

# Emergency Management Planning Reform

## Regional level planning

Regional emergency management planning committees (REMPCs) must produce a regional emergency management plan (REMP) that focuses on the consequences of emergencies within their geographical footprint. Each REMP must include content that is specific to that region, without duplicating the State Emergency Management Plan (SEMP).

### Changes to regional level planning

- While formal planning already occurs at the state and municipal levels, planning is currently less formalised at the regional level. The new arrangements build on existing relationships and expertise to strengthen regional planning, with continuous improvement over time.
- The new arrangements involve establishing regional emergency management planning committees (REMPCs), which will be responsible for preparing new regional emergency management plans (REMPs).
- The *Emergency Management Act 2013* (the Act), as amended by the *Emergency Management Legislation Amendment Act 2018* (EMLA Act), provides that the new REMPCs will elect their chairperson from their membership (any agency).
- Plans will be required to cover mitigation, response and recovery, and address the roles and responsibilities of agencies in relation to emergency management.
- Three significantly different regions (Barwon South West, Loddon Mallee and Southern Metro) have tested the development of a regional plan to refine the guidelines content.
- Once all three planning levels are established (state, regional and municipal), the regional level will be vital in connecting the state and municipal levels to ensure the new planning arrangements operate in both top-down and bottom-up way.

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## Regional emergency management planning committees (REMPCs)

- Each REMPC is responsible for the development of its REMP. Importantly, it is the responsibility of the committee as a whole to deliver the emergency management plan and not that of the chair.
- Membership of the new REMPCs demonstrates the collaborative nature of emergency management planning. REMPCs will be comprised of a core membership from Victoria Police, Metropolitan Fire Brigade/Fire Rescue Victoria (once established) and/or Country Fire Authority – depending on the committee’s geographical footprint, Ambulance Victoria, Victoria State Emergency Service, Emergency Management Victoria, all departments (except the Department of Premier and Cabinet and the Department of Treasury and Finance), all councils and alpine resort management boards within the relevant region (may be represented individually or collectively), and the Australian Red Cross. Each regional committee will also include other members relevant to its geographical footprint, including additional recovery representation, and other members as appropriate, including industry representatives. All members will participate on an equal basis in the new committees.
- Once the municipal phase commences on 1 December 2020, each REMPC will be responsible for providing assurance and approving all MEMPs within the region.
- It will be up to each REMPC to decide whether, and what, subcommittees or working groups are required to assist or inform its planning functions. The REMPC is also empowered to determine its own quorum and voting requirements.

## Guidelines for preparing State and Regional Emergency Management Plans

- The Minister for Police and Emergency Services can issue guidelines to facilitate and support the planning process. A set of planning guidelines for the preparation of emergency management plans will be updated in phases to provide further detail and practical guidance on the planning process, supported by a [Resource Library](#) on the EMV website.
- From April 2020, a draft of the Guidelines for preparing State and Regional Emergency Management Plans will be available for REMPCs to guide the development of their initial REMP. Formal release of the guidelines will follow approval of the SEMP.
- The draft guidelines and [Resource Library](#) will provide further guidance on how REMPCs may operate, including governance and procedures.

### Timing

- The REMPCs will be established from April 2020 on a policy basis to commence the development of their REMPs.
- The new regional arrangements will formally commence after the new SEMP is in place.
- REMPCs will provide their plans to the Emergency Management Commissioner (EMC) for assurance and approval in October 2020.

## Collaboration

- The new arrangements establish an enabling environment that supports collaborative planning and gives flexibility to accommodate the different approaches across Victoria.
- Regions may collaborate in the planning process, however each REMPC is required to produce an individual plan which addresses their particular circumstances, needs and risks. It is expected that REMPs prepared under the new planning arrangements do not replicate other regional plans or the SEMP.

## Assurance of regional emergency management plans (REMPs)

- The EMC is the approver of the REMPs.
- EMV has developed an assurance framework for state, regional and municipal levels under the changes made through the EMLA Act.
- As part of the new assurance requirements, each REMPC will be required to prepare a statement of assurance to indicate the extent to which it has complied with the Act in preparing the plan. This will help to inform the EMC in deciding whether to approve a REMP.
- Refer to the [Assurance of Emergency Management Plans](#) fact sheet for more information.

## How will regions be defined for the purpose of regional level planning?

- Victoria's emergency management regions have previously been defined under the State Emergency Response Plan (SERP) and State Emergency Relief and Recovery Plan (SERRP).
- As part of emergency management planning reform, emergency management regions will be declared by Order in Council and will be confirmed shortly.

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