

JOINT SOP

Title	Public Information and Warnings
Purpose	To provide guidance to members of control and support agencies, in relation to the provision of timely, relevant and tailored public information and warnings to the community before, during, and after emergencies for the primary purpose of protecting life and property.
Scope	This Joint Standard Operating Procedure applies to all control agency members, and those supporting agency members in providing public information and warnings to the community during the response to and early recovery from emergencies. This Joint Standard Operating Procedure does not apply to Victoria Police.
Applicable Agencies	<p>This procedure applies to the following agency personnel;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CFA • DEDJTR • DELWP • DHHS • EMV • EPA • MFB • VICSES <p>Note: Victoria Police discharge their responsibilities as per their agency policies and procedures.</p>
Content	<p>The procedural contents of this SOP are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Step 1: Authorisation and provision of public information and warnings • Step 2: The Public Information Section • Step 3: Application of warning and community information templates • Step 5: Transition to recovery • Schedule One – Protocols for broadcasting frequency and SEWS • Schedule Two – Guideline for the use of Emergency Alert • Schedule Three – Other tools for warning the community • Schedule Four – Guideline for the monitoring and management of warnings
Responsibilities	Emergency Management Commissioner, State Response Controller, State Controller, Agency Commanders, Incident Controller, Deputy Incident Controller, Public Information Officer, Warnings Duty Officer, Media Officer, Spokesperson, Social Media Officer, Information and Warnings Officer, Community

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	Liaison Officer.
Definitions	<p>The following definitions apply to this procedure:</p> <p>Community Liaison Officer Person appointed to co-ordinate community liaison activities from the Incident Control Centre (ICC) associated with the incident. Reports to the Public Information Officer.</p> <p>Emergency Management Joint Public Information Committee (EMJPIC) A state committee that supports operational public information processes by coordinating whole of government emergency management communications and community engagement. EMJPIC coordinates appropriate stakeholders for each specific event where possible, including state, local and federal agencies, businesses and relevant industries and fosters partnerships with media.</p> <p>Evacuation The planned movement of people from dangerous or potentially dangerous areas to safer areas and eventual return.</p> <p>Incident Joint Public Information Committee (IJPIC) Committee established to coordinate the public information across all agencies supporting the incident tier to ensure consistent and holistic messaging throughout response and recovery.</p> <p>Information and Warnings Officer (IWO) Prepares, coordinates and disseminates information and warnings to communities and stakeholders (internal and external) during an incident. Reports to the Public Information Officer.</p> <p>Media accreditation card A card issued by the CFA to media personnel who have showing completion of the training course PUAOHS002A (Maintain Safety at an Incident Scene) that proves media have undertaken briefings about bushfire safety.</p> <p>Media Officer (MO) Works within the Media Unit at an ICC or State Control Centre (SCC) and is responsible for writing key messages, media releases and coordinating all media contact for emergency events. Reports to the Public Information Officer.</p> <p>Public Information Officer (PIO) The individual responsible for the provision of information to the community affected by the emergency. They manage and lead the Public Information Section. Their role includes engaging key stakeholders before, during and after an emergency to ensure the provision of information to the community is coordinated at the local, regional and state levels.</p> <p>Public Information Section (PIS) The section responsible for the preparation, coordination and dissemination of public information and warnings to current and potentially affected communities, media, other agencies, and operational personnel. The Information and Warnings Unit, Media</p>

	<p>Unit and Community Liaison Unit are part of the PIS.</p> <p>SCC Intelligence Support Officer A member of the SCC Support team who provides intelligence and warnings monitoring services and support. This role is not part of the AIIMs structure.</p> <p>Social Media Officer Works within the Media Unit and is responsible for posting, monitoring and responding to community on social media.</p> <p>Standard Emergency Warning Signal (SEWS) The warning signal used in assisting the delivery of public warnings for major emergencies, as described in Part 8 Appendix 14 of the Emergency Management Manual Victoria (EMMV).</p> <p>State Strategic Communications Cell (SSCC) The SSCC guides and sets the strategic communication direction for Class 1, 2 and 3 emergencies, fulfilling the Emergency Management Commissioner’s legislative responsibilities through readiness, response to relief and early recovery on behalf of the State.</p> <p>Victorian Warning Protocol The protocol that outlines the requirements of emergency response and recovery agencies regarding coordinated and consistent information and warnings to inform the Victorian community of a potential or actual emergency event.</p> <p>Warnings & Advice Duty Officer (WADO) Warnings and Advice Duty Officer role is a 24/7</p> <p>The WADO role supports agencies to issue warnings in the absence of a local IWO, and is filled by respective agency duty officers. The WADO role is a 24/7 on-phone duty role that reports to the control agency State Duty Officer. Agencies fill this role based on their requirements and resourcing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CFA/DELWP/VICSES/EMV – Warning and Advice Duty Officer (WADO) • MFB - District Command Centre (DCC) Managers • VICSES - relevant Duty Officers
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PROCEDURE

- 1. Authorisation and provision of public information and warnings**
- 1.1. The Incident Controller is required to authorise all information and warning notifications for all emergencies, before they are disseminated to the community, unless this is impracticable.
- 1.1.1. To facilitate the rapid communication of information and warnings, the Incident Controller may authorise a Deputy Incident Controller or PIO to authorise the release of information and warnings to the community.
- 1.1.2. Where an extreme and imminent threat to life exists and it is not practicable to obtain authorisation from the Incident Controller, information and warnings may be issued by any response agency personnel. The Incident Controller is required to be advised as soon as possible when anything is issued under

these circumstances.

- 1.1.3. In rapidly developing incidents where no Information and Warnings Officer (IWO) is in place, the Incident Controller may request assistance from the relevant agency Warnings Duty Officer (WDO) at local or State level.
- 1.1.4. Where the ICC IWO is seeking to release warnings and cannot do so, the IWO should contact the Region or State PIS or agency Warnings Duty Officer to request them to issue them on their behalf.
- 1.1.5. Once information and warnings are authorised by the Incident Controller (or other persons authorised in accordance with section 1.1.1 to 1.1.4), they require no additional approval before being released to the community.
- 1.2. Under section 42 of the Emergency Management Act 2013 the Emergency Management Commissioner must ensure that warnings are issued and information is provided to the Victorian community in relation to fires for the purposes of protecting life and property. This is an oversight function to ensure that others with a duty to warn fulfil their responsibilities.
- 1.3. The following officers (the “statutory duty holders”) have the responsibility under legislation to issue warnings in relation to fire:
 - 1.3.1. major fire – the State Response Controller¹
 - 1.3.2. fire in the metropolitan district (other than a major fire) - Chief Officer of the MFB²
 - 1.3.3. fire in the country area of Victoria (other than a major fire) – Chief Officer of the CFA³
 - 1.3.4. fire in State forest, national park or on protected public land (other than a major fire) – Secretary to DELWP⁴.
- 1.4. This means that the statutory duty holders are legally responsible for issuing warnings for fire, and may be exposed to potential legal liability if this duty is not discharged appropriately. Section 1.1 above authorises Incident Controllers to undertake this function on behalf of the statutory duty holder.
- 1.5. Where an emergency is not a fire, the responsibility to issue information and warnings is that of the Officer who has overall control of response activities.
- 1.6. For consistency throughout this procedure, the term Incident Controller includes these authorising officers.
- 1.7. The State Response Controller is responsible for ensuring information and warnings are issued to the community via a monitoring and quality control function through the SCC PIS. The State Response Controller exercises this responsibility on behalf of the Emergency Management Commissioner in the case of fires, and is authorised under this JSOP to perform this monitoring and oversight function in

¹ Section 43(1) of the *Emergency Management Act 2013*.

² Section 43(2) of the *Emergency Management Act 2013* and section 32AA of the *Metropolitan Fire Brigades Act 1958*.

³ Section 43(2) of the *Emergency Management Act 2013* and section 50B of the *Country Fire Authority Act 1958*.

⁴ Section 43(2) of the *Emergency Management Act 2013* and section 62AA of the *Forests Act 1958*. Under Section 29 of the *Forests Act* the Chief Fire Officer of DELWP is authorised to exercise this duty of the Secretary.

relation to other emergencies.

- 1.7.1. Given this responsibility, there may be times when the members of the State Information and Warnings Unit have reason to initiate a new notification on behalf of the State Response Controller or Class 2 State Controller.
 - 1.7.2. Schedule Four – ‘Guidelines for the monitoring and management of warnings’ outlines the process for making any changes to authorised information and warnings.
 - 1.7.3. The state PIO or the SCC Intelligence Support Officer may make minor changes to warnings and community information if deemed necessary to correct errors.
 - 1.7.4. Should major changes be required the State Response Controller will follow through the line of control will confirm requirements with the Incident Controller and request changes to be made.
- 1.8. The Class 2 state Controller is responsible for ensuring information and warnings are issued to the community via a monitoring and quality control function through the SCC PIS. The State Controller is authorised under this JSOP to perform this monitoring and oversight function in relation to Class 2 emergencies.

2. The Public Information Section

- 2.1. A PIS should be established at the incident tier and is responsible for managing the Public Information function on behalf of the Incident Controller. As deemed necessary a PIS may be established at the Regional and State Tiers to support the incident.
- 2.2. Consideration should be given to establishing a full PIS at the Incident Management Team (IMT) to ensure it is as close as possible to the affected community. This PIS should be supported from the region and/or state level.
- 2.3. The PIO is responsible for the dissemination of community information and warnings on behalf of the Incident Controller, and should ensure that notifications are based on reliable information.
- 2.4. The Incident Controller and the PIO are responsible for ensuring that all public information and warnings adhere to the Victorian Warnings Protocol and follow operational guidelines.
- 2.5. For some major emergencies, the IMT PIO may form an Incident Joint Public Information Committee (IJPIC), engaging relevant communications representatives from the Incident Emergency Management Team agencies.
- 2.6. The PIO should Chair the IJPIC with a relevant recovery coordinator (e.g. Municipal Council) as Deputy Chair to ensure consistent messaging and approach into recovery.
- 2.7. The IJPIC will work closely with the Incident EMT and EMJPIC.
- 2.8. The Emergency Management Public Information Reference Manual provides further guidance on the processes for the units within the PIS.

3. Application of warnings and community information templates

- 3.1. All warnings are required to be issued from the consolidated warnings tools – EM-

COP and Emergency Alert.

- 3.2. Warnings should be issued in line with the control agency hazard procedures.
- 3.3. Warnings can be issued at a number of different levels relating to the type and severity of the event.
- 3.3.1. **Emergency Warning** – Issued when the community is in imminent danger of an incident/event and need to take action now.
- 3.3.2. **Warning (Watch and Act)** – Issued when an incident/event is likely to, or is directly impacting the community. They need to take action now.
- 3.3.3. **Advice** – Issued to notify the community that an incident/event has occurred that may escalate to impact on life or property. Actions may be recommended for preparedness or vulnerable groups.
- 3.3.4. **Advice - All Clear** - Issued when the threat of an incident/event has subsided. An ‘Advice - All Clear’ is required as a follow up where a Warning/Watch and Act or Emergency Warning has been issued.
- 3.4. Evacuation warnings can be issued when an evacuation is planned. Refer to JSOP J3.12 – Evacuation.
- 3.4.1. **Prepare to Evacuate** – Issued when it is recommended to that the community should quickly prepare to leave the area. This may include undertaking actions to prepare their family, gather critical items and protect their property.
- 3.4.2. **Evacuate Now** – Issued when the community is recommended to immediately leave or processes are in place to evacuate communities.
- 3.4.3. **Safe to Return** – Issued when it is safe for the community to return to an area after an evacuation.
- 3.5. Information contained in a warning should be critical to assist a person’s decision making during an event and should include incident situation, call to action, relief locations, road closures etc.
- 3.6. Warnings should be:
- **Tailored:** warnings are required to include specific details about the emergency and likely or actual impacts on the community. Where possible local knowledge is required to be utilised.
 - **Timely:** warnings are required to be authorised as a priority with initial information issued in the shortest time practicable and updates provided in a timely manner. Warnings should be updated regularly.
 - **Relevant:** warnings are required to contain explicit information in relation to severity, location, predicted direction and the likelihood impact of on communities. Advice on protective actions for the community to undertake should be relevant to the incident and community impacted.
 - **Accessible:** warnings are required to be provided through multiple channels. Warnings should be written in plain language.
- 3.7. Information that is of interest or will assist the community once they have been affected by an emergency should be provided via Community Information. There are two types of Community Information templates.
- Incident Notification – issued when an event has potential to create significant community interest, but there is minimal or no likely impact and no community action required.

- Newsletter – issued to provide non-urgent information to keep the community up-to-date with developments and recovery information during incidents/events (e.g. financial assistance).

4. Transition to recovery

- 4.1. Relief and recovery messaging should be integrated with response information as early as possible to facilitate a smooth transition into the recovery phase. These messages should include information about relief centres, impacts on critical infrastructure, access to assistance and other relevant details to assist the community.
- 4.2. The PIO should lead the development of a communications plan to ensure transition of all Public Information functions into recovery. If the State Strategic Communications Cell (SSCC) is active, the PIO should collaborate with the SSCC to assist in the development and implementation of the strategic communications plan.
- 4.3. Communications Plans should be undertaken in conjunction with local council and/or DHHS and consider audiences, agreed messaging, processes and future resource requirements. Other key stakeholders should be engaged and included as early as practicable, ideally via the IJPIC. Supporting documentation can be found in the IMT Toolbox. The Relief and Recovery Public Information and Communications Framework can be found under EM Arrangements.
- 4.4. Handover from the PIO to the relevant recovery coordinator should be completed outlining the key contacts, messages and the communications plan.
- 4.5. The relevant recovery manager (e.g. Municipal Council) should take over the role of Chair of the IJPIC once the transition into recovery is underway.
- 4.6. The functional lead for each area in recovery is responsible for ensuring that appropriate approvals are gained for any public recovery information in line with that agency's business rules and plans.
- 4.7. The PIS may be called upon to provide communications personnel to support and facilitate the transition to recovery.

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SAFETY

Protection and preservation of life is paramount. This includes:

- Safety of emergency response personnel
- Safety of community members including vulnerable community members and visitors/tourists

In the application of this JSOP there the following safety considerations apply:

- Nil

REFERENCE	
Related Documents	<p><i>Emergency Management Act 1986</i></p> <p><i>Emergency Management Act 2013</i></p> <p><i>Country Fire Authority Act 1958</i></p> <p><i>Metropolitan Fire Brigades Act 1958</i></p> <p><i>Forests Act 1958</i></p> <p>State Emergency Response Plan (EMMV Part 3) 1 August 2016</p> <p>Victorian Warnings Protocol V3 2017</p> <p>JSOP3.12 Evacuation</p> <p>JSOP3.18 Rapid deployment of air quality monitoring for community health</p> <p>JSOP3.19 Managing significant community exposures to fine particles in smoke</p> <p>JSOP3.20 Managing significant community exposures to carbon monoxide from smoke</p> <p>Emergency Management Public Information Reference Manual</p> <p>Relief & Recovery Information & Communications Framework</p>
Environment	Nil

REVIEW

Date Issue	2 October 2017
Date Effective	2 November 2017
Date to be Reviewed	September 2020
Date to Cease	

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AUTHORITY

The Emergency Management Commissioner has issued this SOP under section 50 of the Emergency Management Act 2013. The responder agencies must comply with incident management operating procedures.

Departments and agencies that have approved have also agreed to comply with this procedure.

Approved	Signature	Date
Craig Lapsley Emergency Management Commissioner		
Alison McMillan Deputy Director Emergency Management, DHHS		
Brian Hamer Acting Director Preparedness and Recovery Coordination, DEDJTR		
Endorsed	Signature	Date
Garry Cook Acting Chief Officer, CFA		
Matt Potter Acting Chief Fire Officer, DELWP		
Greg Leach Acting Chief Officer, MFB		
Trevor White Chief Operations Officer, VICSES		

Schedule 1

Protocol for broadcasting frequency and SEWS

How Standard Emergency Warning System (SEWS) is used

SEWS is authorised as part of the sign off process for issuing Emergency Warnings and Evacuation Warnings. SEWS is automatically triggered as part of the issuing of emergency warnings and evacuation warnings.

Incident Controllers should consider if reduced broadcasting conditions should be applied during protracted events or in the evening (between 2100hrs and 0500hrs). If reduced broadcasting is required then the Media Unit should contact Emergency Broadcasters and notify them of the change in conditions (including the use of SEWS and frequency of updates).

Emergency Broadcasters can contact the Media Unit to request the Incident Controller consider reducing broadcasting conditions. Before altering the broadcasting frequency the following should be undertaken:

- i) Check with the Incident Controller when next update will be issued (e.g. warning expiry set for 6am)*
- ii) Incident Controller or PIO confirms that the community is sufficiently informed and that reduced updates won't impact community awareness*
- iii) Emergency Broadcasters and the PIO consult with each other and both agree to the altered frequency of broadcasting, providing approval from the Incident Controller is ascertained*
- iv) Emergency Broadcasters will inform listeners that the frequency of updates will be reduced to hourly and when the next update will be*

If a new warning is issued the broadcaster is required to resume normal emergency broadcasting (e.g. break in for Emergency Warning).

The State Agency Commander of the Control Agency or the State Response Controller, shall monitor the use of SEWS and where they consider it appropriate provide advice to the Incident Controller about reduced broadcasting conditions.

The SCC PIS, where operating, will assist with monitoring the issue of emergency warnings and the use of SEWS. They will support the incident if a request is made to alter broadcasting conditions.

Where there is more than one incident occurring within the state that is generating emergency warnings, broadcasters may adjust use of SEWS to play it only once before a block of warnings are broadcast.

These arrangements have been incorporated in the 'Practice Note for Emergency Broadcasting in Victoria', as the procedure for implementing the Memoranda of Understanding between the Victorian Government and Emergency Broadcasters.

Example of SEWS instructions to broadcasters;

SEWS REQUIRED

This is an official emergency warning announcement issued by NAME. Please broadcast this warning VERBATIM.

The 'Safety Information' and 'Stay Informed' sections should be broadcast at least once in the case of multiple warnings.

Broadcasters should break into programming to broadcast this emergency announcement, preceded by the Standard Emergency Warning Signal.

The announcement is to be repeated 5 mins after the original break into programming, including the SEWS.

After this time there is no further need for SEWS for this specific warning, please revert to reading the warning every 15 minutes in line with the Practice Note for Emergency Broadcasting in Victoria.

If an updated warning is received, please start these broadcasting instructions anew.

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Schedule 2

Guideline for the use of Emergency Alert

Decision to utilise

The decision to use Emergency Alert, whilst dependent on the situation at the time, is more likely to be used as a warning channel when one or more of the following apply:

- contributes to saving lives and property.
- it is deemed the best way of warning the community in the event of an actual or likely emergency
- alternate channels have been considered and alone may not achieve objective(s)
- time is of the essence and specific action following receipt of the warning is required
- defined geographical area

Emergency Alert has a number of different campaign modes available. These are voice, SMS – Service Address and SMS Location Based. The user should choose the campaign mode(s) and/or change the default mode based on the circumstances and operational requirements.

Like all warnings agencies should be mindful that overuse of Emergency Alert may contribute to community complacency and/or the community becoming desensitised to the importance of the warning content.

Promotional and marketing messages are not to be disseminated through Emergency Alert.

The decision to utilise the telephony system will be the responsibility of the Incident Controller. Agency protocols are to contain sufficient information about the use of Emergency Alert.

Agencies are to ensure that they maintain accurate records of all decision-making activities and processes, messages disseminated and associated costs.

Message construction

Users of Emergency Alert need to ensure that the message content considers the limitation of the system.

- SMS - 160 characters maximum (includes spacing)
- Voice - 4000 characters, equivalent of approximately four minutes. (An average message length is approx 30 secs. Longer messages may unnecessarily congest the network)

Emergency Alert contains templates developed by Agency Authorisers. The templates contain generic content for specific hazards with variable fields compatible with the Common Alerting Protocol⁵. Below is an example template.

⁵ Common Alerting Protocol – *simple format used for exchanging all hazard emergency alerts and public warnings. CAP allows a consistent warning message to be disseminated simultaneously over a range of technology networks and warning mediums, thus increasing warning effectiveness while simplifying the warning task.* [CAP Australian Profile (CAP-AP) V1.0]

Message Type	Severity	Voice Message	Text Message
Bushfire	Warning	Emergency. Emergency. This is a Bush Fire Emergency Warning message issued by the CFA. Residents in the //LOCATION// and surrounding areas should seek shelter now. Further information is available via the media, or go to	Bushfire Emergency Warning from CFA. //LOCATION// and surrounding areas. Seek shelter now. Check local radio or www.cfa.vic.gov.au

*Voice Message content uses phonetic spelling



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Users should ensure they listen to the voice playback prior to submitting the message (e.g. residents may sound better spelt residents).

Message dissemination

Warnings disseminated through the telephony based system should:

- define geographical area for telephony warning dissemination
- agree to mode of dissemination i.e. mobile based and/or landline based
- undertake telephony messaging procedures as outlined in the Telstra telephony warning user guide
- ensure that other channels that are referenced have the correct information

If the telephone alert message directs people to seek further information, a warning should be issued through the warnings publishing tools before Telephone Alert unless there are confounding reasons against such use.

System capability, application and performance

Agencies are responsible for undertaking appropriate training and familiarisation activities to ensure users understand the functionality, capability and capacity of the system.

There is a comprehensive User Guide accessible via the help tab on the IMT Toolbox, dedicated 24hr Service Desk and a stand-alone training site to further support registered users. The User Guide includes Recommended Use Guidelines to follow to optimise the performance of the system. The User Guide also outlines the technical configuration of Emergency Alert including supported system browsers, and minimum PC operating configuration to optimise performance.

The system does have some inherent limitations. These include:

- capacity of existing telecommunications networks and infrastructure
- capacity of local telephone exchanges
- existing mobile phone coverage
- integrity and accuracy of data within the Integrated Public Number Database (IPND). The Location Based Number Store (LBNS) is the datasource for Emergency Alert and uses information from IPND
- for location based SMS - the last known location of the mobile phone handset may be up to an hour old. The network updates the location when the handset interacts with the network e.g. makes or receives a call, sends or receives an SMS. If there have not been any network interactions the network updates the handset location every hour (more frequent updates would overload the network)
- restricted access to data due to privacy legislation



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A number of factors may affect message dissemination, including:

- the length of the message
- the number of retries configured for fixed line services
- the Campaign Validity Period
- the time taken to authorise a Campaign
- fixed line congestion
- SMS network load
- number of concurrent Campaigns
- size of the Campaign
- Power disruption or infrastructure failure of communications network

The Emergency Alert system will continue to be examined in the context of continuous improvement and improved effectiveness.

Schedule 3

Other tools for warning the community

VicEmergency Hotline

VicEmergency Hotline is a telephone service that can provide the public with information relevant to emergencies.

The VicEmergency Hotline operational hours are dependent of agency business rules and operational requirements. The State Response Controller and respective agency can nominate hotline operational hours. During recovery the State Relief and Recovery Manager can activate and nominate the hotline operational hours. The process and form for actioning this can be found in SOP – SCC Planned Activation.

When the VicEmergency Hotline is not activated community members can call the hotline to listen to the latest warnings. A text to speech converter means that warnings published to VicEmergency will be read out to the caller. Community members have the option to listen to warnings issued in a post code (that they enter) or if they can select to listen to all warnings issued for Victoria.

The PIS and the VicEmergency Hotline will work together to provide the community with the most up to date information before, during and after emergencies.

1. When the VicEmergency Hotline is activated the PIS should ensure that they are provided with updated and approved key messages. Approved key messages should be provided to the VicEmergency Hotline Customer Service Centre through email (cscemergency.info@delwp.vic.gov.au).
2. The PIS at the SCC will provide support to VicEmergency Hotline by providing them with relevant information and assisting with difficult questions.
3. During recovery, when the PIS is deactivated, key messages will be provided to the VicEmergency Hotline Customer Service Centre by either the State Relief and Recovery Unit (when activated) or by DHHS when recovery is occurring at region.
4. New information provided by the VicEmergency Hotline to the PIS is to be passed to the SCC Intelligence Section to follow up immediately with the IMT Situation Unit. A response is to be provided to the VicEmergency Hotline regarding the validation of the information provided.

Community Alerting Sirens

Community Alerting Sirens are activated at the discretion of the Incident Controller to alert the community of an imminent threat to the community and community members should immediately seek further information.

Sirens are activated using EM-COP Public Publishing. The option to sound a community alerting siren is available for Warning (Watch & Act), Emergency Warning and Evacuation warnings where the control agency has determined that it might use a siren. Community Alerting Sirens can be used to alert the community to any hazard.

Siren lengths:

- Short Siren (up to 90 seconds) – indicates a CFA Brigade has responded to an emergency incident nearby. Stay informed.
- Extended Siren (5 minutes) – indicates that a current emergency has been identified in the local area and people should seek further information immediately. The emergency incident will impact people in this area.

Less than [40 Victorian communities](#) have community alert sirens. The location of the sirens is available within EM-COP by turning on the Infrastructure – Community – Warning Sirens data layer.



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Schedule 4

Guideline for the monitoring and management of warnings

The key role of the members of the State Information & Warnings Unit and the SCC Intelligence Support Officer is to monitor and support the agency's dissemination of information and warnings.

This ensures the State Response Controller's legislative responsibility to provide information and warnings to the Victorian community under section 42 of the Emergency Management Act 2013 is met.

Given this responsibility, there may be times when the members of the State Information and Warnings Unit or the SCC Intelligence Support Officer have reason to update or reissue a warning authorised by an Incident Controller. In this instance the State Response Controller/State Agency Commander needs to liaise with their Regional counterpart.

In line with this Standard Operating Procedure 1.1.2, where an **extreme and imminent threat to life** exists and it is not practicable to obtain authorisation from the Incident Controller in the circumstances, the State Response Controller can request the State Information and Warnings Unit initiate a warning.

PROCESS FOR CHANGES

Should an update or reissue be deemed necessary by either the State Information and Warnings Unit or SCC Intelligence Support Officer they will:

- Confirm the need with the State PIO or State Agency Commander.
- Contact the relevant Incident Information and Warnings Officer or Warnings Duty Officer first to give them the opportunity to send an update.
- Should the local officer agree that the changes are necessary, but is unable to oblige within 10 minutes then the State Information and Warnings unit will make the changes on behalf of the Incident Controller.
- The local Warnings Officer or Warnings Duty Officer may request the State Information and Warnings Unit make the changes if they are unable to do so in a timely manner.

Where the ICC, IWO or WADO cannot be contacted within 10 minutes then the State PIO or State Agency Commander can authorise the reissue or update of a notification as per procedure 1.4 in JSOP 4.01. The incident Information & Warnings Officer and Incident Controller is required be made aware of the reissue or update as soon as possible.

The following instances are considered 'major' changes and need to be raised through the State Response Controller to confirm notification requirements with the Regional Agency Commander/Incident Controller:

1. Where the template chosen does not appropriately represent the notification content
2. Any changes to the impacted area/towns
3. Any changes to the time to impact
4. Incident Name

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