

Meeting 104 – 2 March 2017
COMMUNIQUÉ

The State Emergency Management Committee (SEMC) held its first meeting of the year on Thursday 2 March in Sydney.

Membership changes

Members welcomed Mark Smethurst, the new Commissioner of the NSW State Emergency Service, and thanked Deputy Commissioner Greg Newton for his outstanding effort in leading the State Emergency Service. Ms Zoe de Saram will represent the Department of Premier and Cabinet.

Bushfire situation report

The Commissioner of the NSW Rural Fire Service provided an overview of the recent bushfire events around the state. The recent fire events saw the worst fire danger ratings ever experienced in NSW. In total 56 homes were destroyed and 26 damaged, while 222 homes were untouched. An estimated \$96 million in agricultural damage was sustained including over 7,000 kilometres of fencing destroyed. The counter disaster operations involved up to 2,500 firefighters deployed on a single day. Multi-agency cooperation in combatting the fires was effective and appreciated.

Emergency Risk Management Framework

The Committee endorsed the Emergency Risk Management Framework for NSW. The Framework will be submitted for the consideration of NSW Government.

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

The SEMC agreed to establish a multi-agency working group to consider a joint proposal to clarify legislative and operational arrangements regarding emergency vehicles' use of u-turn and cross over facilities.

Critical Infrastructure Review

The Committee endorsed the Terms of Reference for the Critical Infrastructure Review Working Group. The Working Group will develop a 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 Level Emergency Risk Assessment

Development of a State Level Emergency Risk Assessment is underway. The assessment will provide an in-depth understanding of emergency risks in NSW and enable enhanced emergency management for identified priority hazards into the future.

Agriculture and Animal Services Supporting Plan and Biosecurity (Animal and Plant) Sub Plan

The Committee endorsed the updated plans. The new plans will be publicly available on www.emergency.nsw.gov.au.

Commonwealth Disaster Funding Reforms

A NSW Steering Committee has been established to consider changes proposed by the Commonwealth to the National Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements (NDRRA). An independent cost benefit assessment of the proposed reforms has been commissioned.

Report on Extreme Weather Event in SA

The Committee considered the 'Review report on the Extreme Weather Event South Australia 28 September to 5 October 2016' and noted many of its recommendations were relevant to the work of the Critical Infrastructure Review Working Group.

The next State Emergency Management Committee is scheduled for 1 June 2017.