

# NSW State Emergency Management Committee

**Annual Report 2016-17**

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## Introduction

This report has been compiled in accordance with section 17 of the *State Emergency and Rescue Management Act 1989* to describe the work and activities of the State Emergency Management Committee during the financial year 2016-2017.

The report has been produced by the Office of Emergency Management, NSW Department of Justice.

## Foreword

### Mr Andrew Cappie-Wood Secretary, NSW Department of Justice

The State Emergency Management Committee (SEMC) is established by the *State Emergency and Rescue Management Act 1989* (SERM Act). A key function of the SEMC is to facilitate strategic State-level emergency management capability through inter-agency coordination, cooperation and information sharing arrangements.

2016/17 was characterised by some significant operational events. Several severe thunderstorms occurred throughout the reporting period and in February 2017 emergency services and volunteers were engaged in considerable fire-fighting activity, fighting more than 200 bush fires over the weekend of 11-12 February 2017. At the height of bush fire operations, over 2,500 fire fighters from the NSW Rural Fire Service, Fire & Rescue NSW and National Parks and Wildlife Service were engaged fighting fires in communities across NSW.

While 56 homes were destroyed, 222 homes in the fire affected areas were saved, a testament to the commitment and skill of the firefighters involved in such a large scale bush fire-fighting operation.

Bush fires were quickly followed with severe flooding in March 2017 when the remnants of ex-tropical cyclone Debbie merged with a strong cold front on the north eastern part of NSW, resulting in widespread heavy rainfall and flooding. Once again, it was the commitment of our emergency service agencies and volunteers including the NSW State Emergency Service, NSW Rural Fire Service, NSW Police Force and Fire & Rescue NSW who worked tirelessly in providing emergency response, which at one stage saw the communities of Lismore, Tweed Heads and Murwillumbah severely impacted by floodwaters.

Strategically, in 2016-17 key projects endorsed by the SEMC included the Emergency Risk Management Framework and the Learning Framework Implementation Plan 2017-18. The Learning Framework assists multi-agency Emergency Management (EM) capability through an integrated, contemporary training system which builds resilience across NSW. The Framework will significantly increase assurance of the critical, core and common competencies across the EM workforce and develop an EM workforce that is well trained, flexible, engaged and responsive.

Key emergency related plans endorsed by the SEMC during the reporting period, included the NSW State Waters Marine Oil and Chemical Spill Contingency Plan; NSW Community Resilience and Response Plan; NSW Recovery Plan and Sydney Metropolitan Emergency Management Region EMPLAN. The SEMC remains committed in its work to provide safe and secure communities in NSW.

**Andrew Cappie-Wood**  
**Chair, State Emergency Management Committee**

## Role and Functions

The State Emergency Management Committee (SEMC) is established under the *State Emergency and Rescue Management Act 1989* (SERM Act). In accordance with section 15 of that Act, the SEMC has the following functions:

- To review, monitor and advise the Minister on the adequacy of the provisions of this Act relating to emergency management.
- To provide strategic policy advice to the Minister in relation to emergency management.
- To review, monitor and develop emergency management policy and practice at a state level and to disseminate information in relation to any such policy and practice.
- To review the NSW State Emergency Management Plan and to recommend alterations to it.
- To endorse any sub plans or supporting plans established under the NSW State Emergency Management Plan.
- To facilitate strategic State level emergency management capability through interagency coordination, cooperation and information sharing arrangements.
- Such other functions as conferred or imposed on the Committee by or under the Act or as are related to this Act and assigned to the Committee from time to time by the Minister.

The Minister responsible for administering the SERM Act is the Hon Troy Grant MP, Minister for Emergency Services.

The SEMC membership consists of:

- a) The Chairperson of the Committee
- b) The State Emergency Operations Controller
- c) The State Emergency Recovery Controller, and
- d) Representatives of such relevant government and non-government agencies as the Minister may from time to time determine.

Nine functional areas coordinate functional support for emergency operations in accordance with the SERM Act.

The Act also establishes Regional and Local Emergency Management Committees whose primary role is to prepare emergency management plans for their region or local area.

## Membership

### Chair

Mr Andrew Cappie-Wood

### Members as at 30 June 2017

State Emergency Operations Controller	A/Deputy Commissioner Denis Clifford
State Emergency Recovery Controller	Mr Feargus O'Connor
NSW Ambulance	Commissioner Dominic Morgan
Fire & Rescue NSW	Commissioner Paul Baxter
NSW Rural Fire Service	Commissioner Shane Fitzsimmons
NSW State Emergency Service	Commissioner Mark Smethurst
NSW Volunteer Rescue Association	Commissioner Mark Gibson
Marine Rescue NSW	Commissioner Stacey Tannos
Agricultural and Animal Services Functional Area	Mr Barry Kay
Department of Premier & Cabinet	Ms Zoe de Saram
Energy & Utilities Services Functional Area	Mr Douglas Revette
Engineering Services Functional Area	Mr Martin Dwyer
Environment Services Functional Area	Ms Sarah Gardner
Health Services Functional Area	Dr Ron Manning
Maritime Combat Agencies	Mr Shayne Wilde
NSW Treasury	Mr David Withey
Office of Local Government	Ms Daniela Heubusch
Public Information Services Functional Area	Sergeant Kevin Daley
Telecommunications Services Functional Area	Ms Kate Foy
Transport Services Functional Area	Mr Greg Nott
Welfare Services Functional Area	Ms Allison Rowlands

## Membership Changes

There were a number of changes to the SEMC's membership in 2016-17. In December 2016 the SEMC farewelled the Commissioner of Fire & Rescue NSW, Greg Mullins and Mr Barry Hanstrum, of the Australian Bureau of Meteorology. Both members were key contributors to the work and activities of the SEMC. In 2016-17 new members welcomed to the SEMC included:

- a) Commissioner Mark Smethurst for the NSW State Emergency Service
- b) Commissioner Paul Baxter for Fire & Rescue NSW
- c) Ms Ann Farrell for the Bureau of Meteorology;
- d) Ms Zoe de Saram for Department of Premier and Cabinet.

In May 2017, Deputy Commissioner, Specialist Support, Catherine Burn was appointed State Emergency Operations Controller (SEOCN), with Deputy Commissioner Metropolitan Field Command, Jeff Loy appointed Deputy SEOCN.

## Executive Support

Secretariat support to the SEMC is provided by the Office of Emergency Management's Emergency Management and Policy Coordination Unit.

The Office of Emergency Management can be contacted at:

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## Section 1: Strategic Development

### Emergency Management and Disaster Resilience Review

The Office for Emergency Management held a workshop focused on reviewing emergency management and disaster resilience arrangements in NSW in August 2016. The workshop was attended by SEMC members and other identified Government agency representatives. Terms of Reference and a timeline for reform were presented to members for consideration and an implementation plan developed. In June 2017, after extensive cross government collaboration, a key component of the Emergency Management and Disaster Resilience Review, the State Level Emergency Risk Assessment (SLERA) and Executive Summary was presented and endorsed by members.

### Emergency Risk Management (ERM) Framework

In December 2016, the State Mitigation Standing Committee (SMSC) proposed the development of an integrated framework for Emergency Management in NSW. The SMSC devised a series of principles to establish the framework and oversaw significant consultation on its development. The SEMC endorsed the Emergency Risk Management (ERM) Framework in March 2017. The ERM Framework aims to improve the understanding, prioritisation, effectiveness and efficiency of risk management in NSW at the state, regional and local levels

### Learning Framework for Emergency Management

A Learning Framework was endorsed to implement more efficient learning and development across the sector. In September 2016, the SEMC approved the Training Advisory Group (TAG) to implement a 5-year strategic work program. TAG has since developed a two year implementation plan outlining key deliverables. The Committee endorsed the Learning Framework Implementation Plan 2017-2018 in June 2017.

### Critical Infrastructure Review

An 'all hazards' approach to improving critical infrastructure resilience, which includes natural disasters and human initiated threats is of considerable benefit to NSW, particularly in identifying vulnerabilities, risks, interdependencies and possible treatments in a coordinated manner. In March 2017 the SEMC endorsed the formation and Terms of Reference of the Critical Infrastructure Review Working Group. The Working Group has been tasked with the development of strategy to identify and address current and future risks to critical infrastructure resilience, and implement a collaborative plan to deliver, monitor and evaluate critical infrastructure initiatives.

### State Emergency and Rescue Management Act 1989 (SERM Act)

A review of the *State Emergency and Rescue Management Act 1989* (SERM Act) is underway. Following considerable SEMC stakeholder feedback, the review will bring forward a number of amendments for the NSW Government's consideration in August 2017.



## Emergency Vehicles Use of U-turn and Cross-over Facilities

In 2012 a fatal motor vehicle accident occurred on the F3/M1 highway involving a NSW RFS volunteer which resulted in criminal charges. The judgment in that case raised a number of issues related to the use of U-turn and cross-over facilities by emergency service vehicles. In March 2017 the SEMC agreed to the establishment of a multi-agency working group to consider a joint proposal to clarify the legislative and operational arrangements regarding emergency vehicles' use of u-turn and cross over facilities.

## Commonwealth Disaster Funding Reforms

The Commonwealth has proposed changes to the National Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements (NDRRA). A steering committee was formed to review current funding processes and engage with other NSW Government agencies.

## REMO and LEOCON Reviews

The Committee noted that the NSW Police Force was progressing reviews of the Regional Emergency Management Officer (REMO) positions and the Local Emergency Operations Controller (LEOCON) policy. These reviews will be the subject of consultation with agencies represented on the Committee. Former NSW Police Force Deputy Commissioner Dave Owens has been appointed to lead the review.

## Energy Security Taskforce Report

The Department of Planning and Environment provided an overview to the Committee on the initial report from the NSW Energy Security Taskforce, which was established to provide advice on the State's management of energy security and resilience in the face of extreme weather events. The Taskforce made seven recommendations including: leadership in the COAG Energy Council, fuel availability, and prevention and preparedness for the short-term risks associated with peak demand periods.

## Evacuation Decision Making Guidelines for Private Health and Residential Care Facilities

The SEMC endorsed new guidelines and a decision-making algorithm to assist Private Health and Residential Aged Care Facilities to better prepare for emergencies developed by NSW Health. The initiative was funded under the National Partnership Agreement on Natural Disaster Resilience from the NSW State Emergency Management Projects.

## Section 2: Emergency Management Planning

### Local and Regional Emergency Management Planning

In September 2016, the SEMC endorsed the regional emergency management planning template in support of risk management and planning at a regional level. Regional areas were given two years to complete the template.

### Sydney Metropolitan Emergency Management Region EMPLAN

The Sydney Metropolitan Emergency Management Region EMPLAN has been updated to incorporate recent boundary changes following the amalgamations of local councils in the regions and the Local Emergency Management Committees responsible for them. The updated plan has been developed using a new standard template for writing Emergency Management plans to ensure a robust and consistent process across the State. The SEMC endorsed the Sydney Metropolitan Regional Emergency Management Plan in June 2017.

### NSW Recovery Plan

In December 2016, the SEMC endorsed the revised NSW Recovery Plan following a two-year review in consultation with key stakeholders. The NSW Recovery Plan provides the framework for disaster recovery in NSW. The Recovery Plan establishes the foundation for the development and implementation of a recovery following a natural disaster or other emergency in NSW. Major amendments included the addition of national principles for disaster recovery, and the community's roles and responsibilities in recovery.

### NSW Community Resilience and Response Plan (COMPLAN)

Multicultural NSW presented the NSW Community Resilience and Response Plan to the SEMC. The COMPLAN aims to maintain and promote community harmony, build community resilience, and better equip the State to prevent, limit, withstand, respond to, and recover from situations that may threaten community harmony. The SEMC endorsed the plan in December 2016.

### NSW State Waters Marine Oil and Chemical Spill Contingency Plan

The SEMC endorsed the updated NSW State Waters Marine Oil and Chemical Spill Contingency Plan in December 2016. The amended plan incorporates related guidelines and reflects recent agency and machinery legislative changes to the *Marine Pollution Act 2012*.

### Agriculture and Animal Services Supporting Plan

Prior to this year, the Agriculture and Animal Services Functional Area Supporting Plan was reviewed in September 2011, before the publication of the EMPLAN. A review was subsequently commenced to align the Agriculture and Animal Services Functional Area Supporting Plan to the EMPLAN. The SEMC endorsed the updated plan in March 2017.

## Biosecurity (Animal and Plant) Sub Plan

The NSW Biosecurity (Animal and Plant) Emergency Sub Plan was reviewed to ensure planning and control arrangements are up to date. The Department of Primary Industries (DPI) functional area for biosecurity reviewed the sub plan. The SEMC endorsed the updated plan in March 2017.

## Section 3: Standing Committee, Working Group and Functional Area Reports

### NSW Chemical Biological Radiological Nuclear (CBRN) & Hazardous Materials (HAZMAT) Steering Committee

The Steering Committee is responsible for the development, maintenance and review of the CBRN and Hazmat multi-agency prevention, preparedness, response and recovery capabilities within NSW.

During 2016-17 key achievements included the:

- development of a *NSW Framework for Chemicals of Security Concern* to increase awareness of counter terrorism issues
- review of issues relating to transportation of CBRN substances and increased multi agency training activities in CBRN to improve the capacity and capability of NSW emergency responders to a CBRN incident.

Exercise Chronos was held in 2016-17 to assist in preparedness and prevention in relation to CBRN hazards. Chronos was a combined military/civilian mass casualty exercise and series of “Bradbury” exercises. The exercise also included the procedures for decontamination and treatment for improved future responses.

### Critical Infrastructure Review Working Group

The SEMC Critical Infrastructure Review Working Group was established and endorsed by the SEMC in March 2017. A workshop was conducted with members on 30 May 2017 to establish key definitions, and identify appropriate principles and objectives for inclusion in the Critical Infrastructure Resilience Strategy. The workshop outcomes will form the basis of a Discussion Paper, Discussion Paper Engagement Plan and consultation forums.

### Emergency Management Exercise Working Group

The Working Group was established to: recommend strategic direction, review exercise proposals of state and regional significance, and to oversee the administration of exercise funding. A significant change in the Working Group’s activities is that it will now administer exercise funding for Marine Search & Rescue exercises.

During 2016-17, \$250,000 from the National Partnership Agreement on Natural Disaster Resilience was secured for state and regional exercises in 2016-17 and 2017-18. The Working Group has developed and launched a new exercise proposal and documentation template and compiled a register of students who have completed the OEM Design and Manage Exercises course to assist in the writing, conduct and evaluation of emergency management exercises.

## State Mitigation Sub-Committee

The State Mitigation Sub-Committee provides advice, coordination and recommendations to the SEMC on matters relating to Emergency Risk Management, disaster mitigation and resilience, and funded programs. In 2016-17, significant activities included reviewing 2016-17 State Emergency Management Project applications for recommendation to the SEMC and providing feedback on the Project Initiation Document for the 2017 State-Level Emergency Risk Assessment.

In October 2016, a workshop was held by the Sub-Committee and additional stakeholders to review the draft Emergency Risk Management (ERM) Scoping Study Report from Risk Frontiers. The working group provided a report on the findings which formed the foundation for an ERM Framework for NSW.

## Register Find Reunite (RFR) Working Group

The Register Find Reunite Working Group was formed to explore and initiate agreements for the incorporation of RFR into a range of processes from initial registration including major evacuation centres through to recovery interventions. The purpose of the Working Group has been achieved. The Working Group will reconvene on an as needed basis to further develop concepts or processes as required.

## State Emergency Management Training Advisory Group

The Training Advisory Group (TAG) provides advice and strategic guidance to the SEMC and its member agencies to ensure that multi-agency emergency management training is developed, delivered and evaluated by all agencies and aligns with NSW emergency management arrangements.

Significant activities in 2016-17 included the pilot and review of the Emergency Operations Concept course, the endorsement of the Project Implementation Document for the Learning Framework, and the delivery of the Design and Manage Exercises (DAME) course to the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

Following the endorsement of the *Learning Framework for Emergency Management in NSW* in September 2016, TAG developed Mentor Guidelines and Selection Process for the DAME courses. An additional achievement is the inclusion of the Joint Venture Initiative (JVI), which reports to the TAG on the pilot concept of training interoperability between Fire & Rescue NSW, the NSW RFS, the NSW SES and OEM.

Preparedness and Prevention activities in 2016-17 included 1,353 participants attending 82 face to face activities and 2,511 enrolling in eLearning modules across government and the private sector. Under the Learning Framework for Emergency Management in NSW project the following has been completed in 2016-17:

- Mapping of the emergency management workforce and development of required competencies; and
- A review into emergency management training pathways.

## NSW Urban Search and Rescue Advisory Committee

The NSW Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) Advisory Committee is responsible for sharing information, advising the SEMC on strategic USAR capability issues, developing a multi-agency exercise program, and supporting Fire & Rescue NSW as the combat agency. The Advisory Committee also ensures appropriate planning is achieved for NSW to successfully undertake United Nations certification as a heavy USAR team to deploy to international disasters.

In 2016-17, the Advisory Committee oversaw a number of exercises that tested relevant components of the NSW Major Structural Collapse Plan and directed the engagement with the international community for attendance at United Nations International Search and Rescue Advisory Group (INSARAG) meetings.

Further achievements include executing the International Reclassification of the State USAR team as a qualified international Heavy USAR Team and actioning Rapid Impact Assessments (RIAs) and Base of Operations relating to events associated with East Coast Lows and flood events in the north part of NSW.

Preparation and prevention activities in 2016-17 include:

- Multi-agency training for mass casualty and for the international reclassification;
- Participation in Commonwealth sponsored forums to ensure effective planning for catastrophic events requiring interstate support; and
- Development of data collection for RIAs at state and national levels as well as enhancing FRNSW RIA capability through the use of Remote Piloted Aircrafts.

## Functional Area Reports

Functional areas are units within NSW Government agencies that represent a category of services involved in emergency prevention, preparation, response and recovery.

Throughout the reporting period, Functional Areas participated in a number of prevention and preparedness activities including:

- **SydEx Sydney CBD Exercise** – held on 28 August 2016, was a multi-agency exercise that involved 700 emergency services personnel in one of the largest multi-agency exercises ever conducted. The exercise practised response to an aviation and mass casualty event in the Sydney CBD.
- **Exercise Nautical Twilight (Phase 2)** – conducted by the Roads and Maritime Service on 10 August 2016, was a multi-agency exercise based on a chemical spill on board a container vessel at sea, and a request for a place of refuge. The second phase consisted of the establishment of a Maritime Casualty Control Unit to evaluate the unfolding scenario against the revised Places of Refuge Guidelines and potential utilisation of Maritime Emergency Response Commander powers under the auspices of the National Plan

Other key activities undertaken by the Functional Areas in the reporting period included:

- Delivery of training programs with staff from across government attending marine pollution response related training, exercises and workshops. The program includes management and operational level training covering all aspects of marine incident response.
- Ongoing testing of the CBD Emergency Warning system
- Conduct of Multi-Agency Asbestos Awareness Training Package delivered to the Office of Emergency Management's Training Advisory Group in 2017.
- Completion of a review of the NSW Policy & Standards for Security Risk Management in NSW Health agencies.
- Reviewed and re-signed the Memorandum of Understanding between the Department of Justice and Welfare Services Functional Area Community Partner agencies.
- Submission and subsequent endorsement of the Biosecurity (Animal and Plant) Sub Plan by the SEMC in March 2017
- Submission and endorsement of the Agriculture and Animal Services Functional Area Plan by the SEMC in March 2017
- Submission and endorsement by the SEMC of the NSW State Waters Marine Oil and Chemical Spill Contingency Plan

## Annexure 1 - Meetings Held and Attendance

### Meetings 2016-2017

- Meeting 102 – 8 September 2016
- Meeting 103 – 1 December 2016
- Meeting 104 – 2 March 2017
- Meeting 105 – 1 June 2017

Role/Organisation	Member Attendance	Delegated or other representation by member organisation
Chair	4	-
State Emergency Operations Controller	3	-
State Emergency Recovery Controller (or Acting)	4	-
Deputy State Emergency Operations Controller	4	-
NSW Ambulance	2	2
Fire & Rescue NSW	4	-
NSW Rural Fire Service	4	-
NSW State Emergency Service	3	1
NSW Volunteer Rescue Association	4	-
Marine Rescue NSW	4	-
Agricultural and Animal Services Functional Area	2	2
Department of Premier & Cabinet	3	1
Energy & Utilities Services Functional Area	3	1
Engineering Services Functional Area	4	-
Environment Services Functional Area	1	3
Health Services Functional Area	4	-
Maritime Combat Agencies	2	-
NSW Treasury	0	3
Office of Local Government	1	1
Public Information Services Functional Area	3	-
Telecommunications Services Functional Area	4	-
Transport Services Functional Area	4	-
Welfare Services Functional Area	3	1