

SEMC COMMUNIQUE

11 December 2020 MEETING HIGHLIGHTS



The State Emergency Management Committee (SEMC) met on 11 December 2020. The key discussion items and resolutions from the meeting are summarised below.

SEMC thanks all in the emergency management sector for their hard work this year and expresses gratitude for the role you have each played in planning for, responding to and recovering from emergencies, specifically the COVID-19 Pandemic.

General Update

- SEMC welcomed Ms Emma Cole as Deputy SEMC Chair and Chair of the Recovery and Community Engagement Subcommittee. Emma is the Mayor of the City of Vincent and brings a wealth of community experience to the role. SEMC also acknowledged the six years of dedication and hard work of Mal Cronstedt, has stepped away from the role of Executive Officer. Mal has had a significant impact he has had on the Committee and emergency management in Western Australia. Ms Melissa Pexton returns to SEMC as SEMC Executive Officer.



- The [National Emergency Declaration Bill 2020 \(NED Bill\)](#) and the [National Emergency Declaration \(Consequential Amendments\) Bill 2020 \(NEDCA Bill\)](#) were passed in the Australian Parliament on 10 December 2020 to implement recommendation 5.1 of the [Royal Commission into National Natural Disaster Arrangements](#) (Royal Commission) to establish a legislative framework for declaring national emergencies.
- The [Community Disaster Resilience Strategy](#) Green Paper is currently in development. The Paper will summarise the findings of community consultation and propose outcomes, ideas and initiatives for further targeted engagement. It is anticipated the Green Paper will be published in early 2021, following out of session SEMC approval. The Community Disaster Resilience Strategy aims to reduce the impact of disasters by increasing the strengths and capacity of communities to cope with, adapt to and recover from the impacts of emergencies and disasters.
- SEMC approved the SEMC Grant Governance Framework and the SEMC Grant Delegations Matrix for consistent application across all SEMC managed grant programs.
- SEMC approved the [WA Community Evacuation Guideline](#) to resolve the identified gaps and inconsistencies based on broad consultation with the emergency management sector.
- SEMC noted the amendments to the [Emergency Management Act 2005](#) to extend the sunset clause applied to 72A.
- The Community Development and Justice Standing Committee held public hearings into the COVID-19 Pandemic. [The Committee has released a summary report of its findings.](#)
- The Government has released the [Climate Health WA Inquiry Final Report](#) and [endorsed its recommendations in principle.](#)

Telecommunications Update

A number of SEMC members, subcommittees, district emergency management committees and local emergency management committees have escalated concerns with telecommunications capability within their districts and/or boundaries. These concerns have centred around telecommunication failures during emergencies and/or failures on high risk days where pre-emptive communication with the community is paramount.

The Department of Fire and Emergency Services has progressed three concurrent bodies of work to engage telecommunications service providers:

1. Esperance Case Study Exercise with Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions and Telstra
2. Informing the implementation of the Strengthening Telecommunications Against Natural Disasters (STAND) package in WA
3. Improving Data Sharing between Emergency Services and telecommunication providers

SEMC will continue to keep abreast of activities to improve telecommunications in WA and will coordinate appropriate forums for stakeholders into the future.

Presentations

- The State Emergency Coordinator and Chief Health Officer gave updates on the current COVID situation.
- The Government Chief Information Officer provided an update on Cyber Security risks and activities.
- The Director General of the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development presented on key features of National and WA biosecurity system, the recent history of incursions, priorities and system capabilities and current biosecurity incidents and arrangements.
- Evacuation Centres and the planning and preparation of these were presented on by the Department of Communities Executive Director Emergency Management.