

SEMC COMMUNIQUE



August 2022

The State Emergency Management Committee (SEMC) met on 4 August 2022.

Presentations

Climate Change – Michelle Andrews, Director General Department of Water and Environmental Regulation

The Department of Water and Environmental Regulation (DWER) are leading a whole of government climate change adaptation strategy. The strategy, expected to be completed by the end of 2022, will inform the development of an action plan by late 2023.

Important steps on the journey so far include the:

- Release of the Western Australia (WA) Climate Policy in November 2020.
- Establishment of the Climate Action portfolio.
- Appointment of WA's first Minister for Climate Change in early 2021.
- Launch of the [Sectoral Emissions Reduction Strategies](#).

Sectoral Emissions Reduction Strategies are a core commitment of the Western Australian Climate Policy. Strategies are being developed in consultation with business, industry research institutions and the community to transition our economy to net zero emissions. More than 90 per cent of the State's mining and energy companies, which contribute about half of the state's emissions, have set targets for net zero emissions by 2050 or earlier – demonstrating that there is an appetite for action.

The DWER have been invited by the SEMC Chair to attend future meetings as an observer and to provide ongoing expert advice to the SEMC.

Western Australian Community Disaster Resilience Strategy – Sally Watkins, Department of Fire and Emergency Services

Resilience is identified as a primary goal of emergency management in several national and international strategies and frameworks as part of the broader agenda to reduce disaster risk. Resilience is integral to all aspects of emergency management, before, during and after emergencies. It also needs long-term support and should become a central consideration across the prevention, preparedness, response and recovery spectrum.

The draft Community Disaster Resilience Strategy aims to provide the necessary guidance to support all Western Australians in increasing their disaster resilience, as well as to identify priorities for activities and projects and where to direct investment. The Outcomes Framework included in the Strategy provides a useful tool for the assessment of projects and emphasises the importance of monitoring and evaluation to inform progress in this space.

The implementation plan is structured as an 'opt-in' model, to allow for flexibility with resources, partnerships, funding applications and business cases to be developed and existing projects and activities to be modified where appropriate. It invites the sector to design projects and activities to align to the Strategy and implementation plan where possible.

Valuable feedback was gathered through the six-month consultation on the Strategy. It is anticipated that it will soon be released for final consultation so that stakeholders can see how their feedback has been incorporated.

The final draft Strategy and implementation plan is expected to be completed early 2023.

Discussion Items and Outcomes

SEMC Strategic Plan

SEMC endorsed updated strategic objectives that will place a greater considered emphasis on climate change and community focused outcomes. The endorsed strategic objectives are:

- **Collaborative Leadership:** Strong relationships enable informed decision-making among district and local emergency management leaders.
- **Effective Governance:** A coordinated and collaborative risk and evidence-based approach to emergency management that is trusted by the sector.
- **Capable Sector:** The emergency management sector has accomplished and innovative organisations and is known for its high performance and improvement culture.
- **Capable Community:** Build safer and more resilient community through a local approach to emergency management.
- **Climate Change:** The sector is prepared, willing and responsive to the impacts of climate change on emergency management.

An updated Strategic Plan will be considered at the October 2022 SEMC meeting.

Climate Change Subcommittee

Endorsement was provided by SEMC to establish a Climate Change Subcommittee for an initial two-year period. Mr Nick Sloan, Chief Executive Officer of the Western Australian Local Government Association (WALGA), will be the Sponsor of the Subcommittee.

The SEMC Business Unit are drafting the Terms of Reference for the new Subcommittee and when these are completed, the SEMC Executive Officer will seek nominations from member agencies. The initial workplan of the Subcommittee will include:

- Identifying and evaluating the current situation within the sector, including:
 - existing climate change adaptation initiatives.
 - issues and needs, including capability gaps, barriers to climate change adaptation, future challenges and opportunities.
- Leading the development of an Emergency Management Sector Adaptation Plan aligned to the project scope.
- Supporting the integration of climate change adaptation into the Emergency Management Framework.

It is expected the first meeting of the Climate Change Subcommittee will be held in December 2022.

SEMC Subcommittee and Reference Group Review

The objective of the SEMC Subcommittees and Reference Group review is to establish an effective and relevant subgroup structure that supports SEMC to achieve its strategic objectives.

The review will examine the reporting relationship between the subgroups and the SEMC to identify areas of governance improvement. It also aims to align groups so they can successfully realise the objectives of the updated SEMC Strategic Plan.

District and Local Emergency Management Committee Review

The objective of the District Emergency Management Committee (DEMC) and Local Emergency Management Committee (LEMC) review is to:

- Establish clear roles, responsibilities, functions, and governance for DEMCs and LEMCs so they can achieve the strategic objectives of SEMC.
- Identify improvements to the governance arrangements and capabilities that will increase effective and efficient management outcomes.
- Create a shared understanding of the SEMC expectations of DEMCs and LEMCs.

Philanthropic Framework

The SEMC have endorsed the development of a Philanthropic Framework that will:

- Establish clear roles, responsibilities, functions, and governance arrangements for engagement with philanthropic and private organisations.
- Establish engagement principles with an emphasis on governance and assurance.
- Develop a communications strategy to promote the Framework across the emergency management sector.
- Align with and support relevant outcomes from the review of the State Recovery Framework and other synergies across the recovery field.

Recommendations for the development of a Framework are due to be presented to SEMC in March 2023.

Animal Disease and Pest Risk

The Department of Primary Industry and Regional Development (DPIRD) is currently undertaking significant planning, monitoring and prevention activities, to protect Australia from the spread of a number of high profile and highly damaging animal, pests and diseases. These include:

- Varroa mite (a pest of honeybees).
- Foot and mouth disease (a disease affecting cloven hoofed animals with wide ranging consequences).
- Fire ants (a significant invasive insect pest).
- Lumpy skin disease (a disease of buffalo and cattle, carried by flying biting insects).

DPIRD is grateful for the support of the public to prevent the spread of these problems. If any of these risks gains a foothold, the economic and social costs will be extremely significant.

Consultation

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

There are a number of plans that are scheduled for consultation in the coming period:

- State Emergency Management Roles and Responsibilities Review.
- Funding for Emergency Responses Arrangements.

Following EM sector consultation, the State Emergency Management Policy Branch, in collaboration with the Funding for Emergency Responses Working Group, will consider feedback for endorsement by the Response Capability Subcommittee.

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

GENERAL UPDATES

Grant Program Updates

The National Disaster Risk Reduction (NDRR) grant program is established under a National Partnership Agreement (NPA) on Disaster Risk Reduction (2019-2024). It seeks to proactively reduce the risk and limit the impact of disasters associated with natural hazards on Western Australian communities and economies. The 2022/23 grant round is progressing, and announcements will be made following the completion of the State and Commonwealth approval process.

The 2022-23 round of the All West Australians Reducing Emergencies (AWARE) grant program is in the final stages of approval.

The SEMC endorsed a two-year schedule for both grant programs:

Year	2023-24		2024-25	
Program	NDRR	AWARE	NDRR	AWARE
Round Open	24 April 2023	16 August 2023	25 April 2024	16 August 2024
Round Close	29 May 2023	20 September 2023	29 May 2024	20 September 2024
Assessment	3 July 2023	24 October 2023	3 July 2024	25 October 2024
Anticipated announcement	September 2023	January 2024	September 2024	January 2025

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 for further information on the grant programs.

Local Emergency Management Arrangements Review

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

The SEMC and the WALGA project leads are working with key stakeholders to identify issues with the LEMA and investigate and develop options for streamlining the process.

Discussion papers to guide the consultation process have been finalised and one-on-one engagement has commenced. Local government workshops are scheduled for September. Consultation is expected to finish in early October and an outcomes report will be drafted based on stakeholder feedback.

At the completion of the review in June 2023, a LEMA Improvement Plan – including an implementation plan – will be developed.

The LEMA Review will provide valuable insights for the review of LEMCs as approved by SEMC.

More information on the LEMA Review can be found on the [SEMC website](#). If you have feedback or questions, get in touch at LEMAreview@dfes.wa.gov.au.

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

Next meeting of the SEMC

The next meeting of the SEMC will be held on Thursday 13 October 2022.

Contact Us

If you have feedback or questions, get in touch at info@semc.wa.gov.au