

SEMC COMMUNIQUE



MAY 2022 HIGHLIGHTS

The second meeting of the State Emergency Management Committee (SEMC) for 2022 was held on Thursday 5 May. The meeting was a strategic planning day, with items outside of this scope not considered.

New Independent SEMC Member

The SEMC welcomed a new independent member, Ms Julie Waylen. Ms Waylen brings a wealth of community experience as the CEO of Diversity South – a Not-for-Profit disability service organisation located in Mandurah, Western Australia. Ms Waylen's career has spanned across senior executive leadership roles within both the State Government and the community services sector, encompassing disability services, child protection, family support, homelessness, domestic violence, community services and health. Ms Waylen is a distinguished leader and a fellow of the Institute of Public Administration WA and in 2021 she was awarded WA Leader of the Year Working in the Not-for-Profit Sector. Ms Waylen is a Board Member of Catholic Homes Incorporated, Shelter WA, and National Disability Services, and is a member of the WA Supporting Communities Forum as well as a range of other State Government committees.

Discussion Items and Outcomes

The impact of four key themes on the Emergency Management sector was discussed:

Climate Change

Western Australia is vulnerable to climate events and a changing climate requires greater attention on prevention and increased resilience. The SEMC discussed the limitations of response and recovery (RR) when dealing with the expected increase in severity and frequency of emergency events because of climate change, so much of the discussion centred on prevention and preparedness (PP) in order to implement more effective early intervention and minimise the impacts on RR.

The long-term benefits of focussing on PP was discussed, and how this would enable the empowerment of communities through increased personal responsibility through a stronger connection between community and local Emergency Management capability.

Recovery

State Recovery Coordinator, and State Recovery Controller for TC Seroja, Ms Melissa Pexton presented to the SEMC on recovery, highlighting the fact that there had been no structural changes to the recovery framework since 2012. The SEMC endorsed a review of the recovery framework which is due to be presented to the SEMC at the October 2022 meeting.

The SEMC provided Ms Pexton with the following input for the recovery review:

- recovery needs to focus on people and community, and that local government has a key role to play
- success of the district approach in the aftermath of TC Seroja

- the binary designation of a recovery effort either being led by local governments or requiring a whole-of-government response, including for long term, long tail recovery
- roles and responsibilities of state government agencies and collaboration with the private sector
- improved role clarity and coordination through 'operationalising' recovery
- limitations of existing Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements
- impact of climate change – increasing scale and frequencies of disasters is putting a significant amount of pressure on surge capacity resourcing
- the importance of considering mental health impacts

Philanthropy

Emerging relationships between local and state government stakeholders and philanthropic organisations in Emergency Management sit outside the EM framework, leading to ad hoc and fragmented efforts.

SEMC members highlighted the need for a strategic approach and the development of a new framework that outlines the terms of engagement by outlining goals, objectives, and principles of philanthropic engagement, including an 'all hazard' approach to the PPRR model. The framework should be flexible, acknowledging different stakeholders and their capability and offerings, scalable according to the size of the event, and address how equity for the beneficiaries is managed.

Governance of SEMC Subcommittees and Reference Groups

The SEMC recognises the need to review the current state of the Subcommittees and Reference Groups, and the need to ensure that the future governance structure has a greater degree of clarity of purpose and intent. Further, a robust exchange of information was critical between all levels of the SEMC structure.

SEMC discussed the potential review of the governance structure, roles and responsibilities, including decision making, membership, scope, reporting and potential lifespan. For example, SEMC could establish time-limited working groups to deliver discrete tasks. There was also discussion about the roles of the District Emergency Management Committees (DEMCs) and Local Emergency Management Committees (LEMCs) and how they could be utilised to a greater extent, with the potential for review.

SEMC will conduct a review of the strategic and operational governance, structure, and scope of its Subcommittee and Reference Groups. A DEMC and LEMC review will be considered by SEMC.

Consultation

SEMC has responsibility for the development, maintenance and review of Emergency Management plans, policies, and documents. To ensure these arrangements maintain their relevancy and ability to manage emergencies in WA, they must undergo a process of continuous improvement.

The following EM documents are currently released for stakeholder feedback:

- All Hazards Evacuation Flagging Guidelines
- State Emergency Management Roles and Responsibilities Review

There are a number of plans that are scheduled for consultation in the second half of this year:

- State Hazard Plan – Severe Weather
- State Emergency Management Roles and Responsibilities Review
- Funding in Emergencies Arrangements

Following EM sector consultation, the State EM Policy Branch, in collaboration with the Traffic Management During Emergencies working group, will incorporate feedback received into the State EM Traffic Management During Emergencies Guidelines, for endorsement by the Response Capability Subcommittee in June 2022.

To give feedback on the above plans, visit the [State Emergency Management Consultation page](#), find the relevant consultation tile and select 'Get Involved'.

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

GENERAL UPDATES

Next meeting of the SEMC

The next meeting of the SEMC will be held on Thursday 4 August 2022.

Subcommittees and Reference Groups

The next meetings for SEMC Subcommittees and Reference Groups are scheduled for:

Risk Subcommittee	21 June 2022
Response Capability Subcommittee	22 June 2022
Recovery and Community Engagement Subcommittee	24 June 2022
Essential Services Network Operators Reference	7 July 2022
Public Safety Communications Subcommittee	12 July 2022
Public Information Reference Group	3 August 2022
State Exercise Coordination Team	TBC
Lessons Management Reference Group	TBC

Community Disaster Resilience Strategy

Consultation on the WA Community Disaster Resilience Strategy Discussion Paper closed on 31 March 2022. Extensive engagement across the sector took place, including meetings, conferences, and forums, as well as targeted workshops with more than 50 local governments and 20 community service providers. A number of formal submissions have also been received.

Work is now underway to incorporate feedback into the WA Community Disaster Resilience Strategy and Implementation Plan. There may be further opportunity to provide feedback on the draft documents.

Annual and Preparedness Report Capability Survey

The Annual and Preparedness Report Capability Survey opened on 20 April 2022, with survey invitations sent to approximately 170 organisations in the Western Australian EM sector. Weekly progress tracking is underway and data collection is on schedule. Final data cut off is scheduled for 22 June 2022.

SEMC Emergency Management Capability Framework Review

A comprehensive review of the SEMC EM capability framework, based on EM best practice and contemporary domestic and international frameworks, was completed by the DFES State Capability Team in late March 2022. The revised framework is currently out for review with subject matter experts, with comments due 3 June 2022.

Local Emergency Management Arrangements (LEMA) Review

In late 2019 SEMC approved a sector-led review of Local Emergency Management Arrangements (LEMA) requirements and responsibilities.

Following the signing of an MOU in December 2021, SEMC and the WA Local Government Association (WALGA) have engaged Project Leads who will work together with key stakeholders to identify issues with LEMA, and investigate and develop options for streamlining the process.

A discussion paper has been prepared that will guide consultation, which is expected to start in June 2022. At the completion of the review in June 2023, a LEMA Improvement Plan – including an implementation plan – will be developed.

Discussion paper mid-2022

- Develop discussion paper to guide consultation phase

Consultation mid- to late 2022

- Engagement with identified key stakeholders

Review and reporting late 2022

- Draft outcomes report

Design early 2023

- Test new LEMA approaches with local governments

Next steps mid-2023

- Approve LEMA Improvement and Implementation Plan

Grant Program Updates

Applications for the third round of the National Disaster Risk Reduction (NDRR) grant program closed on 5 May 2022. The applications are currently undergoing validation and assessment by an independent multi-agency panel. It is expected that SEMC will consider the panel's recommendations out-of-session late June 2022. There is a maximum allocation of \$4.8 million available for eligible projects.

The 2022-23 round of the All West Australians Reducing Emergencies (AWARE) grant program is open 29 April to 10 June 2022. With \$200,000 available, this grant is a State Government initiative to enhance Emergency Management arrangements by building capacity and knowledge at both the local and district levels.

Further information on the NDRR and AWARE grant programs is available at <https://semc.wa.gov.au/funding>.

Please contact semc.grants@dfes.wa.gov.au if you require further information on the grant programs.