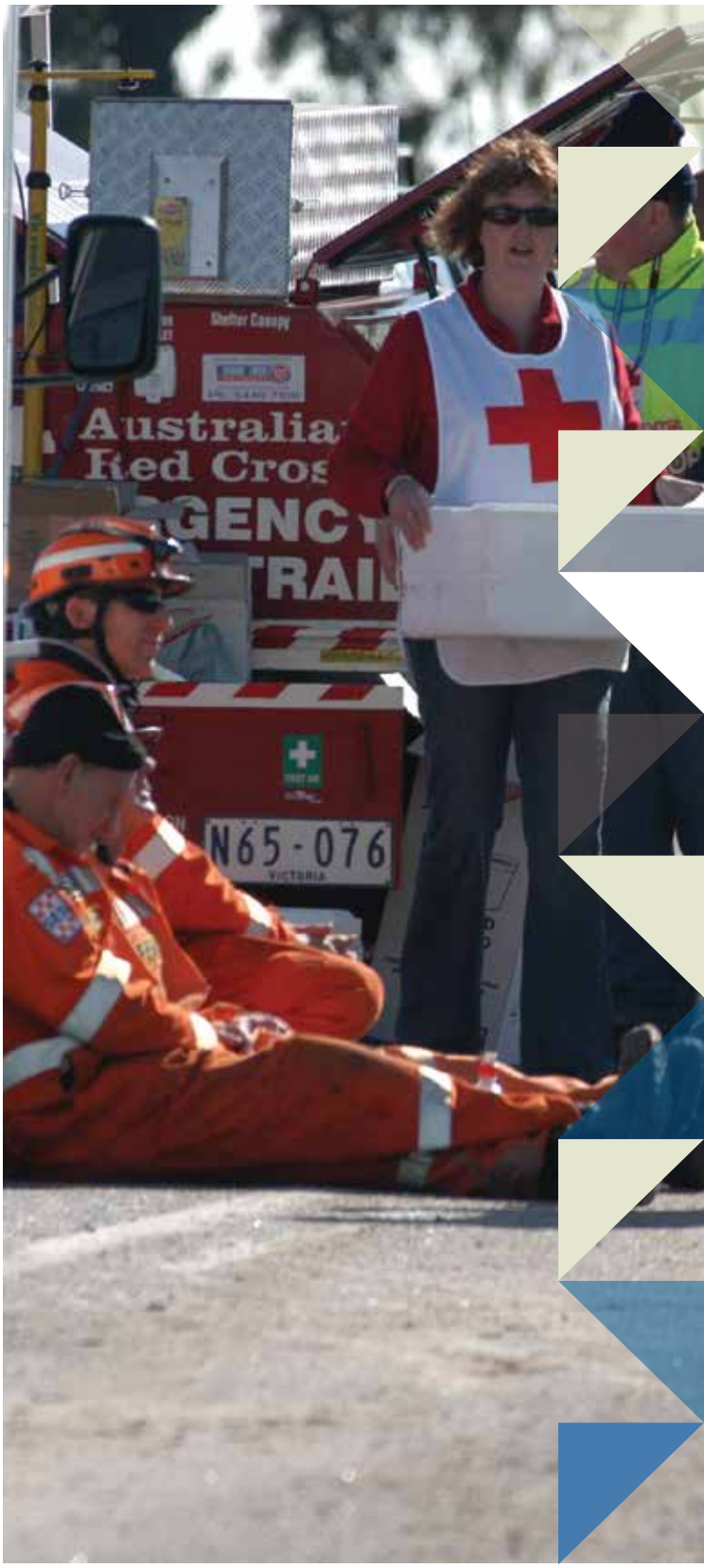
The Government released its emergency management Green Paper entitled Towards a More Disaster Resilient and Safer Victoria in September 2011, seeking submissions from all interested parties.

Ninety-three submissions were received from various organisations, agencies and individuals. See Appendix for a full list of submissions. Copies of submissions are available from www.dpc.vic.gov.au.

These submissions were invaluable in developing this White Paper, especially because they provided 'on the ground' experiences of communities and agencies before, during and after emergencies.

The Department of Justice (DOJ) led the development process via a series of round tables and consultations involving government departments, emergency services organisations, local government and representative bodies. These whole of government roundtables considered a range of issues including governance, control and interoperability, and relief and recovery. Their outcomes informed the directions and actions set out in this paper. Draft reform proposals were then assessed through workshops facilitated by KPMG.

All stakeholders and those involved in the process are thanked for their positive contributions to what will be the next generation of emergency management reform for Victoria.



CONTENTS

Acknowledgments iii

Introduction 1

Vision, Principles and Strategic Priorities 3

Chapter 1 – Community 4

Building Community Resilience and Community Safety 4

- Engaging the community 4
- Community-based planning to mitigate hazards 6
- Community awareness and education 7
- Making information available during emergencies 7
- Crisis management planning 9
- Managing risks to critical infrastructure 11
- Coordinating relief and recovery in communities 13
- Role for local government 15

Chapter 2 – Collaboration 16

Streamlining Governance Arrangements 16

- Renaming the portfolio 17
- New committee structure 17
- State Crisis and Resilience Council 18
- Sub-committees 19
- Emergency Management Victoria 21
- Chief Executive of Emergency Management Victoria 22
- Emergency Management Commissioner 22

Establishing Clear and Effective Response and Control Arrangements 23

State Level Control Arrangements for Major Emergencies 24

- Control of the response to natural hazard emergencies 24
- Control of the response to other emergencies 24
- Ensuring control is effectively established 24
- Consequence management 24
- Information and warnings 25

Regional and Municipal Level Control Arrangements 25

Performance Monitoring, Assurance and Continuous Improvement 27

- Inspector General for Emergency Management 27

Chapter 3 – Capability **28**
Strengthening Emergency Management Planning Processes 28
New emergency management planning arrangements 28
Key features 29
Building Capacity and Capability across the Sector 32
Interoperability 32
Volunteers 35
Additional surge capacity 37
Multi-agency and competency based training 37
Communications and information 38
Equipment and procurement 40
Disaster impact assessment system 40
Scalable coordination and leadership model 41
Conclusion **42**
Acronyms **43**
Appendix **44**

INTRODUCTION

Victoria has suffered a number of natural disasters and emergencies over recent years. Victoria's framework for emergency management has not been comprehensively amended since the 1983 Ash Wednesday fires. Given the changes in the community since then, including demographics and technology, it is timely that we make changes to this framework in order to improve protections for Victorians.

Governments and agencies must work together more cooperatively to enable flexible and networked responses that better support the community and place greater emphasis on mitigating hazards and building community resilience.

Victoria's current emergency management arrangements are set out in the EM Act, supported by the Emergency Management Manual Victoria (EMMV). These documents set out the all-hazards all-agencies approach that underpins current arrangements. The approach assumes all emergencies create similar problems and usually require similar response measures (such as early warning, evacuation, provision of medical services and community recovery), although it does acknowledge many emergencies need specific preparation, response, relief and recovery measures, and that all agencies have emergency management roles.

Nonetheless, some current emergency management structures and arrangements are ineffective. This was made clear in the final reports of the 2009 Victorian Bushfires Royal Commission (VBRC) and the Review of the 2010-11 Flood Warnings and Response (the Floods Review). This does not detract from the extraordinary efforts of the thousands of paid staff and volunteers on the ground who have responded during these emergencies, protecting the Victorian public and helping people restore their lives.

A number of reforms have been implemented since the 2009 bushfires and the 2010-11 and 2012 floods that have improved emergency management in Victoria. Key changes to fire management in Victoria since February 2009 are summarised in the Bushfires Royal Commission Implementation Monitor (BRCIM) Final Report.[1] They include establishing the Fire Services Commissioner, developing and implementing the Fire Services Reform Action Plan, improving state command and control arrangements, and legislative amendments that enable greater interoperability.

The flood planning and response information available to agencies and communities has been improved. For example, the Flood Warning Repair and Improvement initiative is increasing the number of flood monitoring gauges, expanding the coverage of flood mapping and improving access to flood information through a web based technology platform.

Reforms proposed in this paper will build on this work, further improve Victoria's emergency management arrangements and directly address, or provide the mechanism to respond to, the recommendations of the Floods Review.

1 Bushfires Royal Commission Implementation Monitor, Final Report, July 2012 www.bushfiresmonitor.vic.gov.au

Other proposed measures are associated with the current implementation of the Fire Services Reform Action Plan, information obtained through public consultation and submissions received in response to the Green Paper, Towards a More Disaster Resilient and Safer Victoria, released in September 2011.

93 submissions were received from individuals and organisations in response to the Green Paper. The submissions reflected the diversity of views that exist across the sector and in the community, however, there were significant points of agreement including support for:

- a simplified system, rationalising committees and improving their effectiveness
- moving towards a genuine all-hazards all-agencies approach
- updating emergency management legislation to remove redundant and outdated provisions
- recognising the importance of local government
- common training and operating platforms to ensure better delivery systems for emergency services
- initiatives to retain and grow the volunteer sector
- greater community involvement in emergency management, and
- increasing community resilience and empowerment.

Underpinning these reforms is a new understanding of shared responsibility. Individuals, communities, emergency services organisations, business, industry and government all have a role to play.

The new governance arrangements outlined in this White Paper are designed to achieve this collaborative approach and to clarify respective emergency management responsibilities. The new holistic arrangements recognise that while not all emergencies are controllable, the response to them should be.

The understated success of daily operations in saving lives and protecting property is acknowledged. These arrangements work well (such as planning, response and recovery relating to small scale or routine emergencies, or the provision of emergency health services, which comprise most emergency operations) and are therefore not addressed in this paper.

Vision, Principles and Strategic Priorities

The vision for effective emergency management is supported by three key principles on community, collaboration and capability. The paper identifies five strategic priorities and a suite of associated actions to deliver reform.

VISION

A sustainable and efficient emergency management system that minimises the likelihood and consequences of disasters and emergencies on the Victorian community

PRINCIPLES

Community

Emergency management founded on community participation, resilience and shared responsibility

Collaboration

Efficient governance arrangements that clarify roles and responsibilities, embed cooperation across agencies, and ensure emergency management reform is coordinated across the sector

Capability

An all-hazards all-agencies approach built on networked arrangements, greater interoperability and a stronger emphasis on risk mitigation

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Building community resilience and community safety

Streamlining governance arrangements

Establishing clear and effective response and control arrangements

Strengthening emergency management planning processes

Building capacity and capability of the emergency management sector

CHAPTER 1 – COMMUNITY

Emergency management founded on community participation, resilience and shared responsibility.

Building Community Resilience and Community Safety

Victoria's emergency management arrangements operate within a national context that incorporates the National Strategy for Disaster Resilience (NSDR).

The NSDR considers disaster resilience the collective responsibility of all social sectors.[2] The strategy makes it clear that every sector must do more, and that this will involve sustained behavioural change in how communities operate, and how governments and emergency service organisations work with them.

The conventional 'top down' approach to emergency management is changing. Governments in Australia and around the world now recognise the importance of local involvement in emergency management, particularly in planning and mitigation.

Local knowledge on people, history, risks, vulnerability, operational requirements, infrastructure and services significantly enhances emergency preparation, response and recovery.

Building community resilience requires collective action. Individuals must determine how to help themselves and each other in ways that best suit their circumstances. Governments can help greatly in bringing communities together. Support requirements will inevitably vary between communities. Government, emergency services organisations, essential services, local businesses and not-for-profit organisations must be ready to work with each community according to its needs.

Communities' strengths and vulnerabilities change over time. They must therefore be able to adapt so that they can maintain resilience. To do this, communities need the skills to access all available resources when necessary. A disaster-resilient community has the inherent capacity to deal with any shock, no matter how well-anticipated or surprising.

Engaging the community

Community resilience is established by ensuring people in that community are fully engaged in the resilience-building process and that the process is led from within the community. It is unlikely that everyone in the community will choose to be involved. The challenge is to understand the unique features of a community, determine who to work with, and then determine an approach that is appropriate to lead and develop effective engagement.

Australian jurisdictions are currently working to formulate a national framework for community engagement in the emergency management context.

Once endorsed, the community engagement framework will be a nationally-agreed document to support NSDR implementation. It will inform a common approach to community engagement activities across the emergency management sector in Australia. The framework is complemented by a participation model based on the International Association for Public Participation's (IAP2) Public Participation Spectrum.[3]

To build community resilience an enabling role is proposed that is informed by the draft engagement framework and the NSDR. Expert technical knowledge and resources will be provided to support community processes, acknowledging that it is the community's role to agree on its risks and determine an action plan.

2 The NSDR was endorsed by COAG on 13 February 2011 and can be found at www.em.gov.au/Publications/Program%20publications/Pages/NationalStrategyforDisasterResilience.aspx

3 International Association for Public Participation Australasia, IAP2 Public Participation Spectrum, found at www.iap2.org.au

A key aspect of the strategy will be supporting opportunities for peer to peer learning, recognising that many communities already have networks or methods in place to build disaster resilience. In this respect, the energy and enthusiasm that exists in many individuals and communities will be actively endorsed and good practice highlighted to motivate others.

For example, East Gippsland Shire Council has developed a Local Incident Management Planning model whereby council and emergency services organisations support communities to produce local emergency management plans. A Local Incident Management Planning document is designed to be a simple document that guides people on where to go, what to take and what to expect if an incident affects them.

Local Incident Management Planning documents are issued to all households and displayed in all lodgings within a community.

While there is no single path to developing community resilience, there are essential principles and approaches. These include recognising that communities are inherently resilient, have many strengths and capabilities, and can be trusted to know what they need and how to meet that need.

Measuring progress toward resilience is challenging, with relevant information often difficult to obtain or assess. Work will be undertaken with communities to develop an approach for evaluating programs and initiatives designed to build resilience.

Action

1. a) Develop and enshrine principles for disaster resilience practice in emergency management legislation and standards for emergency management

   b) Promote a framework to support, encourage and empower local initiatives to enhance resilience and guide agencies and local government in a consistent best practice approach to delivering community awareness, education and engagement activities, and

   c) Work with communities to develop an approach for evaluating programs and initiatives designed to build resilience.

Community-based planning to mitigate hazards

Community resilience can be improved by using planning approaches that consider likely risk factors and vulnerabilities, and identify how to mitigate against those risks.

Land use planning policy must fully account for a location's risk profile to properly determine the nature and extent of new developments. Current policy does not properly address established locations where the risk profile may have changed over time. In these locations, local communities must be appropriately involved and empowered in emergency planning processes.

Under the NSDR, a national review of land use planning and building codes is considering ways to enhance disaster resilience in the built environment. The review accepts that communities can be made safer and more resilient if risk is understood and used in planning and building decisions. Strategies will continue to be developed to make sure land use planning and other regulatory regimes consider community safety.

The Floods Review highlighted the importance of involving local communities in the planning process and using local plans to inform local government, regional and state plans. Involving communities in local planning has been positive and with the guidance of an all-hazards all-agencies framework, will be more consistent. In line with the Floods Review recommendation, communities will be supported to develop Community Resilience Committees and Plans that engage all relevant agencies.[4] This is discussed further as part of the new emergency management planning arrangements outlined in Chapter 3.

Past experience implementing community-led planning processes has confirmed:

- the process of developing a plan is at least as valuable as the resulting document
- genuine community ownership of local plans is essential to their effective use
- a suite of tools is useful for community groups to encourage involvement
- locally-informed project officers would help development
- development must be community-led and supported by local emergency services organisations
- community planning processes and outcomes will vary in detail, timeframe, focus and product according to the characteristics of each locality, and
- community-led planning in some communities may not succeed without strengthening their capacity and motivation.

Currently in Victoria several risk assessment processes are used at local government and state levels, with hazard-specific risk information available in a range of places. In general, this information is not intended to be a primary means of risk communication to the community, nor is the community easily able to access, use and understand it.

The Green Paper proposed that the state publish a Victorian risk register to encourage people to think about their vulnerabilities. Submissions supported this proposal on the basis that it assist the community to be able to make informed decisions about their vulnerability to risks. The community must have better access to integrated information about the hazards it faces, if it is to adopt an effective disaster resilience approach and will continue to improve its risk assessment methodology and publish information on priority hazards. To this end, a web-based tool, FloodZoom, is beng developed for mapping floods and their impacts on communities. FloodZoom will enable flood intelligence data to be readily available to emergency services and the community.

4 Final Report of the Review of the 2010-11 Flood Warnings and Response, 2011, Rec.93, p.224.

Action

2. a) Continue developing and implementing strategies to give community safety considerations greater prominence in land use planning and other regulatory processes

   b) Support the development of Community Resilience Committees and plans that enable local communities to develop comprehensive all-hazards plans in line with municipal, regional and state plans, and

   c) Publish accessible, easily-understood information on priority hazards and risks in accordance with the National Strategy for Disaster Resilience.

Community awareness and education

Emergency services organisations and government departments currently deliver programs that help people make informed emergency-related decisions. These activities focus on making people more aware of and responsive to potential risks. They also provide access to essential information and warnings.

But changing attitudes and behaviour takes time. While significant improvements have been made in the last 10 years, evidence from the VBRC, Floods Review, research, and agency experience indicates that the current reliance on information dissemination only helps a limited number of people who are at risk.

There is a need for a consistent best-practice approach across government to guide the development of programs and initiatives intended to influence people's behaviour before, during and after emergencies.

Making information available during emergencies

Initiatives to foster long term behavioural change do not replace the need for ready access to information during an emergency. The better informed the community is, the more able it is to respond effectively in a crisis.

Australians are among the world's most prolific users of the internet.[5] The increasing use and speed of this technology (via devices such as smart phones and 'cloud' computing) means half of all Australians now expect timely access to information in a crisis.

The Fire Services Commissioner's trial of the *emergencyvic.info* website in 2011-12 tested the provision of real-time emergency information so communities could access the latest information on their location and risk. This project and work undertaken by other response and recovery agencies will inform the development of a single integrated Victorian emergency management web portal, as recommended by the Floods Review.[6]

It will enable people to access information on emergency preparation, response and recovery. The portal will be integrated with other channels and augment the One Source One Message emergency messaging system currently used by Incident Controllers to issue community warnings for fires and floods.

---

5 Internet World Statistics website www.internetworldstats.com

6 Final Report of the Review of the 2010-11 Flood Warnings and Response, 2011, Rec.33, p.87.

Most organisations involved in emergency management in Victoria use social media channels to some extent. More must be done to meet community expectations that information and warnings will be available across all channels. There is a risk that people may become too dependent on information sources that might be unavailable in a crisis.

The current multi-agency, multi-hazards and multi-channel approach to providing community warnings and information will continue to be improved, in line with Floods Review recommendations and recognising the various ways communities choose to access information.[7]

Such a comprehensive approach is also essential to reach particular community sectors – such as youth, the disabled or the elderly – with a preference for specific types of communication.

The reach of official emergency broadcasts is being explored to include more commercial television, and culturally and linguistically-diverse media. Where possible, memoranda of understanding with broadcasters will include provision for the broadcasting of community meetings and dissemination of warnings across a range of communication channels, such as internet-based media.

One all-hazards hotline number will be developed by combining the functions of the Victorian Bushfire Information Line, the VICSES Flood Storm and Information Line, the proposed Police Assistance Line and the Department of Human Services relief and recovery lines.[8] This single number will reduce confusion, be easier to remember and facilitate better coordination between agencies.

Action

3. a) Develop a single emergency management web portal to provide information and advice to help people prepare for, respond to, and recover from emergencies

b) Continue to develop the current multi-agency, multi-hazards and multi-channel approach to providing community warnings and information, focusing more on understanding and responding to the various ways communities choose to access information

c) Expand the reach of official emergency broadcasts to include more commercial television and culturally and linguistically diverse media in partnership with emergency broadcasters, and in line with the Floods Review recommendations

d) Where possible, memoranda of understanding with broadcasters will include provision for broadcast of community meetings and dissemination of warnings across a range of communication channels (such as internet-based media), and

e) Develop a single all-hazards telephone hotline for the community to access information during emergencies.

7 Final Report of the Review of the 2010-11 Flood Warnings and Response, 2011, Rec.37, p.92.

8 A single all-hazards hotline will not replace or override Triple Zero.

Crisis management planning

Planning and preparation using tools like business continuity plans can help governments, businesses and the public more easily navigate disruption and adapt to new circumstances. Having crisis management plans and arrangements in place enables organisations to become more resilient. They can recover critical functions more readily and get back to 'normal' faster.

Government departments and agencies in Victoria have specific business continuity plans in place, but linkages between the different plans should be improved – especially considering the increasing interdependency between departments and agencies.

A government Security and Continuity Network (SCN) will be established to oversee business continuity arrangements at state level. The SCN will be part of the existing SCN set up under the Victorian critical infrastructure protection management arrangements. The first major task for the government SCN will be to conduct a broad review of existing business continuity arrangements and recommend ways for departments and agencies to better-integrate these arrangements.

An annual training and exercise program (overseen by the government SCN) will be developed for departments and agencies to test how well existing business continuity plans and arrangements work. Exercises and training provide a safe environment in which people can rehearse their roles and test how different departments and agencies would work together in response to an emergency.

At the municipal level, councils will be supported to prepare quality business continuity plans that are in line with best practice, such as the international standard on *Societal Security – Business Continuity Management Systems – Requirements*.[9] A business continuity forum will be held for local government to share best practice ideas, and teach participants about developments in business continuity and crisis management planning.

During extreme events like the 2009 bushfires, and the 2010-11 and 2012 floods, many smaller councils found it difficult to continue delivering core services at the same time as responding to the event. Often local government staff live in the area and are part of the affected community. This can substantially diminish a local government's resources.

Recognising this difficulty, and in consultation with the local government sector and the State Services Authority, arrangements will be developed to strengthen collaborative and strategic decision-making processes between the state and a council in the exceptional circumstances where a council is overwhelmed by an emergency.

These arrangements will guide the assessment of the emergency event's impact on the local community and the council's ability to respond. It will also identify where any capacity and capability gaps can be addressed. These arrangements will be underpinned by principles recognising the key role councils have in supporting their community to recover from emergencies.

Crisis management planning for business is equally important to build the capability for businesses to survive the immediate impact of an emergency or disaster, and to recover and resume business operations as quickly as possible. The Department of Business and Industry (DBI) has a specific role in working with businesses to build the full range of capability to manage well in a crisis, including support to develop effective business continuity plans.

DBI will be supported in the development of a quality crisis management planning resource and programs for small and medium-sized businesses.

A number of programs are in place to help businesses recover from emergencies. The Victorian and Commonwealth Governments both provide clean-up and restoration grants. Low interest loans are available to eligible businesses through the Rural Finance Corporation, and affected businesses can seek business recovery advice through the Small Business Victoria's Small Business Mentoring Program and Business Victoria Online.

---

9 International Organisation for Standardisation, 22301:2012 - Societal security – *Business continuity management systems – Requirements*, found at www.iso.org/iso/catalogue_detail?csnumber=50038

Through Tourism Victoria, DBI has developed a suite of resources to help tourism businesses effectively prepare for, respond to and recover from crisis events. This suite includes the Open for Business: Crisis Management for Tourism Businesses publication and supporting workshops. DBI also provides tourism sector funding to help affected regions with destination marketing and post-crisis recovery workshops.

The Mobile Business Centre has been deployed to affected communities to help with post-disaster business recovery. The Mobile Business Centre is a Victorian initiative that takes expert business advisers to businesses and provides face-to-face mentoring services. Business continuity and disaster recovery advice can also be provided for disaster-affected communities.

Action

4. a) Establish a government Security and Continuity Network to oversee business continuity planning and preparedness for state government departments and agencies

b) Undertake a broad review of existing business continuity arrangements at state government level

c) Develop an annual training and exercise program for state government departments and agencies

d) Review existing local government business continuity practices and, where necessary, help local governments prepare high quality, tailored business continuity plans in line with best practice and tailored to local government needs

e) Conduct a business continuity forum for local government to share best practice information and learn about developments in business continuity and crisis management planning (further forums will be considered following an evaluation of the initial forum)

f) Consult with the local government sector to develop strategies, mutual aid agreements and potentially legislation for a strategic partnership approach to help councils during extreme events, and

g) Support the development of a quality crisis management planning resource and programs for small and medium-sized businesses.

Managing risks to critical infrastructure

The ability of critical infrastructure industries to continue functioning through an emergency is vital to a community's resilience. For a community to plan and prepare for any emergency, it must be confident of having access to critical infrastructure such as water, electricity and communications.

Most critical infrastructure assets in Victoria are owned and/or operated by private industry, so the Government works with private industry to improve resilience by sharing information, raising awareness of dependencies and vulnerabilities, and sharing knowledge through exercises and meetings.

All businesses should plan to continue operating in an emergency. However, some assets are of greater importance to the community and a collaborative government-business model has been created, with mandatory measures aimed at the infrastructure facing the highest risk.

These services are referred to as "declared essential services" under Part 6 of the *Terrorism (Community Protection) Act 2003* (the TCP Act). Their owners/operators are required to prepare a risk management plan to cover terrorist attacks as well as their normal emergency management planning. They must also test their plan annually. The Government provides input and guidance to help with these tests.

The Victorian Framework for Critical Infrastructure Protection from Terrorism (the Critical Infrastructure Framework) is based on the Commonwealth Government's critical infrastructure resilience policy, and divides critical infrastructure into eight sectors.[10]

By encouraging owners and operators to plan for any emergency, the Critical Infrastructure Framework recognises that due to their specific knowledge about their business and industry, owners and operators of critical infrastructure are best placed to undertake planning and preparation to protect their assets. The framework develops a relationship between government and industry, and provides guidance on how to plan for disruptions through regular sector-based SCNs, meetings and communications. The participation level and broad-ranging discussion topics to date have proved these forums effective.

Critical infrastructure risk management arrangements are adopting an all-hazards resilience model. Outcomes of a government-led review in 2011 showed that stakeholders in these arrangements agreed a broader focus is necessary. While previous arrangements focussed on terrorist risks (in response to the 2001 terrorist attacks in the United States), occurrences in the last 10 years indicates that owners and operators of critical infrastructure should also prepare for natural hazards because these are likely to present more immediate risks.

The Evans Review notes that the Victorian critical infrastructure arrangements have proved sound but that Victoria now needs a regime that addresses all risks, not just terrorism: *"There is a need to transform the current arrangements into a legislative and policy framework that captures the strategic intent of an all-hazards all-agencies approach."* [11]

10 These are banking and finance, communications, energy, food, health, police and emergency services, transport and water.

11 Evans, M, AO, DSC *The Review of the role of the Department of Premier and Cabinet in supporting the Premier in the administration of "Part 6 – Essential Services Infrastructure Risk Management" of the Terrorism (Community Protection) Act 2003,* July 2012.

The review recommends that Victoria review the TCP Act and consider other, non-legislative mechanisms to manage risks. Other independent reviews also recommend a single, comprehensive framework to manage the risks to critical infrastructure in Victoria, rather than the joint current Act and framework arrangement. They also suggest that the Government more effectively guide and monitor the performance of government and industry stakeholders. This way the state will be better positioned to deal with different hazards in the future.[12]

A new Strategy for Critical Infrastructure Resilience is being developed to replace Part 6 of the TCP Act and the critical infrastructure framework. The first stage of this will be to publish a roadmap outlining the vision and proposals for reform. Releasing the roadmap before a new strategy will give stakeholders clearer direction and allow time for the reforms presented in this White Paper (on which the new critical infrastructure arrangements will be broadly-based) to take effect.

The strengths of Victoria's current arrangements will be retained and built-on in the roadmap and strategy. This way, the state will be better positioned to deal with hazard circumstances in future. Key features of the new arrangements to be proposed by the roadmap are:

- a move to an all-hazards resilience model while recognising the ongoing importance of managing terrorism risks
- providing a new definition for Victorian critical infrastructure and a consistent and transparent method of assessing the value and 'criticality' of infrastructure
- more flexible partnerships between the Government and the private sector
- clearer roles and responsibilities for all sectors
- adopting a risk-based approach to critical infrastructure resilience in legislation, and
- a robust performance measurement and assurance framework.

Victoria's critical infrastructure risk management is part of a nation-wide commitment to the issue. Victorian arrangements should not differ from the national arrangements, nor should they put any more pressure on the private sector than the arrangements of other states and territories.

The Commonwealth issued its new policy, The Critical Infrastructure Resilience Strategy, in December 2011. Victoria will continue to work in partnership with the Commonwealth and other jurisdictions to develop consistency, cooperation and shared goals for critical infrastructure resilience.

Local stakeholders are also considering new ways to manage their risks. The Central Gippsland Essential Industries Group and the Department of Transport's Security Precincts are made up of representatives within a limited geographical location. A common understanding of their local environment and threats, established relationships and shared purposes allow emergencies to be managed locally, and with the support of appropriately shared resources and personnel. This approach is reflective of the shift towards developing community resilience.

Action

5. a) Replace Part 6 of the *Terrorism (Community Protection) Act 2003* with an all-hazards regime that sets out roles and responsibilities of government departments and agencies, owners and operators, and

b) Develop a new Critical Infrastructure Resilience Strategy in 2013.

12 These include the Victorian Auditor-General's 2009 Report *Preparedness to Respond to Terrorism Incidents: Essential Services and Critical Infrastructure, the Review of the 2010-2011 Flood Warnings and Response* (Recommendation 85, p.191) and the Public Accounts and Estimates Committee's 2011 *Review of the Auditor-General's Report on Preparedness to Respond to Terrorism Incidents: Essential Services and Critical Infrastructure.*

Coordinating relief and recovery in communities

Enabling communities to contribute to their own recovery is essential to restoring community functions. Relief and recovery is a complex social and developmental process with short and longer-term phases to recovery. All levels of government, the not-for-profit and private sectors have relief and recovery responsibilities.

They partner with the community to restore and rehabilitate the social, built, natural and economic environments, and the health, well-being and long-term recovery of the community.

Relief and recovery should:

- target the unique needs of each community using community-led approaches that engage the community
- operate simultaneously and cooperatively with response procedures
- be timely and seamless with scalable arrangements embedded in legislation and policy
- be informed by effective impact and needs assessments, and
- have the capacity and capability it needs through investing in partnerships over the long-term, and effectively harnessing public goodwill and participation.

Appropriate decisions about relief and recovery programming need timely, accurate and increasingly comprehensive information about the impact of an emergency on affected communities. They also require the input of agencies from within or external to those communities. A comprehensive review of the impact assessment system is proposed in Chapter 3.

Relief and recovery efforts depend on strong partnerships with the not-for-profit and private sectors. Community partners in relief and recovery include governments at all levels, Australian Red Cross (as auxiliary to government in humanitarian services), non-government organisations, the private sector and the general public. The Government values its relationship with the Australian Red Cross and the organisation's unique role delivering emergency management support to disaster-affected communities.

Non-government organisations, such as the Salvation Army, St John Ambulance and others, also play vital roles. Through their large base of volunteers, such organisations coordinate and deliver services across many local government areas, often simultaneously.

Other local, more grass-roots community organisations are equally important to support relief and recovery in their own communities. People and organisations working at the local level can often best identify the most vulnerable individuals or groups, particularly those who may need extra planning support, and relief and recovery assistance.

There are also opportunities for people already involved in relief and recovery to better engage with the private sector, particularly as a source of surge capacity, expertise and community linkages. Government interaction and private sector support for emergency management often takes place after large-scale events, as occurred after the 2009 bushfires.

Working in partnership with government, the private sector quickly provided support to communities affected by the 2009 bushfires. This support included complementary airline tickets so affected people could return to their families, constructing temporary shelters and distributing vouchers for replacing household goods.

Some businesses have significant logistic capability which could be used under agreement to deliver humanitarian assistance after an emergency. Post-event interactions with the not-for profit and private sector represent opportunities to help communities better prepare for future emergencies.

Partnerships with the Australian Red Cross and the not-for-profit, community and private sectors will be strengthened to better plan and develop a holistic approach to deliver emergency relief and recovery services.

The VBRC and the Floods Review supported a more coordinated approach to outreach, where multi-agency teams and agencies share information as appropriate. There is an opportunity to achieve this through better use of outreach teams and by using a single registration form in relief centres.

Victoria's outreach model will be reviewed so it is informed by the multidisciplinary 'outreach' teams used in New Zealand after the February 2011 Christchurch earthquake, and ensure that post-emergency needs of Victorians affected by a disaster are coordinated across agencies.

The generosity of the Victorian and Australian public is internationally recognised. This admirable cultural trait has generated an unprecedented response to significant emergencies, particularly after fires and floods.

The Victorian Bushfire Appeal Fund (set up in partnership with the Commonwealth Government and Australian Red Cross) received more than $375 million. The Victorian Floods Disaster Relief Fund (set up by the Victorian Government in partnership with the Australian Red Cross) received almost $19 million. Emergency appeals can be an enormous help for disaster-affected communities and individuals.

Recent emergency appeal arrangements provide worthwhile examples to help determine whether appeals can be set up more effectively. The guidelines for arranging and administering public appeals will be reviewed, taking into account work underway at the national level regarding the charitable status of donations to such funds.

It is important that the goodwill of the community in helping disaster-affected households and communities is well targeted and that relief and recovery agencies do not incur additional costs or experience greater pressure as a result.

Following the 2009 bushfires, more than 22,000 'spontaneous volunteers' offered their help online or by phone, but only a small number were used. Additionally, 63,000 tonnes of unsolicited material aid was donated at a cost of more than $8 million for storage, management and transportation. Deployed staff and trained volunteers were re-directed to manage these unsolicited volunteers and donations.

The experience of those working with volunteers will be utilised to develop strategies to harness the skills and goodwill of spontaneous volunteers. Key issues that affect these volunteers, such as insurance cover will also be considered. A common approach to spontaneous volunteers will help limit any duplication of effort.

The National Guidelines for Managing Donated Goods will be adopted and the state's emergency preparedness and relief practices aligned with the guidelines.

Actions

6. **Strengthen partnerships with the Australian Red Cross, the not-for-profit sector, community groups and private sectors to:**

   a) Better plan and develop a holistic approach to deliver emergency relief and recovery services which operate across the social, built, economic and environmental arenas

   b) Review guidelines for setting up and administering public appeals

   c) Adopt the National Guidelines for Managing Donated Goods and align the state's emergency preparedness and relief practices with these guidelines, and

   d) Examine opportunities for building relationships and potentially entering into agreements with the private sector to support relief and recovery efforts.

7. **Review Victoria's outreach model so it:**

   a) Is informed by lessons learnt from the multidisciplinary 'outreach' teams used in New Zealand after the February 2011 Christchurch earthquake, and

   b) Facilitates a coordinated and efficient response to the post-emergency needs of people affected by a disaster.

8. **Work with local government, volunteer organisations and agencies to:**

   a) Develop strategies to manage spontaneous volunteers during relief and recovery efforts, and

   b) Review protections (including insurance) for volunteers engaged to help in emergency events.

Role for local government

Local government is a key component of Victoria's emergency management system. Individual councils will continue to maintain a range of emergency management responsibilities, including mitigation responsibilities set out in legislation (such as land use planning, drainage maintenance and powerline clearance) and responsibilities associated with the delivery of council services.

Local councils also play a significant role in engaging local communities, building resilience and helping communities plan for emergencies and disasters. All levels of government can help build community resilience but local government is most involved at a grass roots level. A council's knowledge about local people, history, risks, vulnerabilities, operational requirements and services is critical in planning for, responding to and recovering from a disaster. Local government will therefore have a key role in the new emergency management planning arrangements outlined in Chapter 3.

Councils' emergency management responsibilities are set out in various pieces of legislation across a number of portfolios, such as the EM Act, the *Country Fire Authority Act 1958, the Metropolitan Fire Brigades Act 1958, the Water Act 1989* and the *Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008*.

The *Local Government Act 1989* does not address emergency management specifically, but Part 1A provides general guidance for councils on fulfilling their obligations and responsibilities under that and other Acts. The EMMV also outlines certain responsibilities for councils. Community service expectations, major events and legislation have added a raft of new roles for councils to an already complex arrangements.

There is an urgent need to clearly enunciate the roles of local government in emergency management. These roles must be in line with the strengths, capabilities and unique positioning of councils.

A review of all legislation that allocate emergency management responsibilities to local government is needed, including specific consideration of how the legislative and regulatory instruments facilitate (or impede) effective operation of local government during emergencies. This should be accompanied by a review of any relevant policies that determine local government's role in emergency management to make sure it aligns with any legislative changes.

The importance of closer engagement with local government in the emergency management arrangements is recognised. The new governance arrangements outlined in Chapter 2 will provide for local government representation through the Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) at all levels of the committee structure. This will enable local government to be more involved in the policy and reform process and strengthen relationships with councils. Strong relationships made before an emergency will improve the overall quality of the response, relief and recovery activities.[13]

Action

9. In consultation with local government:

a) Review all legislation that allocates emergency management responsibilities to local governments (including the *Local Government Act 1989*) to clarify local government's roles in emergency management, taking into account work already undertaken by the Municipal Association of Victoria on the future role of local government in emergency management and its analysis of relevant legislation.

13 See Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) The role of local government in emergency management, Position Paper, December 2011.

CHAPTER 2 – COLLABORATION

Efficient governance arrangements that clarify roles and responsibilities, embed cooperation across agencies, and ensure emergency management reform is coordinated across the sector.

Streamlining Governance Arrangements

Many organisations have a role in emergency management in Victoria. Collaboration and clarity of roles and responsibilities between all organisations involved is essential. Ensuring this is achieved is a key objective of streamlining governance arrangements. The new system for emergency management governance will be based on networked arrangements accompanied by an obligation to participate.

Current governance structures reinforce a 'siloed' approach to emergency management. This has confused and frustrated emergency services workers and the community regarding the responsibilities and limits of each organisation. The Floods Review recognised that much of this confusion and frustration can be attributed to a strategic void in Victoria's emergency management arrangements.[14]

The EM Act provides Victoria with a legislative basis for an all-hazards all-agencies approach to emergency management. In 2011, the Victorian Parliament passed legislative amendments to strengthen an all-hazards all-agencies approach by making key response agencies responsible for helping each other in major emergencies, in addition to their hazard-specific obligations.

Governance arrangements that support collaboration and interoperability improve the integration and effectiveness of the planning and preparation for, response to, and recovery from emergencies.

Victoria's emergency management governance arrangements will be reformed to reflect the characteristics of contemporary emergencies. These arrangements will clarify roles and responsibilities, generate stronger accountability mechanisms and improve interoperability. They will require a behavioural shift and ongoing commitment from all stakeholders to share responsibility for disaster resilience.

It is essential that departments and agencies participate fully in these arrangements. Emergency management governance arrangements must be comprehensive and engage bodies across government which may not be viewed (or see themselves) as having a major emergency management role, but whose work has an impact on emergency management. This is particularly relevant to risk mitigation activities. Emergency management arrangements must also operate within a national context, as described in the NSDR.

In line with the recommendations of the Floods Review, the new governance arrangements will:

- reinforce an all-hazards all-agencies approach and where appropriate, embed this approach through cross-agency interoperability and common procedures, training, planning and procurement
- provide a common strategic policy framework that makes best use of Victoria's emergency management capabilities
- create networked arrangements with strong accountability mechanisms and an obligation to participate
- clarify roles, responsibilities and accountabilities, and
- adopt the principles of community resilience and community participation, and provide the Victorian public with a key role in emergency management arrangements.

The existing board structure of emergency services organisations will not be replaced. However, legislation will require emergency services organisations to participate in the new networked emergency management arrangements.

14 Final Report of the Review of the 2010-11 Flood Warnings and Response, 2011, p.148.

Non-legislative measures will be explored to ensure departmental participation in the new arrangements. This will include key performance indicators in the performance plans of departmental secretaries and formal confirmation by departmental secretaries of their department's participation in the new arrangements.

The strategic plan and underlying work program will be designed to ensure departments and emergency services organisations' participation in this collective enterprise.

Renaming the portfolio

The current objectives of the EM Act encompass prevention, response, and relief and recovery. The Minister for Police and Emergency Services is responsible for the administration of the Act.

The reforms set out in this White Paper extend beyond emergency response to encompass whole of government emergency management. The ministerial portfolio will therefore be renamed Police and Emergency Management. This will emphasise the importance of addressing emergency management in a holistic fashion across government.

This change reflects the networked nature of emergency management. The Minister for Police and Emergency Management will have a broad, whole of government coordinating function. Renaming the portfolio will not alter the emergency management responsibilities of other ministers.

New committee structure

Victoria's current emergency management committee structure is unnecessarily complex. It does not foster efficient and innovative solutions for Victoria's emergency management needs. The Floods Review identified more than 40 emergency management committees, sub-committees and working groups established at state level. The review noted this has resulted in a *"complex configuration of working groups and committees intended to assure the readiness and appropriateness of the State's emergency management arrangements."* [15]

A new committee structure will be implemented to streamline arrangements, and create clear lines of decision-making and accountability, improve efficiencies and facilitate better outcomes. Under this structure there will no longer be a role for the Central Government Response Committee, the Victorian Emergency Management Council (VEMC), the Secretaries' Flood Recovery Group, the bushfires Sub-Committee of the State Coordination and Management Committee or any of their respective sub-committees and working groups.

The enormous work undertaken by these bodies and many other emergency management committees is appreciated. Much of the work currently underway will need to continue under the new arrangements. A review of this work (and which body should be responsible for it) in consultation with the sector will be undertaken as part of the transition arrangements to the new committee structure, with a view to aligning existing programs with a coherent strategy that sets out the reform priorities.

Action

10. Rename the relevant ministerial portfolio as Police and Emergency Management.

15 Final Report of the Review of the 2010-11 Flood Warnings and Response, 2011, p.118.

State Crisis and Resilience Council

The State Crisis and Resilience Council (SCRC) will act as Victoria's peak body responsible for developing and coordinating policy and strategy across the emergency management spectrum and overseeing its implementation. It will not make operational or tactical decisions. SCRC will be established in legislation so its functions are transparent, clearly understood and in the public domain.

The SCRC will:

- lead the reform agenda for emergency management, including measures to increase community resilience
- develop a strategic action plan with a medium to long-term outlook for emergency management reform. It will identify priority areas for action and specific implementation plans to be undertaken within agreed timeframes. This will incorporate and build on the Fire Services Reform Action Plan
- oversee the implementation of the strategic action plan and report regularly on progress
- oversee the work of its three standing sub-committees (Risk and Resilience, Capability and Response, and Recovery) and other time-limited, task focused working groups, established as required
- advise the Minister for Police and Emergency Management, other relevant ministers, and the Security and Emergencies Committee (SEC) of Cabinet on whole of government emergency management strategy and emerging or complex emergency management issues, including the continuity of supply of essential services
- meet regularly during normal business and more often in the event of a complex or large-scale emergency occurring or threatening to occur, and
- in the event of a major emergency:
  - ensure that the broad social, economic, built and environmental implications are addressed at a whole of government level, including the management of communications strategies
  - help the Emergency Management Commissioner (EMC) – once this role is established – identify and access the Government resources required beyond existing plans and arrangements, and
  - support the EMC to manage all emergencies by fielding a State Emergency Management Team and Strategic Advisory Group, as required.

The SCRC will include members from all departments, either departmental secretaries or their senior delegates. The Secretary DPC will chair the SCRC with the Secretary DOJ as deputy chair. The SCRC will also include:

- the Chief Commissioner of Police
- the chief executive of Emergency Management Victoria (EMV) – once this role is established – also representing CFA, MFB and VICSES
- the Emergency Management Commissioner (EMC), and
- the CEO of the MAV (in a representative capacity).

The Inspector General for Emergency Management (IGEM) – once this role is established – will attend the SCRC as an observer. EMV and the role of the EMC and IGEM is discussed in more detail below.

Ministers will retain responsibility for delivering emergency management-related functions within their own portfolios (such as Environment and Climate Change, Energy and Resources, Transport, Water, Health and Agriculture). However, the SCRC (on which all departments will be represented) will be responsible for developing policy and strategy and coordinating emergency management activity across the emergency management spectrum.

Sub-committees

The SCRC will be supported by three standing sub-committees to address risk and resilience, capability and response, and relief and recovery. The role of the sub-committees will be to drive holistic reform and deliver the overall strategy.

The sub-committees will replace the current State Emergency Mitigation Committee, the State Emergency Response Planning Committee and the State Relief and Recovery Planning Committee. They will assume the roles currently performed by other limited-term committees such as the Bushfires Sub-Committee of State Coordination and Management Committee and the Secretaries Flood Recovery Group.

The membership and work of the sub-committees will be similar to that undertaken by the existing committees, but will reflect the reform agenda and priorities set by the Government.

Non-government organisations, the private sector, community groups and the general public have equally important roles in emergency management. It is important that this breadth of experience and expertise is reflected in the work of the sub-committees.

The sub-committees will:

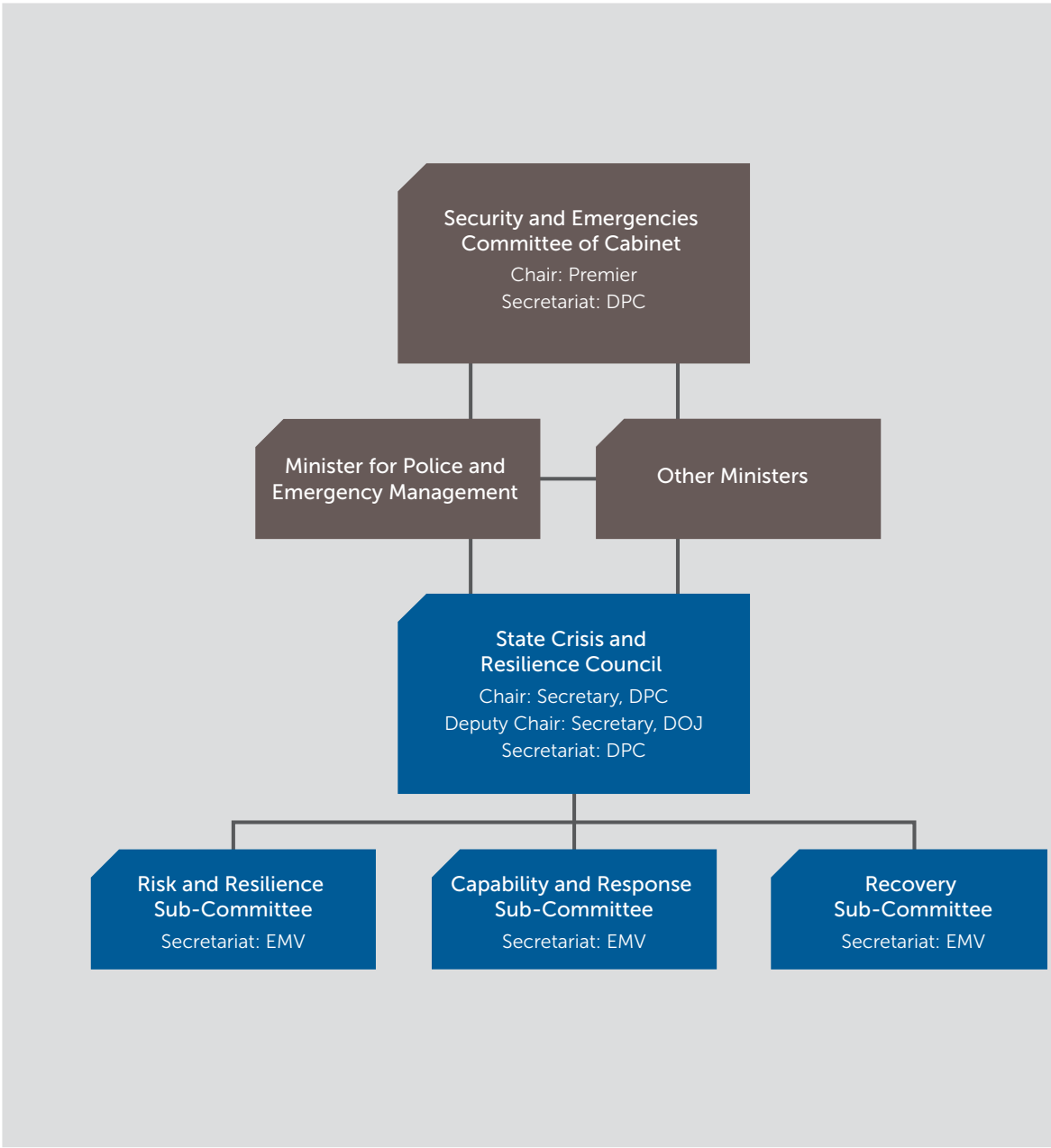
- work to terms of reference developed by the SCRC and endorsed by the Government
- develop specific preparation, mitigation, response, relief and recovery plans and strategies for endorsement by the SCRC and then the Security and Emergencies Committee of Cabinet
- develop and implement work programs that respond to the strategic action plan, in line with established timeframes and accountability mechanisms
- adopt a model of representative membership that incorporates regular formal engagement with all relevant organisations, including the private sector and community groups
- meet regularly, with secretariat support provided by EMV, and
- provide strategic support during major emergencies, as required by the SCRC and EMC.

The Recovery Sub-Committee will provide strategic support to the State Recovery Coordinator and take on the functions currently performed by the Secretaries' Flood Recovery Group.

Certain issues, such as emergency services telecommunications, may require more effort and focus than can be provided at committee level. To address these issues, time-limited working groups will be established (operating according to specific goals and within terms of reference, specific goals and timelines) that will report to relevant sub-committees.

Clear direction from the SCRC to sub-committees will ensure any additional working groups have carefully delineated terms of reference and work programs. It will also eliminate the need for additional ad hoc committees to be created outside the proposed new structure.

FIGURE 3: PROPOSED EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE STRUCTURE



Action

11. Simplify and streamline emergency management committee structures by establishing:

a) The State Crisis and Resilience Council as the peak state emergency management policy body responsible for developing, coordinating and implementing emergency management policy and strategy across the emergency management spectrum and overseeing its implementation, and

b) Three standing sub-committees to support the State Crisis and Resilience Council in addressing risk and resilience, capability and response, and relief and recovery.

Emergency Management Victoria

EMV will be the new overarching body for Victoria's emergency management sector.

The key objectives of EMV will be to:

> clarify roles, responsibilities and powers, including control arrangements for major emergencies

> embed a collaborative and interoperable approach, with more integrated policy, strategy, planning, investment and procurement, and

> focus more on risk, community resilience and recovery activities.

EMV will maximise the ability of agencies to work together and share resources, and strengthen the working relationship between the Government and statutory response agencies without compromising their individual identities and strengths.

EMV will provide a necessary central structure for emergency management in Victoria. As secretariat to the sub-committees, it will coordinate the work allocated in accordance with the strategic action plan.

While EMV is likely to lead the majority of reform initiatives, departments and agencies will still lead specific projects in accordance with their mandated responsibilities. It will also be essential to clarify precisely those functions for which EMV will be responsible on a whole of sector basis and those which emergency services organisation's will continue to manage individually as directed by their boards.

EMV will:

> streamline the management and implementation of emergency management arrangements in Victoria

> be a 'centre of excellence' for emergency management policy in Victoria, responsible for coordinating a whole of government approach to emergency management reform

> provide secretariat support to the SCRC sub-committees, and work collaboratively with departments, agencies and other stakeholders to develop agreed policies on emergency management reform in line with the direction provided by the SCRC

> ensure stronger emphasis on community resilience and risk mitigation, recognising that these are cross-government responsibilities

> facilitate networked arrangements, and promote an all-hazards all-agencies approach to emergency management to build capability and greater interoperability

> draw together all aspects of relief and recovery – social, economic, built and environmental – responsibility for which is spread across several Government departments

> stand ready to activate relief and recovery arrangements across the whole of government

> take a lead role coordinating investment planning and large-scale strategic projects on behalf of the sector (including major procurement, communications and information, and emergency management planning processes) to achieve greater efficiency and effectiveness

> liaise with the Commonwealth on emergency management, and

> represent Victoria on relevant national committees.

During a major emergency, at the state level, EMV will also:

> support the EMC and sub-committees as required in the particular context

> coordinate data collection and impact assessment processes and advice

> coordinate relief and recovery efforts and manage their escalation through the head of the recovery directorate who will assume the role of State Relief and Recovery Coordinator

> be a single source of advice to people affected by an emergency about relief, grants and other aspects of recovery, and

> liaise with the Commonwealth.

Current arrangements will continue to apply for emergencies at a regional or municipal level, as addressed below.

Chief Executive of Emergency Management Victoria

EMV will be established as a separate administrative unit within DOJ, led by a chief executive. The chief executive position will be a statutory appointment with specific statutory functions reporting to the Secretary DOJ. The role of the chief executive will be to coordinate the broad reform agenda across the entire emergency management spectrum, driving an all agencies, networked approach to emergency management in Victoria and establishing a stronger focus on risk and resilience.

EMV will comprise three directorates aligned with the three SCRC sub-committees, supported by cross-cutting functional teams led by a senior executive. The chief executive will ensure Victoria's emergency management arrangements are properly in place. The chief executive will also be responsible for maintaining the whole of government approach to emergency management, and ensuring EMV fulfils its strategic policy function and coordinates the timely implementation of sub-committee work programs.

So there is an inclusive and comprehensive approach to emergency management reform, EMV executive team meetings will also be expanded to include some senior representation from agencies and departments with significant planning, response and relief and recovery roles. The participation of CEOs from the CFA, MFB and VICSES will enable the chief executive and EMC to appropriately represent their views at the SCRC.

This group will be of minimal size and will not replicate any committee work. Rather, it will give EMV work greater depth and be the 'natural' successor to the Fire and Emergency Services Leadership Group established by the Fire Services Commissioner.

Emergency Management Commissioner

The VBRC and the Floods Review emphasised the need to strengthen and improve Victoria's operational capability and capacity. The Fire Services Commissioner is specifically mandated to address this in terms of fire, but a gap remains in the broader all-hazards all-agencies context.

To this end, the role of the EMC will be established reporting directly to the EMV chief executive. The position will be a statutory appointment with specific statutory functions and be responsible for:

- overseeing the three EMV directorates aligned to the SCRC sub-committees for Risk and Resilience, Capability and Response, and Recovery
- overseeing the development of the new planning arrangements
- providing leadership and driving sector improvements particularly in operational planning, capability, interoperability and response, and
- overseeing a more cohesive approach to relief and recovery.

The EMC will also have a key role in the new control arrangements during major emergencies (see below). The role of EMC will absorb the role of the Fire Services Commissioner.

Action

12. **Establish Emergency Management Victoria in legislation and as an administrative unit within the Department of Justice to streamline the management and implementation of emergency management arrangements in Victoria.**

Action

13. **Appoint an Emergency Management Commissioner with responsibility for overseeing the three Emergency Management Victoria directorates aligned to the State Crisis and Resilience Council sub-committees for Risk and Resilience, Capability and Response, and Recovery.**

Establishing Clear and Effective Response and Control Arrangements

The current organisational arrangements for response management in Victoria are based on three principal management tasks: command, control and coordination. Under the new control arrangements, the tasks of command and control will retain their current meanings, as outlined below.

Command is directing the members and resources of an agency in the performance of the agency's role and tasks (that is, operating vertically and within an agency). Agency commanders manage their personnel and report to the Incident Controller.

Control is the overall direction of response activities in an emergency. That is, operating horizontally across agencies and in respect to an incident. A single agency is appointed as the control agency for each emergency. Incident management systems are adopted to integrate the operational protocols of the control and supporting agencies into a unified management system.

The Incident Controller is responsible for providing direction to all agencies deployed in an emergency response at the incident level. Depending on the scale of an emergency, controllers may also be appointed at a regional/area-of-operations level or at state level.

However, the notion of coordination has caused confusion because the term describes a number of different activities. Each of these will be separately addressed under the new response arrangements, as outlined below. In future, the term 'coordination' will simply be used according to its conventional meaning.

This is consistent with the international standard for emergency management which defines 'coordination' as "*the way in which different organizations (public or private) or parts of the same organisation work or act together in order to achieve a common objective*".[16]

Under Victoria's current arrangements, incident control responsibility is based on statutory responsibility or hazard expertise. This works extremely well for routine emergencies.

Nonetheless, major emergencies are likely to span the responsibilities of multiple agencies. In those circumstances, it can be unclear which agency is ultimately in control of the emergency response. To address this lack of clarity, new state level control arrangements for major emergencies will be introduced.

As currently defined in agency legislation, a major emergency is a large or complex emergency (regardless of how it is caused) which:

> has the potential to cause loss of life and extensive damage to property, infrastructure or the environment

> has the potential to have or is having significant adverse consequences for the Victorian community or a part of the Victorian community, and

> requires the involvement of two or more emergency agencies to respond to the emergency.

In line with the VBRC recommendations, a graded scale of emergency declarations will be developed.[17] The trigger points for activating the state level control arrangements will be modelled on those already in place for major fires, as described in the Victorian Fire Agency Bushfire Handbook 2012-2013.[18]

Under these arrangements, the Fire Services Commissioner is the State Controller in respect of a major fire, and on days of high fire risk. With fires that have the potential to become 'major fires', the relevant agency chief officer is required to notify the Fire Services Commissioner who decides whether to assume control of the fire or leave it with the relevant agency.[19]

Applying this model, a strategic priority for the capability and response sub-committee will be to develop operational procedures that clearly spell out the trigger points for when emergencies become 'major emergencies' and state level control arrangements are activated. In doing so, the nominated triggers must not become barriers to action.

16 The International Standard on *Societal Security – Emergency management – Requirements for incident response* (ISO22320).

17 2009 Victorian Bush Fires Royal Commission, Final Report, Rec. 13, p.26.

18 The Victorian Fire Agency Bushfire Handbook 2012-2013 is available at www.firecommissioner.vic.gov.au

19 As defined in legislation.

Chief officers of the emergency services, the DSE Chief Fire Officer and the lead hazard specialists from other portfolios play an essential role in routine emergencies, as well as major emergencies. The new control arrangements will continue to rely heavily on the expertise and authority of these people.

State Level Control Arrangements for Major Emergencies

Under the new arrangements, command arrangements will remain as they are. Agency managers will direct agency personnel and resources to meet their responsibilities.

Control of the response to natural hazard emergencies

For major natural hazard emergencies, the EMC will be responsible for appointing a suitably qualified State Controller. This will include all major emergencies for which the MFB, CFA, VICSES and DSE have control responsibility.

The term 'suitably qualified persons' will be defined to include the chief officer or other senior officers of the fire services, VICSES, DSE, and the head of the capability and response directorate within EMV. The State Controller will control all the resources of the CFA, MFB, VICSES and DSE.

Control of the response to other emergencies

For other kinds of major emergencies, the State Controller will be the person nominated by the agency currently designated in Part 7 of the EMMV (under section 15 of the Emergency Management Act). Part 7 of the EMMV will be reviewed to ensure that control responsibilities are appropriately assigned across all hazard types, and take into account any relevant legislative, government or government-industry arrangements.

Victoria Police will remain the control agency for an emergency clearly involving a terrorist or criminal act or threat.

Ensuring control is effectively established

For all major emergencies, irrespective of their nature (other than criminal or terrorist acts), the EMC will be responsible for ensuring that control of the response is effectively established and maintained.

The EMC will also:

- ensure that appropriate officers to control the response to different types of emergencies have been designated as part of operational planning (including what contingency arrangements are in place if that officer is unavailable)
- provide guidance and assistance to the State Controller
- determine the State Controller in the event of a dispute or lack of clarity over responsibility for control or the allocation of resources to manage the emergency. This power will extend to transferring control responsibility when the need arises (such as the nature of the emergency changes, the State Controller needs relief or is not performing effectively), and
- when circumstances require, step in and assume the role of State Controller until another person is appointed to the role. This power will not apply in emergencies involving terrorist or criminal acts or threats, or other prescribed emergencies.

In a situation where the EMC decides to assume the role of State Controller, the EMC will have a duty to inform the Chief Commissioner of Police, who will have a reserve power to ensure control is effectively established and maintained.

In line with national arrangements, Victoria Police will retain responsibility for liaising with the Australian Defence Force to obtain additional support during an emergency should that prove necessary or be requested by the State Controller.

Consequence management

The EMC will lead the broader consequence management of all major emergencies, irrespective of their nature. In doing so, the EMC will ensure that the necessary state resources are appropriately allocated to manage the event.

Supported by the SCRC, the EMC will form a State Emergency Management Team and, if necessary, a Strategic Advisory Group, to determine what actions are required to address or minimise the consequences of the emergency. Team members will be selected based on their capability and expertise depending on the potential consequences facing the community, with members responsible for initiating the necessary actions within their own portfolios, organisations or spheres of influence.

Information and warnings

The EMC will also be responsible for:

> ensuring appropriate warnings are issued to the public, and

> keeping relevant ministers and secretaries informed on the management of the emergency and its consequences.

So the EMC can ensure appropriate control arrangements are in place, agencies will be required to report to the EMC as soon as they become aware that a major emergency may occur, is occurring or has occurred.

Regional and Municipal Level Control Arrangements

The control arrangements outlined above for major emergencies apply at state level. The control arrangements for the regional and municipal levels will remain unchanged, with Victoria Police retaining responsibility for ensuring control has been effectively established.

Resourcing arrangements at the local government level will be clarified. Incident controllers (with the support of Emergency Management Teams) and not local governments, will be responsible for sourcing resources during emergencies.

The requirement for councils to maintain and operate Municipal Emergency Coordination Centres during emergencies will be removed, although councils may choose to utilise existing facilities to assist the management of their own emergency-related business.

In such instances, it will be necessary to ensure there are no conflicting priorities or duplication of effort between council and incident control centres. These changes will be made in consultation with councils and phased in over a transitional period.

Actions

14. Introduce new state level control arrangements for major emergencies, under which:

a) For major natural hazard emergencies, the Emergency Management Commissioner will be responsible for appointing a suitably qualified person as the State Controller

b) For other types of major emergencies, the State Controller will be the person nominated by the agency currently designated in Part 7 of the Emergency Management Manual Victoria, with Victoria Police remaining the control agency for emergencies that clearly involve a terrorist or criminal act or threat

c) The Emergency Management Commissioner determines the State Controller in the event of dispute or lack of clarity over responsibility for control or the allocation of resources to manage the emergency

d) The Emergency Management Commissioner is responsible for ensuring control of the response is effectively established and maintained and may assume the role of State Controller, where required. Where the Emergency Management Commissioner is the State Controller, the Chief Commissioner of Police will have a reserve power to ensure that control is effectively established and maintained

e) The Emergency Management Commissioner leads the broader consequence management of all major emergencies, irrespective of their nature, and

f) The Emergency Management Commissioner ensures appropriate warnings are issued to the public and keeps relevant ministers informed during the course of the emergency.

15. a) Review Part 7 of the Emergency Management Manual Victoria to make sure control responsibilities are appropriately assigned across all hazard types

b) Develop a graded scale of emergency declarations that sets out the powers and arrangements for each graded scale, noting that care is required so declarations (or their absence) do not inhibit effective action

c) Provide for establishing State Emergency Management Teams and Strategic Advisory Groups

d) Clarify that incident controllers (with Emergency Management Team support) and not local governments will be responsible for resource provision during emergencies, and

e) Remove the requirement for councils to maintain and operate Municipal Emergency Coordination Centres during emergencies.

Performance Monitoring, Assurance and Continuous Improvement

Inspector General for Emergency Management

A strong performance-monitoring and review body is essential for sector accountability. To achieve this, the statutory role of Inspector General for Emergency Management (IGEM) will be established as the assurance authority for Victoria's emergency management arrangements. The IGEM's role will build on the refocused and reoriented role of the current Emergency Services Commissioner. The IGEM will report to the Minister for Police and Emergency Management.

The IGEM will:

- develop and maintain a monitoring and assurance framework (and associated instruments of assurance, audit, review, evaluation and investigation) in consultation with departments and agencies
- initially focus on emergency services agencies, with capacity to extend the scope (subject to ministerial approval) to other organisations with emergency management responsibilities
- provide the evidence-base and analysis from its monitoring and assurance functions (and benchmarking against national and international best practice) to inform continuous improvement in the Victorian emergency management sector
- undertake system-wide reviews as part of a program to drive continuous improvement, as directed by the relevant minister
- review and evaluate emergency management planning arrangements (see Chapter 3)
- develop and maintain a framework for reviewing and evaluating system performance in response to non-routine emergencies (ie. those that do not require an independent or judicial inquiry). For example, small or medium-scale emergencies where elements of the incident or the response are sufficiently unusual or difficult compared to general daily operations
- evaluate state-wide training and exercising arrangements to maintain and strengthen the State's emergency response ability
- monitor and report on progress in implementing the Government endorsed strategic action plan, and
- conduct investigations into apparent systematic failures to identify the root cause, and report and advise on relevant improvements.

Action

16. **Appoint an Inspector General for Emergency Management to develop and maintain a monitoring and assurance framework, and report on performance across the emergency management sector. The Inspector General for Emergency Management will do this in consultation with departments and agencies.**

CHAPTER 3 – CAPABILITY

An all-hazards all-agencies approach built on networked arrangements, greater interoperability and a stronger emphasis on risk mitigation.

Strengthening Emergency Management Planning Processes

"Crisis planning should involve more than just making sure that the government sector knows what to do in the event of crises and disasters. Enhancing community resilience and planning the interface between government, business and community sectors in crisis response should be part and parcel of the planning process." [20]

Improving planning processes is essential to minimising the likelihood and consequences of disasters and emergencies on the community. Victoria's current emergency management planning combines legislative and non-legislative requirements that, together do not provide a comprehensive approach to emergency management planning.

Effective and strategic planning management models have characteristics which equally apply to emergency management planning. These include:

- efficiency – streamlined planning processes
- transparency – publicly available plans that are easily understood and developed using an inclusive process that makes it clear how and why decisions are made
- currency – plans are regularly reviewed and audited
- accountability – identified bodies are responsible for the contents of the plans and their implementation
- capability – the planning process is well resourced and supported by skilled practitioners
- flexibility – plans that focus on results and that allow for local conditions rather than follow generic rules and procedures, and
- based on risk – exercised and tested.

Holistic, all-hazards emergency management planning engages all agencies, is strategic, forward-looking, linked to funding, interconnected and operates at a state, regional and local government level. It is a foundation for *"improvements in operational policy, standards, stronger coordination and greater interoperability and a strengthened capacity to provide an integrated response."* [21]

The planning process creates opportunities to build partnerships and networks so effective communication, coordination and collaboration between agencies is well established in the event of an emergency.

New emergency management planning arrangements

Victoria's new emergency management planning arrangements will:

- focus on all likely hazards, be interconnected and operate at a state, regional, and local government level
- engage all agencies, including the not-for-profit and private sectors
- ensure processes are streamlined and supported by well defined committee structures
- include clearly articulated quality assurance, accountability and review processes
- allow for flexibility, particularly at a local level
- increase focus on comprehensive risk management approaches
- connect with communities and contribute to building community resilience

20 Boin, A. & 't Hart, P. (2010). Organising for effective emergency management: Lessons from research. *The Australian Journal of Public Administration*, 69 (4), p.361.

21 2009 Victorian Bushfires Royal Commission, Final Report, Summary, pg 18.

- engage skilled participants at all levels, representing the broad range of organisations that need to be involved in an all-hazards emergency management approach (including business and community leaders)
- strengthen planning at the regional level, recognising that emergencies cross municipal boundaries
- foster operational networks and a culture of shared responsibility, recognising that effective emergency response relies strongly on pre-existing cooperative networks built and maintained during preceding years
- foster greater community involvement to develop and own local plans, consistent with the NSDR, and
- be regularly reviewed through a performance assessment regime by the proposed IGEM.

Key features

The new approach to planning will be embedded in legislation formalising the requirement for emergency management planning at the state, regional and local government level. This will create an obligation for relevant agencies to participate in the planning process.

Legislation will recognise that emergency management is a shared responsibility and that plans will identify roles and responsibilities for a range of stakeholders. The evaluation and review process will determine whether stakeholders have fulfilled their responsibilities.

EMV will have primary responsibility for overseeing and supporting implementation of the emergency management planning arrangements across state, regional and local government levels. EMV will be responsible for facilitating the planning process by developing supportive planning tools and templates, and ensuring a consistent approach that takes into account existing portfolio responsibilities. Key agencies will still be responsible for contributing to the development and implementation of plans as they relate to their areas of expertise.

The planning process will identify broader stakeholders (including business leaders and not-for-profit agencies) that must be consulted and included in the planning process. Existing processes, such as Integrated Fire Management Plan and flood planning processes will be aligned with the new arrangements. Over time, they will achieve the objective of an all-hazards all-agencies planning approach.

State level

- legislated objectives of the SCRC will include driving the full implementation of the new emergency management planning arrangements
- long-term strategies will be developed for mitigation, response, relief and recovery, with plans updated as required
- for transparency, strategies and plans (including risk assessments) will be published on the internet
- implementing the new planning arrangements will be subject to an independent quality assurance, review and evaluation by the IGEM and will include a role for self-regulation. The evaluation will determine the efficacy of the plans and whether agencies have fulfilled their responsibilities under the plans
- there will be an in-built quality assurance process that involves regular reviews and progress reporting to the SCRC
- strategies and plans developed at the state level will inform emergency management planning at the regional and local government level, and
- state mitigation, response, and relief and recovery plans will be aligned with the NSDR.

Regional level

- the planning process at the regional level will be supported by EMV which will also make sure these plans align with state level priorities
- to enable a practical governance arrangement, regional level planning will adopt the eight State Government regional boundaries to align with existing whole of government regional processes[22]
- long-term regional strategies will be developed for risk management, response, and relief and recovery underpinned by risk assessments with plans to meet strategic directions. Planning at the regional level may reduce the need for municipal plans to adopt individual approaches to some hazards
- consideration will be given to the role of the Regional Management Forums to endorse regional emergency strategies and plans, to ensure they align with broader regional planning and strategic priorities
- opportunities for smaller municipalities to come together to form 'clusters' for emergency management planning purposes will be identified at the regional level.[23] Clustering has principal advantages for 'small' councils in pooling resources and expertise, and it allows 'landscape' (sub-regional) planning that relates to a risk footprint extending beyond the boundaries of a single municipality. The MAV is piloting this approach in the Bendigo area and the Fire Services Commissioner is piloting this approach (in relation to fire management) in the Dandenong Ranges
- lead agencies at the regional level will be identified to lead various planning processes, and
- the planning process at the regional level will be subject to independent performance assessment regime managed by the IGEM.

Local level

- the revised process for the development of Municipal Emergency Management Plans (MEMPlan) will be underpinned by a risk assessment and management plan, a response plan and a relief and recovery plan
- councils will have a key role in the planning process and bringing key stakeholders together, including local emergency services brigades and units, local business and critical infrastructure agencies
- risk assessments will identify high-risk communities, and councils will help establish community resilience committees for these high-risk communities by coordinating all agencies to participate in the development of community resilience plans that are underpinned by community resilience principles. This process should complement existing community-led processes and ensure that the expectations and resulting demands on local emergency services providers are carefully considered
- shared accountability for the plans will be reflected in amendments to the EM Act. The provision for councils to endorse MEMPlan will be removed (but councils and agencies will still need to affirm and acquit their responsibilities within the plan)
- local government will retain its current responsibilities to fund specific mitigation activities (such as flood warning systems and land use planning)
- plans will be published and used to measure agencies' performance
- the planning process at the local government level will be subject to an independent performance regime managed by the IGEM
- the role of VICSES in supporting council planning will be reviewed and the requirement for VICSES to undertake the MEMPlan auditing transferred to the IGEM, and
- hazard-specific sub-plans (where required) at the local government level will be led by experts from relevant agencies.

---

22 Part 8 (Appendix 8) of the EMMV provides a guide to various regional boundaries. Boundaries, including hazard footprints, will not always align, but there needs to be a formal mechanism to bring agencies together on a common platform. For the purposes of emergency management, the existing State Government regional boundaries provide this mechanism.

23 s.18 of the EM Act provides for municipal councils to cooperate in relation to emergency management.

Action

17. New emergency management planning arrangements will:

a) Adopt an all-hazards all-agencies approach, and an increased focus on risk and operate at the state, regional and local government levels

b) Be subject to an independent review and evaluation by the Inspector General for Emergency Management with greater focus on quality assurance

c) Incorporate existing emergency management planning processes (including hazard-specific processes) over time

d) Consider a role for Regional Management Forums to support emergency management planning at the regional level

e) Include strategies to increase the involvement of the not-for-profit, community and business sectors in emergency management planning

f) Ensure transparency by developing plans in an inclusive manner and making plans publicly available and easy to understand

g) Transfer responsibility for Municipal Emergency Management Plan auditing from Victoria State Emergency Service to the Inspector General for Emergency Management

h) Clarify roles and responsibilities for local government, recognising that the Municipal Emergency Management Plan is a multi-agency plan, and

i) Task the State Crisis and Resilience Council with responsibility for overseeing implementation of the new arrangements with support from its sub-committees and Emergency Management Victoria.

Building Capacity and Capability across the Sector

The VBRC and the Floods Review both found that the capability and capacity of Victoria's emergency management system were severely tested by major emergencies.

In this context, capability refers to the emergency management system's technical and other abilities to deliver a service. Capacity refers to the extent to which the system is able to sustain application of this capability for long periods or across multiple locations.

Capability and capacity in the emergency management sector will be improved by promoting:

- shared responsibility – all agencies have responsibility to cost-effectively build the state's capability and capacity to plan and respond to major emergencies
- risk reduction – human and other costs of emergencies are lessened as risk reduction activities become more effective. The benefit of action that reduces the severity of emergencies and disasters usually outweighs the cost of that action, and
- networked capability and capacity – no individual emergency services organisation in Victoria has the capability or capacity to provide all services required in large-scale emergencies. Victoria's success in dealing with emergencies depends on how organisations operate together, as well as how individual agencies perform.

The process of building state-wide capability and capacity has already begun through the Fire Services Reform Action Plan legislated for under the *Fire Services Commissioner Act 2010*. The three-year rolling reform action plan aims to improve Victoria's fire-related emergency system. Several projects within the plan address the fire services' capability and capacity. While its participation is not mandated in legislation, VICSES has voluntarily joined the fire services to participate in the reform program.

Interoperability

Victoria's emergency management system involves many organisations with different objectives, operational models and ways of doing business. It is important that these components work together to effectively deploy the State's emergency-related resources for events of a scale or duration requiring a multi-agency response.

Achieving interoperability is about setting up the structures and processes to allow emergency services organisations the chance to work together more effectively, and within networked systems and processes. Emergency services organisations must share vital data across disciplines to respond to emergencies effectively.

The Department of Homeland Security in the United States has developed the Interoperability Continuum (represented below) to encourage those working in emergency management to consider critical elements for success as they plan and implement interoperability solutions.

The Interoperability Continuum provides a blueprint for stakeholder organisations to reach an optimal level of interoperability. It outlines the milestones along five interdependent work streams under a unified governance framework.

Governance: achieving interoperability requires a unified governance framework that reflects the Government's strategic direction to which all relevant stakeholder organisations are aligned. It replaces organisational and system boundaries with a common vision that is achieved through common outcomes.

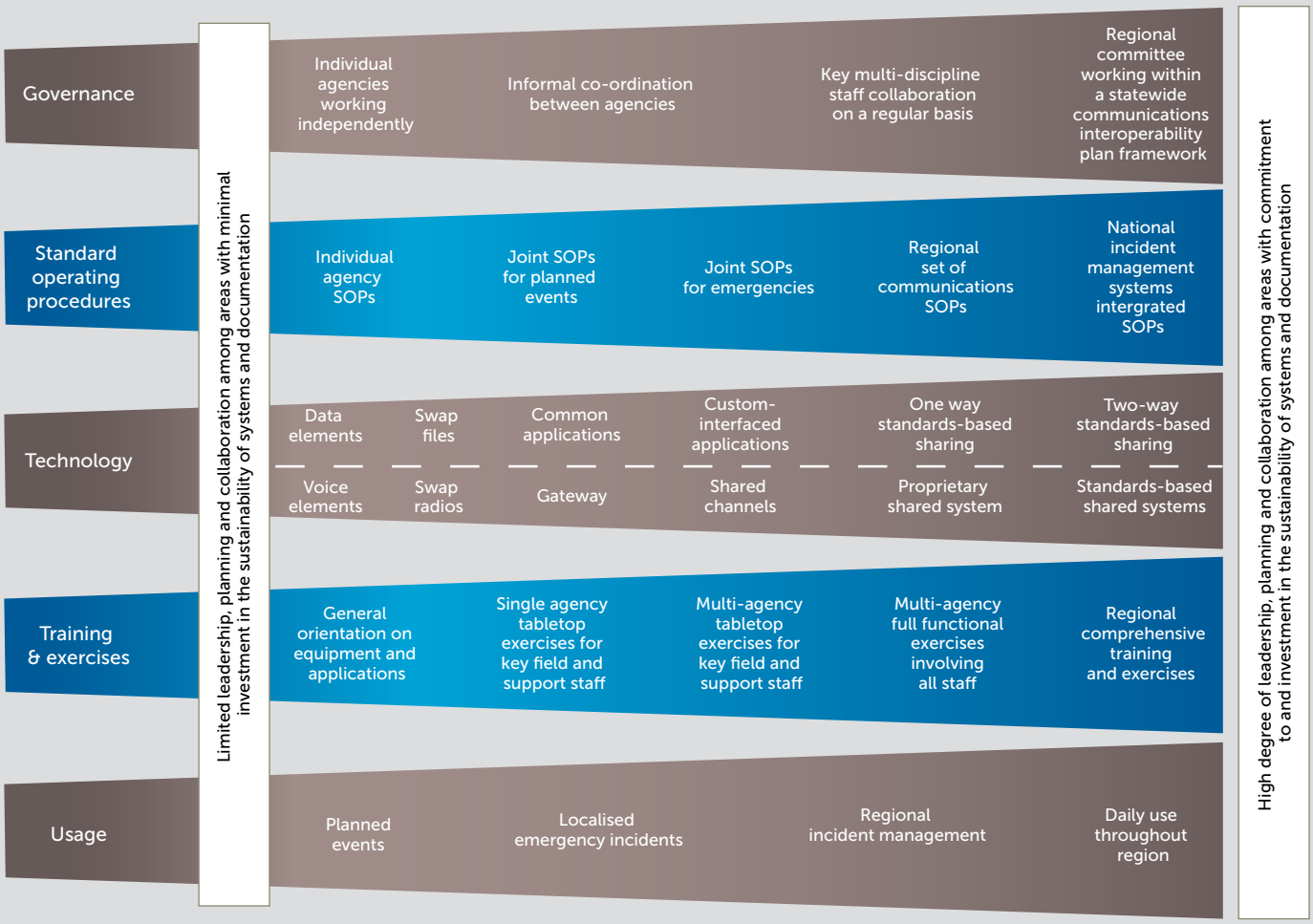
Standard Operating Procedure: developing, adopting and complying with common doctrine in the form of standard operating procedures. These reinforce the principles of collaborative working arrangements in managing emergencies at local, regional and state levels.

Technology: developing and using compatible, even common, information and communications technologies, platforms and business rules as enablers of interoperability for the exchange of voice and data.

Training and Exercises: ensuring the principles of the all-hazards all-agencies approach to interoperability are embedded into operational service delivery by joint training and exercising of all relevant stakeholders.

Usage: encouraging and facilitating the increased use of common capabilities and joint procedures that are scaled seamlessly to meet the demands of routine and major emergencies.

FIGURE 4: INTEROPERABILITY CONTINUUM (THIS SPECTRUM HAS BEEN ADAPTED FOR USE IN THIS DOCUMENT)[24]



24 Dr David Boyd, Interoperability Continuum: A tool for improving emergency response communications and interoperability (2006), Department of Homeland Security, US.

According to respected academics Boin and 't Hart, agencies work better together when:

- they articulate common purposes that recognise the importance of interdependency
- they work to agreed decision-making and conflict resolution structures
- political infighting and conflict between agencies is minimal
- key personnel from different agencies have good relationships, and
- information moves freely between the system's components.[25]

The current legislative framework in which emergency services organisations and other agencies with emergency management responsibilities operate can present barriers to achieving effective networked arrangements. On this basis, and in line with the recommendation of the Floods Review, emergency services-related legislation will be reviewed to remove these barriers and develop a legislative framework that promotes increasingly networked system-wide capability and capacity.

Any consolidation of legislation will aim to:

- reduce system 'silos' and increase interoperability
- clarify the specific emergency-related roles of agencies, including how they will be required to work together
- remove any inappropriate overlaps between agencies, and
- ensure that agencies have common responsibilities, powers and protection in legislation (where appropriate).

Strengthening networks and addressing legislative anomalies within the emergency management system is important to increase interoperability and to address other structural barriers. These goals will further be supported by establishing system-wide standards, centralised procurement, shared accommodation (where viable) and common regional boundaries.

An enterprise model that describes how Victoria's emergency management system inter-relates, supported by new governance arrangements will be developed. The enterprise model will represent the structure, activities, processes, information flows and resources of Victoria's emergency management system.

Action

18. a) Review legislation to identify opportunities to strengthen networks and increase the extent to which emergency services organisations work cooperatively

b) Establish system-wide standards, centralised procurement, shared accommodation (where viable) and common regional boundaries that all build on the Fire Services Reform Action Plan, and

c) Develop a clearly articulated enterprise model that explains how the elements of Victoria's emergency management system inter-relates, supported by the new governance arrangements.

25 Boin, A. & 't Hart, P. (2010). Organising for effective emergency management: Lessons from research. *The Australian Journal of Public Administration*, 69 (4), 357-371.

Volunteers

Victoria's emergency services are highly dependent on the efforts of thousands of volunteers. These volunteers are essential to the response to routine emergencies and provide essential surge capacity during major emergencies.

Volunteers from various community service organisations also make substantial contributions to relief and recovery efforts. Victoria is indebted to all these people, who selflessly give their time and sometimes their lives to protect and help others. Their participation in Victoria's emergency management arrangements is one of the major strengths of the state's system and must be acknowledged, encouraged, and enhanced.

Volunteers are part of their communities and as such, are fundamental to the community approach to safety and ensuring resilient communities. Empowering volunteers plays a pivotal role in local emergency management decision-making directly increases community resilience. It is vital that volunteer local knowledge and expertise is harnessed and respected as part of emergency management planning and response.

The specialist skills of the different emergency services organisations, and the level of training and experience required to attain them is also important. The aim of strengthening the all-hazards all-agencies approach is to better draw on these skills whenever needed. It is essential that the new arrangements, in encouraging interoperability, support the maintenance and development of the skills needed by volunteers and paid staff alike to respond to emergencies throughout Victoria.

This does not necessarily mean all responders will need to have all the skills to be able to respond to any event. It will require that all available skills are maintained and utilised to maximum effect.

A broader all-hazards, capability-driven approach to emergency management must also ensure that what is asked of volunteers is managed in a sustainable manner, and takes local requirements into account along with other pressures on volunteers, considerations for their employers and the need for life balance. Some volunteers may feel they have already reached their capacity.

Contributions from individual volunteers may vary over time. A more holistic volunteer lifecycle which streamlines and simplifies the ability to volunteer across the sector, identifies volunteer career paths throughout the volunteer life cycle, and best matches volunteers' community orientation with their availability, capability and interests is needed.

This White Paper outlines the mechanisms that will be established to drive the reform process for the emergency management sector. These reforms are more likely to succeed if they draw on the expertise and wisdom of people with front line emergency experience. Therefore, volunteers must be consulted as part of the ongoing reform process.

Action

19. Strategies will be developed to:

a) Strengthen Victoria's culture of volunteerism and community service

b) Recognise, value, respect and promote the contribution of volunteers to the well-being and safety of the Victorian public

c) Increase recruitment and retention of volunteers, including those from diverse backgrounds

d) Minimise barriers to volunteering in the emergency management sector

e) Equip volunteers with an all-hazard capability, acknowledging that not all volunteers wish to have responsibilities in relation to all-hazards

f) Develop policy and organisational arrangements that encourage, maintain and strengthen the capacity of volunteers across the sector

g) Develop a more holistic volunteer life cycle with the ability to volunteer across the sector and identified volunteer career paths

h) Consult and engage with volunteers and their representative bodies on matters which affect them, and

i) Acknowledge and respect the contribution that employers make in the way they support volunteerism in the emergency management sector in Victoria.

Additional surge capacity

There are opportunities to strengthen Victoria's emergency surge capacity and clarify roles and responsibilities, for example, amendments to the *Public Administration Act 2004* include emergency provisions for mobilising the public sector workforce.

The deployment of surge personnel (and equipment) beyond that available within the state is sometimes required. National and international agreements are in place so resources from the Commonwealth, other Australian jurisdictions and international emergency services organisations can be deployed in Victoria if necessary. Commonwealth and agency agreements will be reviewed so they allow quick deployment, as needed.

Action

20. a) Review agreements with the Commonwealth and other agencies so personnel and equipment can be quickly deployed, and

b) Explore ways to release capability held within the Victorian public sector.

Multi-agency and competency based training

State level training is currently with the responsibility of the Emergency Management Training and Exercising Strategy Committee. The Floods Review found that the committee did not sufficiently ensure the delivery of multi-agency training and exercising to meet the system's needs. It also noted that training focused on fire response capability and neglected other hazard-related capabilities.[26]

In line with the Floods Review recommendation, there is a need for a formal and competency-based training framework to prepare emergency workers for large and complex events. Common training will also advance system networks and interoperability. It is also important that training strategies consider the need to develop skills and expertise for planning for emergencies, risk management and community engagement.

A system-wide, competency-based training regime founded on current work will be developed. It will consider the most effective ways to deliver combined exercise and simulation-based training to prepare emergency services organisations and departments to work together in response to major emergencies.

Action

21. Develop a Victorian training strategy that:

a) Details the competencies required of emergency workers, and training available to meet these competencies

b) Includes a competency gap analysis incorporating a focus on building planning, risk management and community engagement skills

c) Uses a range of training delivery modes

d) Takes advantage of economies of scale and interoperability opportunities

e) Includes combined exercise and simulation-based training for workers from all organisations in the system, and

f) Clarifies the responsibilities of agencies in relation to participation, implementation and evaluation.

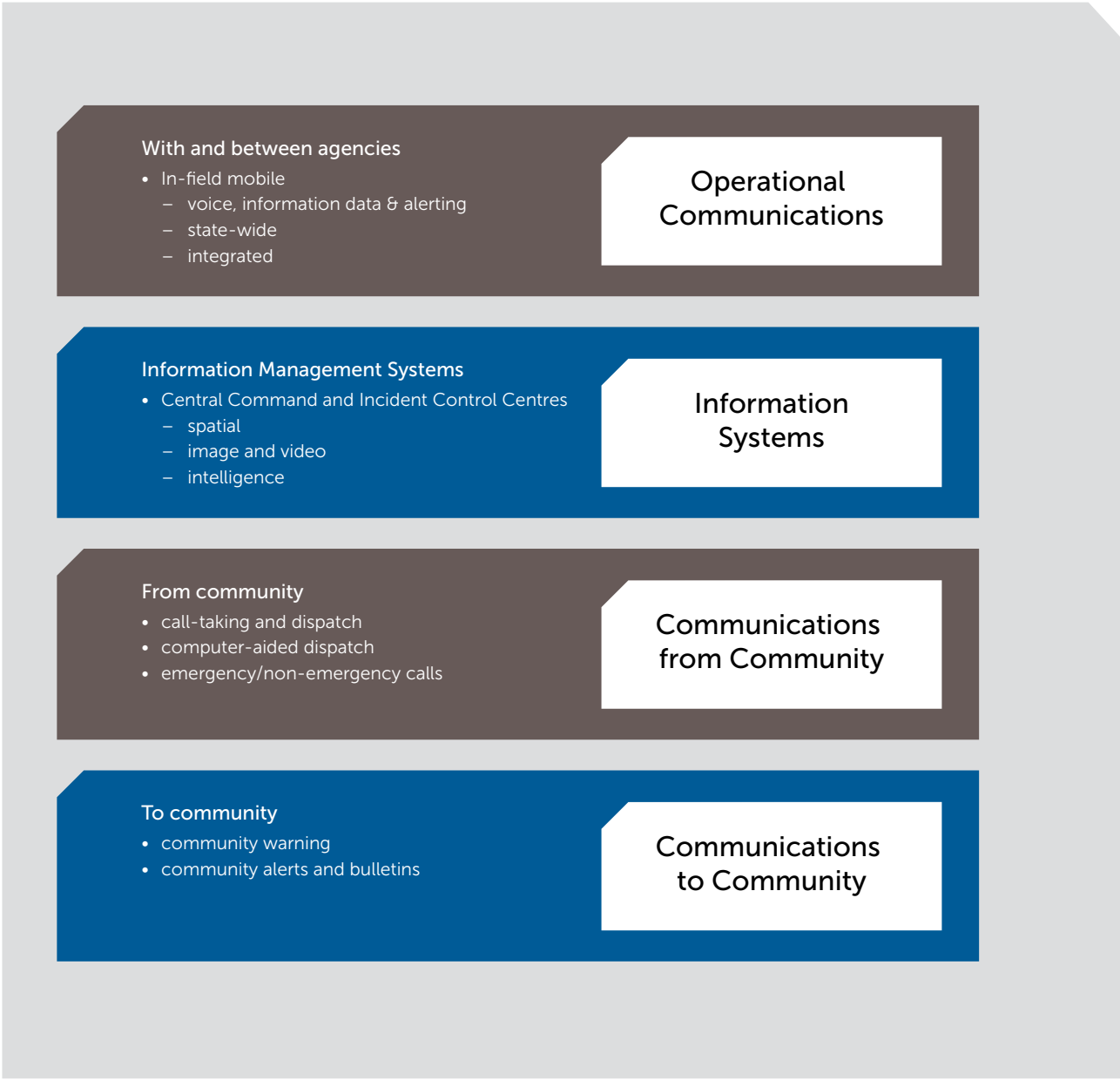
26 Final Report of the Review of the 2010-11 Flood Warnings and Response, 2011, p.144.

Communications and information

Effective emergency services and public safety communications systems are essential to protect Victorian communities. Emergency services communications systems require considerable investment, and time to plan and implement. They must be robust and reliable.

The Emergency Services Communications Strategic Framework (ESCSF) was released in 2011. Widely endorsed in the emergency services sector, the framework provides a broad vision, principles and directions for sector-wide communications infrastructure investment. The scope of the framework is detailed below.

FIGURE 5: SCOPE OF THE EMERGENCY SERVICES COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK[27]



27 Internal working document for the implementation of the Emergency Services Communications Strategic Framework, Department of Justice, Victoria, 2010.

The vision for Victoria's emergency communication systems and information is characterised by:

> high transmission capability and flexible platforms able to support diverse applications

> control centres with systems needed to collect information from diverse sources, including emergency workers and members of the public. These will also be capable of processing, analysing and disseminating acquired knowledge

> field workers with access to information and equipment that is simple and intuitive. Equipment will support the transfer of large volumes of data and communicate (by voice or data transfer) directly with field personnel from other agencies, and

> community members with access to sophisticated, timely and accurate information (via diverse media) before, during and after emergencies.

Building on the ESCSF, a system that assures effective and seamless communication between all components of Victoria's emergency management system and with the community in emergencies will be developed.

The various components of Victoria's emergency system have previously been unable to deliver shared processes and procedures to provide effective data collection, interpretation and sharing – all critical for accurate impact assessments. Although different components of Victoria's emergency system usually hold considerable information during emergencies, it is often not readily available to other agencies because of network inefficiencies.

In line with the ESCSF, work on a long-term strategic plan has begun to determine the path for operational communications as contracts conclude.

Also in line with the ESCSF, the Fire Services Commissioner has launched a common operating platform initiative: 'Information Interoperability Blueprint: Toward resilient emergency management for the information age', to address the ability to share such processes and procedures. The Blueprint is a key part of the Government's information and communications technology strategy entitled Digital by Design.

Greater collaboration, supported by the new governance arrangements, will provide additional impetus to better deliver these communications and information systems through a more directive approach to system-wide change issues.

A centralised approach to procurement will better allow for measurement of the amount of capital and recurrent expenditure required by each emergency service organisation for information technology, radio and other communications technology. It will also support better alignment of standards, radio spectrum resources, operating processes and training across the system – all of which are necessary for a unified or otherwise interoperable system.

Action

22. **Continue developing a long term strategic plan for emergency information and communications, including the integration of the Information Interoperability Blueprint to deliver a common operating platform.**

Equipment and procurement

Agencies with emergency-related responsibilities have usually determined their own resource requirements, and purchased their own equipment and goods. Despite their different specialities, many of these agencies use similar goods and equipment for communication, transport, information management, relief and administration.

To some extent, independent procurement practices have limited agencies' ability to work together in emergencies because their commonly held equipment is not always compatible. These practices are also not the most cost-effective way to equip the system.

The concept of a more consolidated supply management system for the sector is important. The best method by which to implement this should be investigated, including establishing centralised procurement processes for commonly-used equipment and goods such as those relating to communications and information management.

Advantages of such a system are:

> more agencies will use similar equipment and goods, improving interoperability and increasing the ability of agencies to work together

> skills will be more transferable between agencies

> economy of scale savings for agencies, and

> less duplication of effort.

Ensuring that equipment is fit for purpose when making purchasing decisions is a primary requirement that will remain.

Disaster impact assessment system

Good decisions about relief and recovery programming require timely, accurate and progressively more comprehensive information about the impact of an emergency on affected communities, and the assistance required by agencies within or external to those communities.

In the early stages of an emergency, it is difficult to get accurate information. Such information is vital to plan and provide an appropriate, adaptive and evidence-based relief and recovery program.

Impact and needs assessments (particularly for large events) are done initially and then progressively as an event unfolds, as multi-agency resources are mobilised, and as affected communities come to terms with the impacts and their changing needs.

There are three key stages to impact assessments:

Stage 1: Preliminary assessment (visual inspection and quantifiable early data) undertaken by response agencies

Preliminary assessments conducted by emergency service organisations often comprise visual inspections, and/or the compilation of early available quantifiable data (such as the number of injuries or dwellings destroyed or damaged).

Such assessments provide very early intelligence, often in respect to the 'response' environment rather than the recovery to follow. Nonetheless, they are important for relief and recovery because they help indicate the potential scale and location of future relief and recovery needs.

Action

23. a) Develop common procurement strategies, and

b) Consolidate supply management throughout the sector to take advantage of economies of scale and improve interoperability.

Stage 2: Subsequent – progressive and more holistic assessment of the built and natural environments, social and economic impacts, and resulting needs

Impact assessment for relief and recovery requires an additional layer of analysis beyond the preliminary assessment. This assessment compares baseline information to post-disaster information to describe the scale and characteristics of the impact on the social, built, economic and natural environment.

Needs assessment provides information on the type, amount and priorities of help an affected community needs. It considers resources available within an affected community and identifies those needs which can only be met with outside assistance.

The most useful impact and needs assessments for relief and recovery consolidate pre-disaster and post-disaster data, and gather information that will be needed by multiple agencies.

Stage 3: Later – Damage and Loss Assessment

Damage and Loss Assessments estimate the cost of destroyed assets, the changes in the 'flows' of an affected economy caused by the destruction of assets, interruption of business activities and any downturn of an affected economy offset by financial assistance. Such assessments inform the medium to longer-term recovery process, and build the knowledge base of the total cost of disasters that informs risk assessment and management.

There is an opportunity for Victoria to improve its impact and needs assessment system and formally link disaster assessments to relief and recovery planning more quickly and transparently. This work will be supported by the move toward greater interoperability and common operating platforms.

Scalable coordination and leadership model

The recommendations of the VBRC and Floods Review reflected concerns about the fragmentation of efforts in relation to relief and recovery from major emergency events. The new committee structure and EMV will help resolve this issue by formally drawing together responsibility for all aspects of relief and recovery. However the experiences of the 2009 bushfires and 2010-11 and 2012 floods demonstrated that, following the most extreme of events, it is beneficial to establish a dedicated office with responsibility for coordinating efforts across multiple departments and agencies.

Following these events, the Victorian Bushfire Reconstruction and Recovery Authority and the Secretaries Flood Recovery Group respectively provided a focal point and a consistent approach for a complex and long term recovery process.

Based on this experience, a scalable model for quickly deploying an authority to coordinate the ongoing recovery arrangements following major emergencies with particularly devastating or far-reaching consequences will be established. The intention is to prepare the necessary legislative or administrative processes so that such an authority can be immediately established when required.

The authority will provide a clear point of emergency recovery leadership and coordination. Unlike previous ad hoc arrangements, any new such authorities will have a clear line of accountability in the new governance arrangements, and will operate to agreed terms of reference for a specified time period.

Action

24. Review the impact assessment system to:

a) Identify agency responsibilities, information required and data collection, and

b) Develop procedures and protocols to support the collation, analysis, sharing and distribution of collected data (consider common information management system).

Action

25. Develop a scalable model for quickly deploying an authority or body to coordinate the ongoing recovery arrangements after major emergencies with particularly devastating or far-reaching consequences.

CONCLUSION

Victoria's emergency management arrangements need to be reformed to better serve all Victorians. The White Paper is one step in a long-term process that will require a shift in thinking and an ongoing commitment from the Government, agencies and the Victorian community.

This paper sets out a broad roadmap for change. It affirms the importance of supporting the community to become more resilient and building the capability and the capacity of the sector. The paper also establishes governance structures to improve accountability and efficiency, and drive reforms.

The new structures, including the independent monitoring function, will ensure the work meets or exceeds expectations. Some of the reforms outlined in this White Paper will be enacted within months of its release. Others are more complicated and will require considerable consultation and planning in line with clearly established work programs.

As key reform initiatives are developed and implemented, there will be many opportunities for the sector and the Victorian public to help shape these reforms. A key principle underpinning the White Paper is community participation, building resilience and shared responsibility.

The Victorian community must remain the focus. Victorians deserve an emergency management system that can readily and effectively harness the skills, expertise and commitment of our volunteers and paid workers to the greatest extent. The reforms outlined in this White Paper will achieve this goal to ensure a safer and more resilient Victoria.

ACRONYMS

BRCIM	Bushfires Royal Commission Implementation Monitor
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CFA	Country Fire Authority
COAG	Council of Australian Governments
DBI	Department of Business and Innovation
DOH	Department of Health
DOJ	Department of Justice
DPC	Department of Premier and Cabinet
DPCD	Department of Planning and Community Development
DSE	Department of Sustainability and Environment
EM Act	Emergency Management Act 1986
EMC	Emergency Management Commissioner
EMMV	Emergency Management Manual Victoria
EMV	Emergency Management Victoria
ESCSF	Emergency Services Communications Strategic Framework
Floods Review	Final Report of the Review of the 2010-11 Flood Warnings and Response
Green Paper	Towards a More Disaster Resilient and Safer Victoria (September 2011)
IGEM	Inspector General for Emergency Management
MAV	Municipal Association of Victoria
MEMPlan	Municipal Emergency Management Plan
MFB	Metropolitan Fire and Emergencies Services Board
NSDR	National Strategy for Disaster Resilience
SCRC	State Crisis and Resilience Council
SCN	Security Continuity Network
SEC	Security and Emergencies Committee
TCP Act	Terrorism (Community Protection) Act 2003
VBRC	2009 Victorian Bushfires Royal Commission
VICSES	Victoria State Emergency Service

APPENDIX

Submissions received on the Towards a More Disaster Resilient and Safer Victoria Green Paper

LIST OF SUBMISSIONS

1 Metropolitan Fire and Emergency Services Board (MFB)
2 Peter Duncan
3 Michael Eburn (ANU College of Law)
4 Corangamite Shire
5 Clint Saarinen
6 Shire of Campaspe
7 Lynn Gunter
8 Confidentiality Requested
9 Loddon Shire Council
10 City of Stonnington
11 Don Garlick
12 Foodbank Victoria
13 Confidentiality Requested
14 Hepburn Shire Council
15 Victoria Police
16 Santos Limited
17 Confidentiality Requested
18 Wimmera Catchment Management Authority
19 City of Greater Bendigo
20 Confidentiality Requested
21 Majella Global Technologies
22 Major General John W Libby
23 Emergency Services Telecommunications Authority (ESTA)
24 Cooperative Research Centre for Spatial Information
25 Swan Hill Rural City Council
26 Harris Software Systems
27 Jared Hopping
28 Gannawarra Shire Council
29 Committee for Melbourne
30 Telstra
31 Save Williamstown Working Group
32 Melbourne Water
33 Confidentiality Requested
34 The Salvation Army Victoria State Council
35 Shane Cramer
36 Victoria State Emergency Service (VICSES)
37 Macedon Ranges Shire Council
38 Institute of Public Works Engineers Australia (VIC)
39 Victorian Council of Churches
40 East Gippsland Shire Council
41 Ian Bennett
42 The Bereaved Community Advisory Group
43 Murrindindi Shire Council
44 Victorian Farmers Federation
45 Joint submission – Greater City of Bendigo, Central Goldfields Shire, Loddon Shire, Macedon Ranges Shire, Mount Alexander Shire, Hepburn Shire
46 Central Goldfields Shire
47 Leon Soste
48 The University of Melbourne & IBM
49 St John Ambulance Australia (VIC)
50 Confidentiality Requested
51 Women's Health Goulburn North East
52 City of Casey
53 Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV)
54 Pete Walsh
55 Victorian Spatial Council
56 Suncorp Group Limited
57 Google Australia
58 Phillip Jeeves
59 Cardinia Shire Council
60 Confidentiality Requested

61 Monash University

62 Confidentiality Requested

63 Michael Brennan

64 Professor Rod Keenan

65 Country Fire Authority (CFA)

66 Roger Jones

67 Ambulance Victoria

68 Confidentiality Requested

69 Coast Guard

70 Confidentiality Requested

71 Yarra Ranges Council

72 Pyrenees Shire Council

73 Volunteer Fire Brigades Victoria

74 Victorian Emergency Service Association

75 Commissioner for Law Enforcement Data Security

76 Life Saving Victoria

77 Australian Energy Market Operator Ltd

78 Australian Red Cross

79 State Fire Management Planning Support Team

80 Victorian Employers' Chamber of Commerce and Industry (VECCI)

81 Energy Safe Victoria

82 Golden Plains Shire

83 Grampians Regional Strategic Fire Management Planning Committee

84 Southern Grampians Shire Council

85 Northern Grampians Shire Council

86 Nillumbik Shire Council

87 Emergency Management Network

88 High Country Councils Coalition

89 Jim Read

90 Ken Baxter

91 Confidentiality Requested

92 Victorian Council of Social Service (VCOSS)

93 Jeff Godfredson

PHOTO CREDITS

Photo Credit	Page
1. East Gippsland Flooding 2012, Department of Sustainability and Environment. Photographer: David Young. 2. Lakes Entrance Community Meeting, Gippsland Floods, June-July 2007. CFA Strategic Communications. Photographer: Keith Pakenham. 3. Teamwork, CFA Strategic Communications. Photographer: Michelle May.	Cover
1. Yallourn Northern Batter Failure. Yallourn Coalmine, La Trobe Valley. Source – Department of Primary Industries. 2. 1st Anniversary Black Saturday, Kinglake. 7th February 2010, CFA Strategic Communications. Photographer: Blair Dellemijn. 3. CFA and DSE team members planning strategies at the Kilmore East-Murrindindi bushfire. February 2009. CFA Strategic Communications. Photographer: Keith Pakenham	Inside Front Cover
Kerang Train Derailment, 2007, CFA Strategic Communications. Photographer: Ken Jenkins.	iii
Kilmore Public Hall meeting regarding upcoming fire season. 23rd September 2009. CFA Strategic Communications. Photographer: Keith Pakenham.	5
SES Rescue Rubber Ducky. Source – Department of Justice.	17
Premier Ted Baillieu is briefed by SES personnel in Horsham during the January 2011 floods. Source – Department of Premier and Cabinet.	19
ESTA Triple 000 Call-taker, ESTA State Emergency Communications Centre Ballarat. Source – ESTA.	25
Lifesavers demonstrate resuscitation techniques. Source – Life Saving Victoria.	27
A simulated cardiac arrest emergency – Federation Square. Source – Ambulance Victoria.	31
Launch announcing the successful recipients of the 2011/12 Volunteer Emergency Services Equipment Program (VESEP) at Life Saving Victoria's head office, Port Melbourne, 2011. Source – Department of Justice.	36
Battery acid spilt off forklift truck. Rowville, 15th February 2007. CFA Strategic Communications. Photographer: Martin Anderson.	39
Emergency services members planning fireground strategies at a call, CFA Strategic Communications. Photographer: Keith Pakenham.	40
Deployment of Shoreline Boom During Training Exercise. Source – Department of Transport.	42
1st Anniversary Black Saturday, Kinglake, 2010. CFA Strategic Communications. Photographer: Keith Pakenham.	45

Accessibility

If you would like to receive this publication in an accessible format, such as large print, please telephone Victorian Government Contact Centre on **1300 366 356**

ISBN 978 1 92 1627 77 4

State Government Victoria

DOT 7375/12