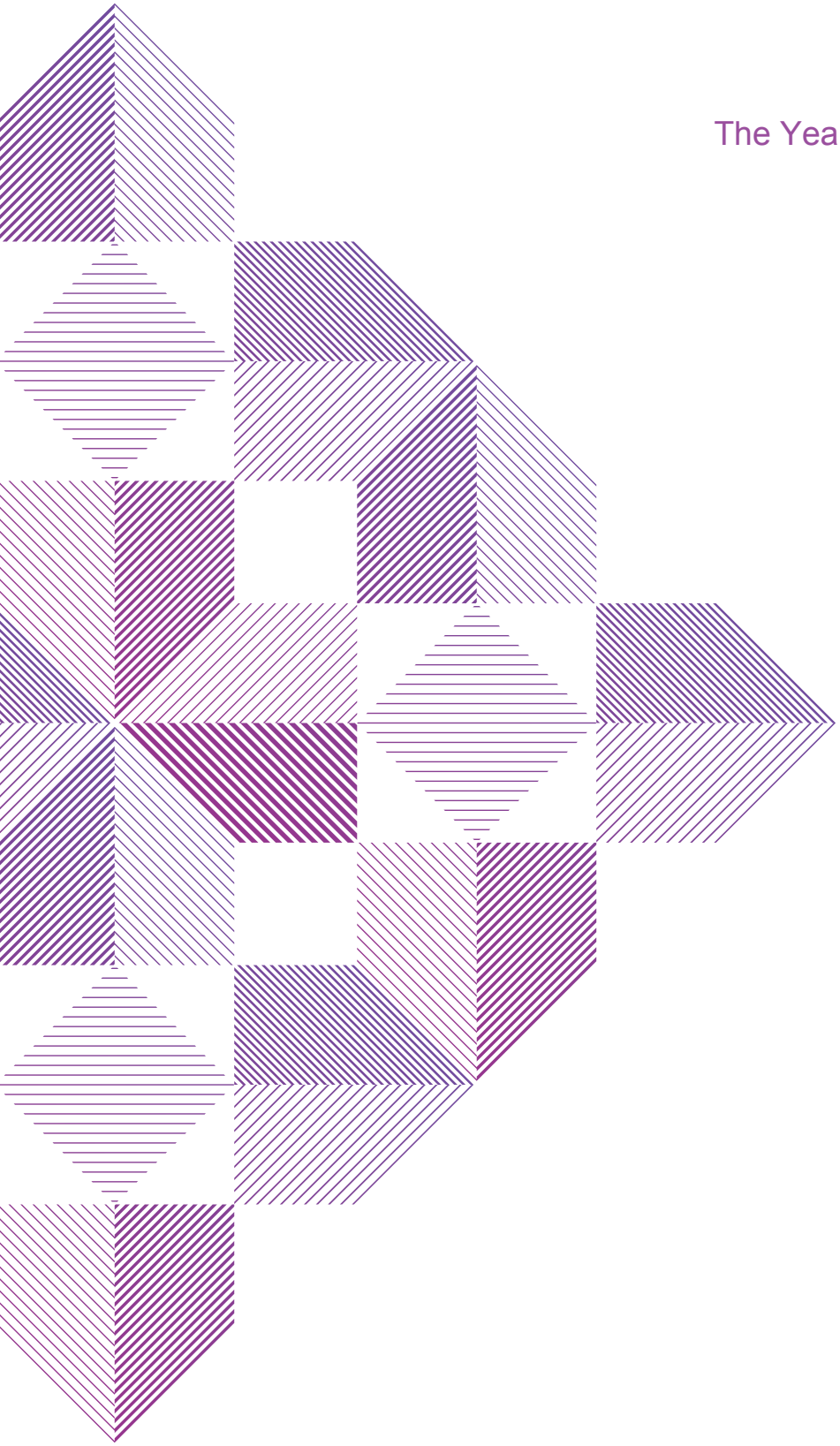
2016–17 Annual Assurance Summary

The Year in Review



Inspector-General for Emergency Management

VICTORIA State Government

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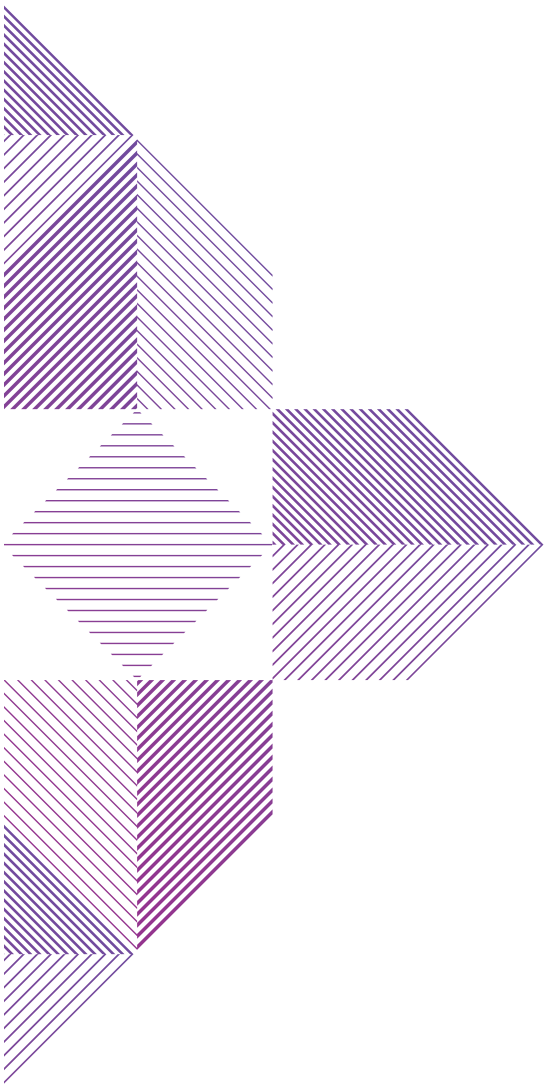


Preface

The Annual Assurance Summary is produced every year by the Inspector-General for Emergency Management (IGEM). It collates and provides a high-level summary of assurance activities conducted by different organisations and independent bodies across Victoria's emergency management sector (the sector).

In 2016–17, assurance activities were conducted at all levels of the emergency management system – organisational, system and independent – as described under the *Monitoring and Assurance Framework for Emergency Management.* This is a testament to the sector's commitment to learning and continuous improvement.

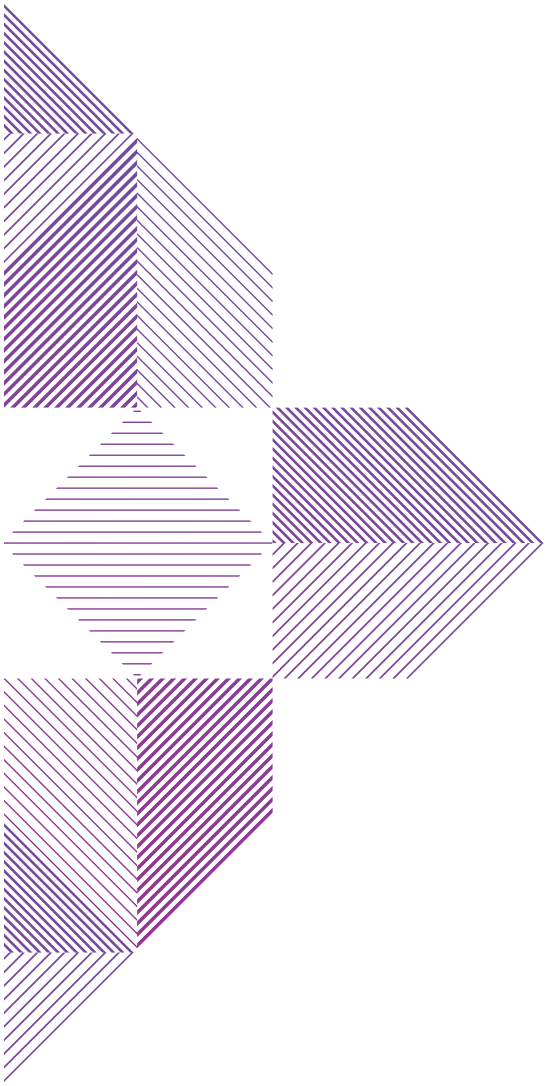
At the system level, IGEM's reviews conducted as part of its *Annual Forward Plan of Reviews* are being progressively released and their recommendations for improvement have been accepted by government. Consistent with IGEM's implementation monitoring role, IGEM will monitor these recommendations and report on their implementation progress in future iterations of the Annual Assurance Summary.

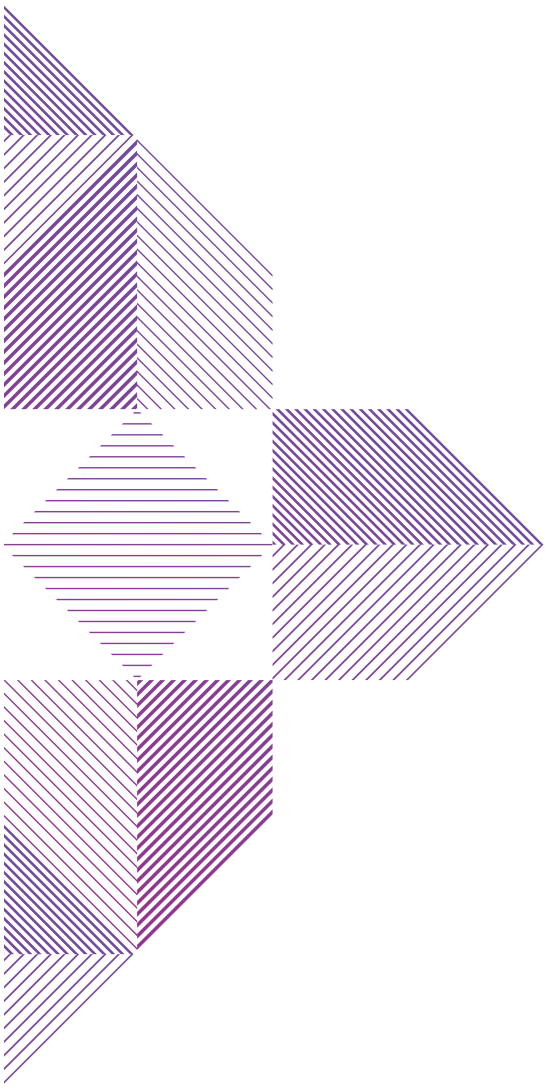
In addition to highlighting assurance activities conducted across the sector, the 2016–17 Annual Assurance Summary reflects another year of progress by the sector in implementing the reform agenda. This includes the release of performance standards for responder agencies across the spectrums of risk and resilience, capability and response and relief and recovery. Legislative change to enable the introduction of the new emergency management planning arrangements is well underway and reform of Victoria's relief and recovery arrangements has also commenced.

Assurance and continuous improvement are intrinsically linked and neither is possible without collaboration. I would like to take this opportunity to thank our emergency management partners for their support and acknowledge the sustained efforts demonstrated by the sector, and all its staff and volunteers, in working towards the vision of *safer and more resilient communities.*

Tony Pearce

Inspector-General for Emergency Management





Contents

1 **Executive summary** 1

1.1 The year in assurance 2
1.2 2016–17 reform agenda highlights 2
1.3 Conclusion 2

2 **Introduction** 3

2.1 Purpose and scope 4
2.2 Approach 4
2.3 Reader's guide 4

3 **Emergency management in Victoria** 5

3.1 Governance 6
3.2 Operating context 8

4 **Risk and resilience** 9

4.1 Performance and risk overview 10
4.2 Progress against reform agenda 11
4.3 Future directions 12

5 **Capability and response** 15

5.1 Performance and risk overview 16
5.2 Progress against reform agenda 19
5.3 Future directions 20

6 **Relief and recovery** 21

6.1 Performance and risk overview 22
6.2 Progress against reform agenda 23
6.3 Future directions 24

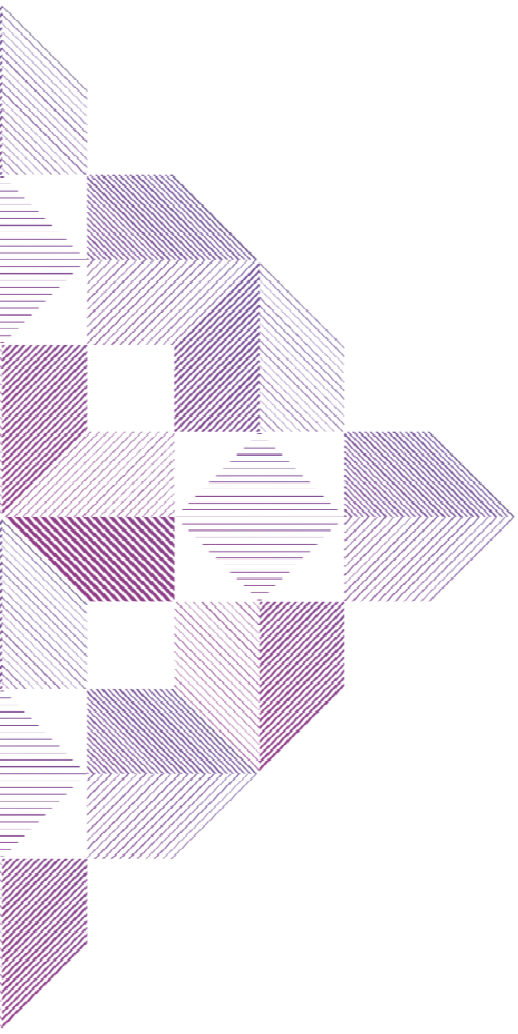
7 **Concluding remarks** 25

8 **References** 26

Acronyms

CFA	Country Fire Authority
CRU	Community Resilience Unit
DELWP	Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning
DHHS	Department of Health and Human Services
EMC	Emergency Management Commissioner
EMV	Emergency Management Victoria
ESTA	Emergency Services Telecommunications Authority
IGEM	Inspector-General for Emergency Management
IMT	Incident Management Team
MFB	Metropolitan Fire and Emergency Services Board
SAP	Victorian Emergency Management Strategic Action Plan
SCRC	State Crisis and Resilience Council
SERP	State Emergency Response Plan
SRN	Sector Resilience Network
VICSES	Victoria State Emergency Service

1 Executive summary



Victoria's emergency management sector (the sector) and independent bodies conduct a range of assurance activities – such as inquiries, reviews and monitoring – to support the continuous improvement of emergency management in Victoria.

Assurance activities provide evidence to government and the community of the sector's ability to plan for, respond to and recover from emergencies.

Assurance activities may also highlight areas where improvements can be made.

The Annual Assurance Summary draws together and provides examples of significant assurance activities relating to the overarching emergency management arrangements in Victoria.

Many of the system level assurance activities highlighted in this Annual Assurance Summary are undertaken by the Inspector-General for Emergency Management (IGEM), Emergency Management Victoria (EMV) and independent bodies.

Organisational level assurance activities – such as debriefs, after action reviews and monitoring – undertaken by emergency management organisations make a vital contribution to broader system level assurance.

1.1 The year in assurance

In 2016–17, Victorian communities were impacted by a wide range of emergency events, including the thunderstorm asthma event of 21–22 November 2016 and the Bourke Street incident on 20 January 2017.

These events tested the resilience of the Victorian community and stretched the capability and capacity of the sector.

Assurance activities such as reviews and debriefs allow the sector and the Victorian community to learn from these experiences and provide the platform for better preparedness for, response to and recovery from similar events in the future.

IGEM continued to provide assurance on planned burning to reduce bushfire risk through its investigation and reporting of planned burn breaches and monitoring the implementation progress of the *Safer Together: A new approach to reducing the risk of bushfire in Victoria*[1] policy.

The sector continued to embrace a culture of continuous improvement notably through EMV and sector partners sharing lessons from responses to emergency events in case studies published in the *Emergency Management Operational Review 2015–16.*[2]

IGEM undertook a significant review of the response to the unprecedented thunderstorm asthma event and made recommendations on how the sector can better prepare for and mitigate the impacts of rapid onset events.[3] The Victorian Government accepted in-principle all recommendations made in IGEM's review and the sector has already commenced implementing a range of improvement actions.

Victoria's relief and recovery arrangements are currently being reformed to empower communities to participate in their own recovery. To facilitate the reform, EMV released the *Resilient Recovery Discussion Paper,*[4] which introduces a community-centred recovery model based on community outcomes of wellbeing, viability, sustainability and liveability. The discussion paper identifies assurance and learning as important components in achieving the desired community outcomes.

1.2 2016–17 reform agenda highlights

Reform of Victoria's emergency management system continues to forge ahead through the sector's dedication and effort. In 2016–17, the sector made progress in a number of reform areas including:

- updating the Victorian Emergency Management Strategic Action Plan for the next three-year period (July 2016 to June 2019)[5] to refine the existing 30 actions and introduce two new actions on water safety and marine search and rescue
- releasing the *All Sectors Resilience Report*[6] for critical infrastructure resilience, which keeps government informed of key emergency risks faced by and interdependencies between Victoria's critical infrastructure
- releasing the second version of the *Victorian Emergency Management Performance Standards*[7] across the themes of risk and resilience, capability and response, and relief and recovery to provide responder agencies with guidance of the minimum requirements for the delivery of emergency management functions before, during and after emergencies
- updating the State Emergency Response Plan[8] to clarify control arrangements for major emergencies
- commencing reform of the relief and recovery arrangements in Victoria to meet the intent of the *Victorian Emergency Management Reform White Paper*[9].

1.3 Conclusion

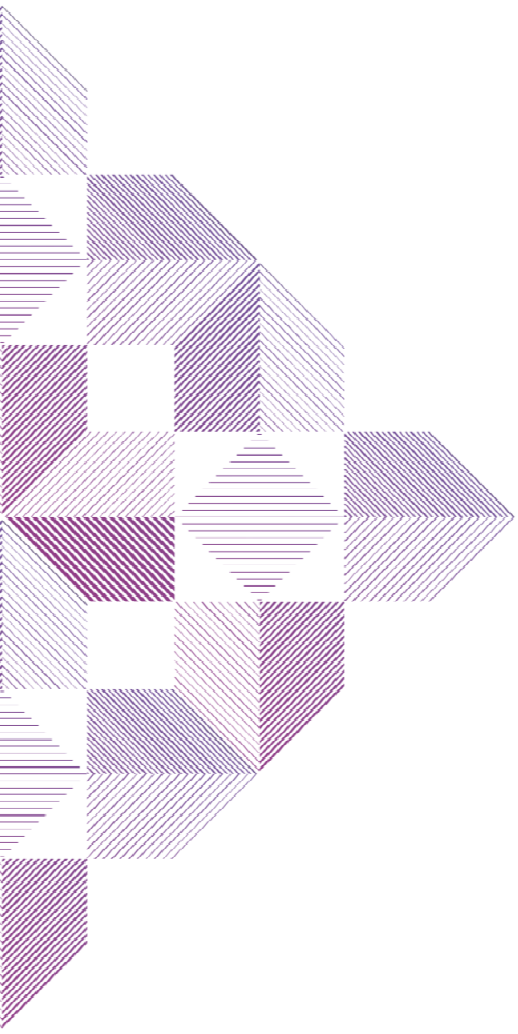
Assurance activities and implementation of improvement actions identified through assurance activities are critical to achieving the vision of *safer and more resilient communities*.

IGEM commends the sector in continuing to embrace a culture of continuous improvement and in maintaining the momentum to progress the reform agenda.

IGEM recognises the time and resources committed by the sector, and all its people, in embarking on this reform journey and improving emergency management in Victoria.

IGEM will continue to report on performance, risks, and progress against the reform agenda in the next Annual Assurance Summary in 2018.

2 Introduction



Victoria's emergency management sector (the sector) includes all agencies, bodies and departments and other persons who have a responsibility or function or other role in emergency management.[1]

Over the years, numerous emergency management assurance reports have been produced by the sector or independent entities. The findings of these reports are often related or interdependent. However, before 2016, a consolidated view of sector assurance activities had not been produced.

The Inspector-General for Emergency Management (IGEM) now produces an Annual Assurance Summary to provide a high-level synopsis of sector assurance activities. This is the second Annual Assurance Summary.

This Annual Assurance Summary consolidates key assurance activities undertaken by sector organisations and independent bodies in 2016–17.

IGEM acknowledges that it is not possible to capture each and every sector assurance activity in a concise summary report. The assurance activities highlighted are those which have broad applicability to the overarching emergency management arrangements in Victoria.

[1] This definition is adopted from section 3 of the *Emergency Management Act 2013* (Vic)

2.1 Purpose and scope

The purpose of the Annual Assurance Summary is to provide a high-level overview of assurance activities undertaken in relation to the sector in 2016–17 and serve as a record of progress. The primary audience is the Minister for Emergency Services.

The *Monitoring and Assurance Framework for Emergency Management*[10] defines assurance as an expression or statement designed to increase the confidence of government and the community in the ability of the sector to plan for, respond to and recover from emergencies. Assurance activities such as debriefs, audits, monitoring, reviews and evaluations need to be carried out by the sector and independent bodies in order to inform any such expression or statement of assurance.

2.2 Approach

IGEM's objectives under the *Emergency Management Act 2013* (the Act) are to provide assurance to the government and the community in respect of emergency management arrangements in Victoria, and to foster continuous improvement of emergency management in Victoria.

To compile the Annual Assurance Summary, IGEM sources publicly available reports on assurance activities conducted at the system and organisational levels. These reports provide information on sector performance and risks, and describe progress against the reform agenda. IGEM sources publicly available information to minimise burden on the sector.

IGEM also considers publicly available plans, strategies, guidelines and frameworks developed by the sector as these documents signal future directions of reform and the related assurance activities.

IGEM prepares the Annual Assurance Summary in accordance with assurance principles outlined in the Framework. In particular, it adds value by providing a succinct, high-level overview of sector assurance activities.

The Annual Assurance Summary does not make any recommendations.

2.3 Reader's guide

Following this introduction, the first part of the Annual Assurance Summary titled 'Emergency management in Victoria' describes the overarching governance and recent operating context for emergency management in Victoria.

The next three parts provide the high-level overview of assurance activities undertaken by the sector during 2016–17. The parts correlate to the governance structure of the State Crisis and Resilience Council (SCRC) sub-committees, namely:

- Risk and Resilience
- Capability and Response
- Relief and Recovery.

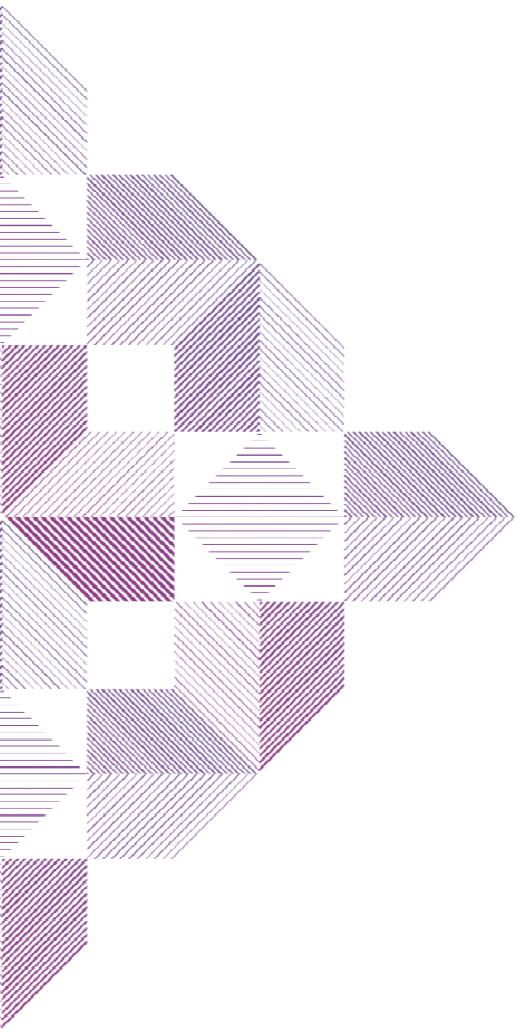
Assurance activities are allocated as accurately as possible to one of these three themes even though some of the assurance activities focus on matters which span more than one theme.

Under each theme, assurance activities are further categorised as follows:

- 'Performance and risk overview' outlines assurance activities which consider sector performance against relevant standards or which consider risks within the emergency management system
- 'Progress against the reform agenda' outlines assurance activities which demonstrate progress made on reforms set out in *Victorian Emergency Management Reform White Paper*[9] (the White Paper)
- 'Future directions' outlines assurance activities which are still taking shape as well as policies, strategies or plans which signal the future directions of reform progress and the related assurance activities.

The Annual Assurance Summary ends with 'Concluding remarks' which reinforce the importance of assurance activities in achieving the shared vision of *safer and more resilient communities*, while also recognising the time and resources that the sector and independent bodies devote to providing assurance.

3 Emergency management in Victoria



Victoria has a long history of emergencies, each with different characteristics, challenges and consequences. Over the past decade this has included animal health incidents, fires, floods, hazardous materials incidents, heatwaves, public health emergencies, locust plague, road/rail incidents, severe storms and tornadoes.

Emergency events like these can result in devastating losses and considerable social, economic and environmental impacts. This history demonstrates that emergencies may emerge at unpredictable times and can be triggered, magnified or mitigated by natural and human factors.

The shared vision for emergency management in Victoria is *safer and more resilient communities*[2] with the shared, legislated objective of *a sustainable and efficient emergency management system that reduces the likelihood, effect and consequences of emergencies*[3].

The sector recognises that this shared vision and goal can only be achieved through all agencies, departments, industry, business, levels of government and community working together as one.

[2] Emergency Management Victoria, *Victorian Emergency Management Strategic Action Plan 2015-2018*. Melbourne: Victorian Government; 2015.
[3] Section 5 of the *Emergency Management Act 2013* (Vic).

3.1 Governance

Strong governance is required to coordinate policies and strategies across the sector. **Figure 1** depicts the overarching emergency management governance structure in Victoria.

Following commencement of the Act on 1 July 2014, the SCRC was established to drive a more integrated approach to governance. The SCRC achieves integration by developing and coordinating policy and strategy and overseeing its implementation across the spectrum of emergency management functions. The SCRC membership comprises the:

- Secretaries of each government department
- Chief Commissioner of Police
- Chief Executive of Emergency Management Victoria (EMV)
- Emergency Management Commissioner (EMC)
- IGEM (as an observer)
- Chief Executive Officer of the Municipal Association of Victoria (as the representative of local government).

The SCRC is supported by three sub-committees: Risk and Resilience; Capability and Response; and Relief and Recovery. The SCRC and its sub-committees meet no less than quarterly. They ensure integration and cohesion across the sector and enable the government to progress the reform agenda.

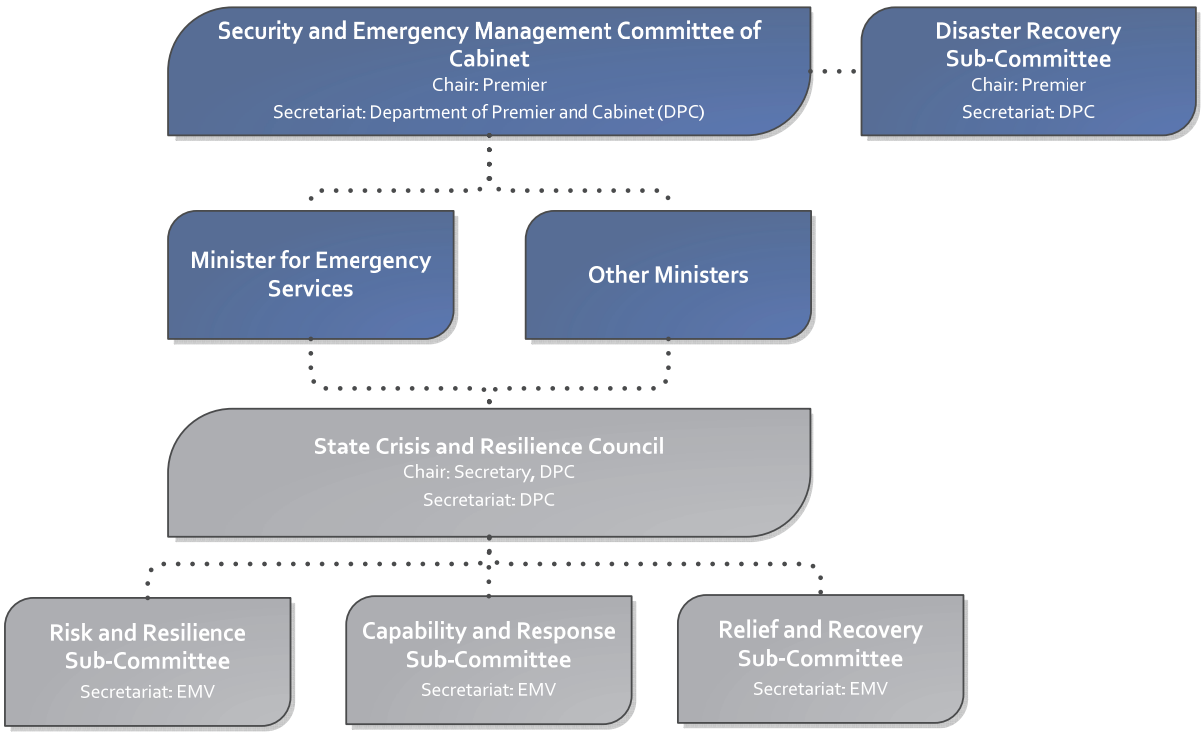
The SCRC sub-committees' membership is made up from a broad range of organisations with a role in emergency management.

SCRC key priorities

Every year the SCRC develops a list of key priorities, the delivery of which will realise its role as the peak crisis and emergency management advisory body to the Victorian Government. The priorities support the delivery of the reform agenda. The key priorities for 2016–17 were:

- strengthening resilience and risk mitigation
- implementing a Whole of Government integrated approach to emergency management that meets future needs
- implementing a next generation relief and recovery system for Victoria, including a focus on community-led recovery and integration of emergency management activities before, during and after an emergency
- strengthening counter-terrorism security and social cohesion
- testing changes to the natural disaster funding arrangements
- providing ongoing oversight of implementation of inquiry/audit recommendations and other findings, including implementation of those from the Hazelwood Mine Fire Inquiry reports
- building diversity and inclusion in the sector, including the development of a Diversity and Inclusion Framework.

Figure 1: Overarching emergency management governance structure in Victoria



Victorian Emergency Management Strategic Action Plan

The Act requires that the SCRC develop a Strategic Action Plan (SAP) with a three-year outlook, and that IGEM monitor and report to the Minister for Emergency Services on the implementation of the SAP by emergency management organisations.

The first three-year SAP[11] was released in July 2015, setting out 30 state-level actions aimed at enhancing Victoria's emergency management system in line with the vision of *safer and more resilient communities*. In May 2016, IGEM reported that 22 out of 30 actions had commenced and were at varying levels of planning, scoping and implementation across the sector.[12]

The SAP Update[5] released in November 2016 rolled the plan into the next three-year period (July 2016 to June 2019). It refined the existing 30 actions and introduced two new actions on water safety and marine search and rescue.

The SCRC agreed in October 2016 to amend the timeframes for IGEM's SAP reporting to align with the financial year. This will allow sector agencies to streamline SAP reporting with other quarterly and annual reporting.

In September 2017, IGEM will deliver its second annual progress report to the Minister for Emergency Services, reflecting implementation progress for the SAP Update.[5]

Continuous improvement

The SCRC conducted a discussion exercise in 2016. Following on from this, the Security and Emergency Management Committee of Cabinet conducted a discussion exercise. Both exercises were evaluated by IGEM.

In 2017–18, as part of IGEM's Annual Forward Plan of Reviews, IGEM will be conducting a review to assess the impact and effectiveness of current emergency management governance arrangements in Victoria. This includes the identification of opportunities for improvement in line with leading practice.

Image: © State Government of Victoria, DELWP

3.2 Operating context

During 2016–17, Victorian communities were affected by a range of different emergency events. This included fires, storms and flash flooding which the sector and community have come to expect.

The period also included a range of incidents and events which were unique and harder to predict, and which tested the capacity and capability of the sector and the resilience of communities. These unique and harder to predict events included the:

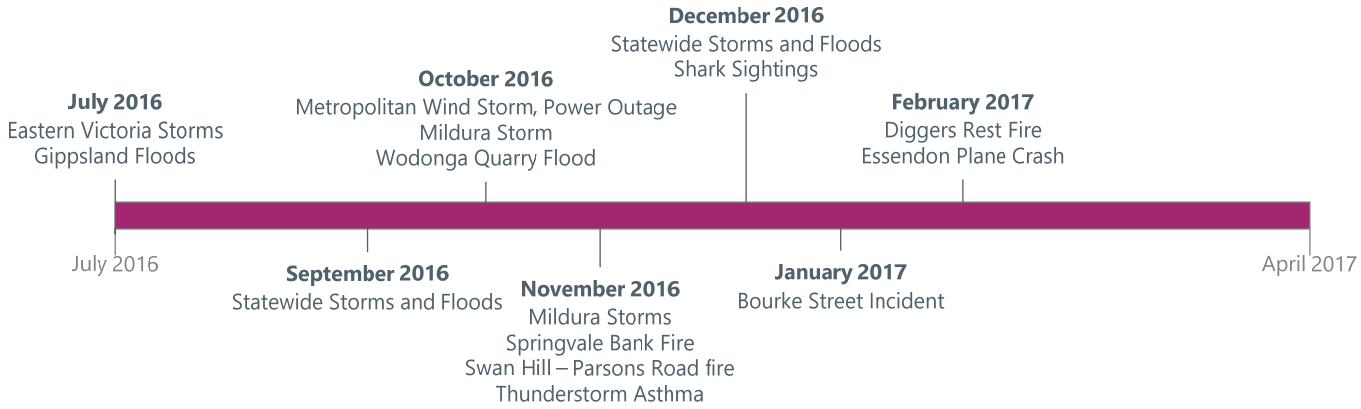
- Springvale Bank Fire incident (18 November 2016)
- thunderstorm asthma event (21–22 November 2016)
- Bourke Street incident (20 January 2017)
- Essendon Plane Crash incident (21 February 2017)
- increased shark sightings during summer (2016–17).

Figure 2 shows a selection of events and incidents that occurred during 2016–17. This is not an exhaustive selection but seeks to illustrate the broad range of emergency events and incidents faced by the sector and communities.

Victoria's climate is changing with implications for fire conditions and extreme weather events.[4] Systems underpinning society continue to evolve and become more interconnected. For example, society continues to embrace and rely on new technology. Delivery drones may fill the skies and autonomous cars may fill roads in the near future, but they also have the potential to introduce new risks or increase the impact of existing risks, such as cyber-attack.

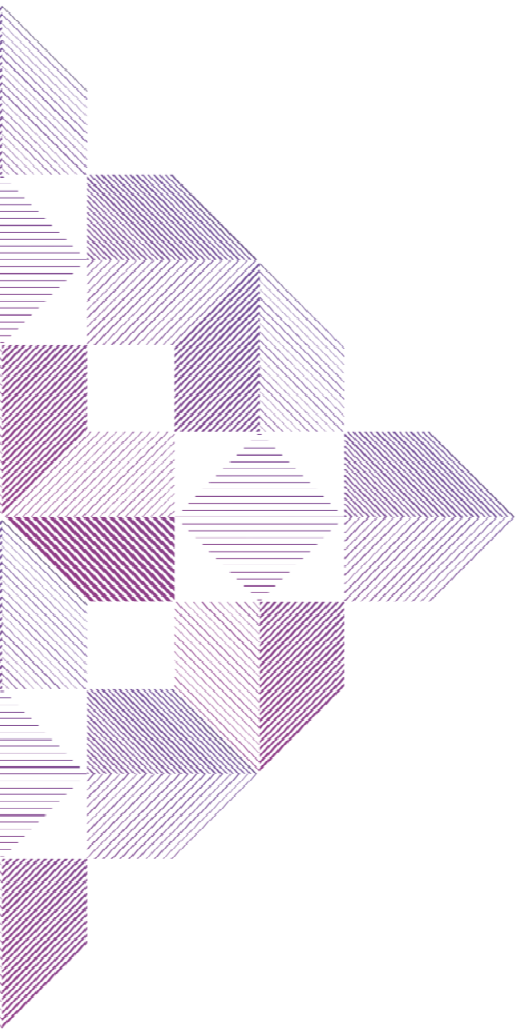
As a result, the sector and communities will face greater challenges, not only from known risks, but also from emerging risks. The sector's all communities, all emergencies approach to emergency management and its focus on building community resilience are vital in preparing the sector and communities to face these emerging risks.

Figure 2: Selected emergency events and incidents July 2016 to April 2017



[4] Emergency Management Victoria. *New emergency management climate change program for Victoria.* Online media release: Emergency Management Victoria.

4 Risk and resilience



The International Organization for Standardization defines risk as “the effect of uncertainty on objectives”.[5] This definition of risk is clearer once put in context. In the context of emergencies, the Victoria State Emergency Service (VICSES) describes risk as “the outcome of interactions between a specific hazard (for example bushfires) and assets or functions that are of value to the human system”.[6]

EMV defines resilience as the "capacity of individuals, communities, institutions, businesses and systems to survive, adapt and thrive no matter what kind of chronic stresses and acute shocks they experience".[7]

This part of the Annual Assurance Summary provides a high-level overview of assurance activities undertaken in 2016–17 which consider the sector’s management of emergency risks or the sector’s work to build resilience to chronic stresses and acute shocks.

IGEM notes that some assurance activities included in this part of the Annual Assurance Summary focus on matters which span more than risk and resilience. For example, while the subject matter also spans capability and response and relief and recovery, the implementation monitoring of recommendations and related actions flowing from the 2009 Victorian Bushfires Royal Commission is included in this part on the basis that the final two ongoing actions are resilience focused.

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[5] International Organization for Standardization. *ISO 31000:2009 Risk management – Principles and guidelines.* Geneva: International Organization for Standardization; 2009.

[6] Victoria State Emergency Service. *Community Emergency Risk Assessment, Informing Emergency Management Planning, Participant Workbook Version 2.0.* Online publication: Victoria State Emergency Service; 2014.

[7] Emergency Management Victoria. *Resilient Recovery - Discussion Paper*. Melbourne: Emergency Management Victoria; 2017.

4.1 Performance and risk overview

Victorian Bushfires Royal Commission

The 2009 Victorian Bushfires Royal Commission made 67 recommendations to improve the State's preparation for, response to, and recovery from bushfires.[13] Since then, the sector has undergone major reform, particularly through the sector's commitment to an all-agencies, all-communities approach.

In 2015, IGEM assumed responsibility for monitoring the implementation of recommendations and related actions from the 2009 Victorian Bushfires Royal Commission.

On 13 October 2016, IGEM's second annual progress report[14] was tabled in Parliament. This concluded IGEM's responsibility for annual progress reporting. IGEM found that of the 11 actions incomplete in 2015, only two remained ongoing. IGEM continues to monitor the progress of the ongoing actions and reports directly to the Minister for Emergency Services on completion.

IGEM has advised the Minister for Emergency Services that Action 49(h) *Amend Building Regulations 2006 to adopt performance requirements* has been completed. IGEM expects to advise on the completion of the final action in 2017 following confirmation from the Victorian Building Authority.

Investigation of the Lancefield-Cobaw Fire

As part of its Bushfire Fuel Management Program, the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) conducted a planned burn at Lancefield-Cobaw Croziers Track in the Macedon Ranges in September 2015. The burn later breached containment lines impacting local communities and the environment. The independent investigation[15] into the fire made 22 recommendations for improvement of DELWP's management of planned burns. In its response[16] to the independent investigation, DELWP accepted all of the recommendations and made 10 additional commitments.

The Victorian Government requested that IGEM report on the implementation of the recommendations and commitments. IGEM provided an interim progress report[17] in February 2016, a progress report[18] in June 2016, and its final report[19] in August 2016.

IGEM reported that, overall, DELWP acted swiftly to respond to the independent investigation findings and rebuild community trust. IGEM found that 19 recommendations and all 10 commitments had been completed. The remaining three recommendations were progressing satisfactorily. IGEM will continue monitoring implementation of the remaining three recommendations as part of its implementation monitoring of the *Safer Together: A new approach to reducing the risk of bushfire in Victoria* policy[1] (the *Safer Together* policy).

DELWP also released three related documents about its quality control and assurance practices: an assessment of its approach to hazardous trees with a view to extending practice to other aspects of its planned burn practice;[20] a discussion paper on its Bushfire Management Audit Program;[21] and its *Audit and Quality Assurance Framework for Bushfire Management.*[22]

In November 2016, IGEM released its *Summary of investigations into breaches of planned burn control lines (1 January to 30 June 2016)*[23] as part of its approach with DELWP to manage the prompt investigation and reporting of planned burn breaches. The report brings together IGEM's observations from investigations into the eight breaches for the period 1 January to 30 June 2016. IGEM also identified four improvement opportunities to reduce the potential for planned burn breaches in the future.

Implementation of the Safer Together policy

In February 2015, the Minister for Environment, Climate Change and Water and the Minister for Emergency Services requested IGEM to review performance targets for bushfire fuel management on public land in light of findings and commentary from recent reports including the final annual report of the Bushfires Royal Commission Implementation Monitor.[24] IGEM's 2015 review[25] made four recommendations relating to DELWP's Bushfire Fuel Management Program, the most significant of which was for DELWP to move from a hectare-based fuel reduction target to a risk-reduction target.

The Victorian Government accepted all of IGEM's recommendations and is implementing these through its *Safer Together* policy. IGEM is monitoring implementation of the four recommendations and a further three recommendations that carried over from the Lancefield-Cobaw independent investigation.

In its first annual report[26] of October 2016, IGEM found that the most significant recommendation had been completed and that the remaining recommendations were progressing satisfactorily. IGEM will continue monitoring implementation progress and report annually to the Minister for Emergency Services and Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change.

Fire season preparedness

In June 2017, the Environment and Planning Committee of the Parliament of Victoria (the Committee) tabled the final report[27] on its inquiry into fire season preparedness.

The final report considered:

- causes of bushfire ignitions, including human negligence, accident and arson
- fundamental principles of bushfire fuel management with a focus on planned burning (the definition, goals, strategies, approaches, targets, challenges of public and private tenure, environmental impacts, health impacts and alternatives)
- other bushfire mitigation measures with a focus on evacuation policies
- the effect of climate change on the bushfire season
- emergency management coordination arrangements with a focus on the concept of shared responsibility and relevant legislative frameworks.

The final report made 22 findings and 12 recommendations.

4.2 Progress against reform agenda

Critical infrastructure resilience

The need for an all hazards model for critical infrastructure resilience was identified in the White Paper.[9] On 1 July 2015, new emergency risk management arrangements for critical infrastructure resilience in Victoria came into effect, namely Part 7A of the Act and relevant regulations[28], the *Critical Infrastructure Resilience Strategy*[29] (the Strategy) and Ministerial Guidelines.[30]

Under the arrangements, infrastructure is assessed for criticality according to the level and geographical extent of adverse impact that its disruption would have on essential services and economic and social well-being. The owner and/or operator of critical infrastructure designated as vital is required to comply with the annual Resilience Improvement Cycle which includes emergency risk management planning, an exercise, an audit and a statement of assurance.

Sector Resilience Networks (SRNs) have been established in order to enable joint planning and information sharing between industry and government. Each SRN is chaired by the relevant portfolio department and includes representatives from industry, EMV and Victoria Police. SRNs report to the Risk and Resilience Sub-Committee of the SCRC via an annual Sector Resilience Plan which informs government on the resilience improvement initiatives addressing key risks and dependencies.

EMV released the first annual *All Sectors Resilience Report*[6] in December 2016 based on the Sector Resilience Plans. It described Victoria's critical infrastructure resilience arrangements, outlined key emergency risks and dependencies faced by Victoria's critical infrastructure sectors, and provided an overview of Victoria's eight critical infrastructure sectors.

IGEM has a legislated responsibility to monitor, review and assess critical infrastructure resilience at a system level. In its inaugural report[31] released in April 2017, IGEM examined the first year of implementation of the new arrangements, with a particular focus on the outputs required under the Act and the Strategy. IGEM reported that, overall, EMV, portfolio departments and industry partners have made considerable progress in implementing the new arrangements. As the arrangements are progressively implemented, IGEM will transition to reporting on implementation effectiveness.

More specific to the energy sector, on 19 January 2017 the Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change announced an independent review of Victoria's electricity network safety framework, to be chaired by Dr Paul Grimes. DELWP released an electricity issues paper[32] in April 2017 and public submissions closed on 28 April 2017. The review will examine the safety framework applicable to the electricity network and also the gas network in Victoria and assess the effectiveness in achieving desired safety outcomes. This includes the design and adequacy of the regulatory obligations, incentives and other arrangements governing network safety. The interim report is scheduled for release in July 2017, with the final report planned for December 2017.

Also in the last year, the Victorian Auditor-General's Office tabled in Parliament several reports related to performance in the health, water and transport sectors.

Image: Shutterstock

Emergency management performance standards

The Act tasks the EMC with developing, and reviewing from time to time, operational standards in relation to the performance by responder agencies of their functions.

The SAP[5] calls for the development of performance standards to guide effective and efficient governance and to enable the sector to measure its performance so that there will be a clear understanding of the roles and responsibilities for emergency management in Victoria.

In line with these responsibilities, the EMC released the second version of the *Victorian Emergency Management Performance Standards*[7] (the Standards) in December 2016.

The Standards were structured into three elements: risk and resilience, capability and response, and relief and recovery. The Standards for risk and resilience comprise five functions:

- community connection
- understanding and reducing risk
- emergency management planning
- critical infrastructure resilience
- consequence management.

For each function, the Standards describe the context, the desired outcome, objective, assumptions and then list minimum requirements and criteria that responder agencies report against to EMV, with consolidated information to be provided to the EMC and IGEM.

The Standards for risk and resilience apply to responder agencies as of 1 January 2017. Work on this is continuing and IGEM will revisit progress in the next Annual Assurance Summary.

Emergency management planning reform

In accordance with the strategic priorities outlined in the White Paper,[9] EMV is leading the reforms to Victoria's emergency management planning arrangements through the development of the *Emergency Management Legislation Amendment (Planning) Bill 2016 Exposure Draft*.[33]

EMV invited public submissions, which closed on 30 June 2016. EMV will consider the submissions for the further development of the planning arrangements.

To support the implementation of the planning arrangements, EMV, in partnership with the sector, is developing new emergency management planning guidelines for the state, regional and municipal levels. The guidelines will describe how to implement the new arrangements from plan development to assurance.

Under the new arrangements, IGEM is expected to have an assurance role to monitor, review and assess emergency management planning at a system level.

4.3 Future directions

A more diverse sector

In October 2016, EMV released *The Emergency Management Diversity and Inclusion Framework*.[34] This framework guides the sector's actions for creating a diverse and inclusive sector that better connects to all of Victoria's diverse communities. Connecting with diverse communities builds resilience as it results in:

- improved emergency management planning that addresses the needs of the whole community and limits the impact of emergencies
- improved service delivery for the whole community before, during and after emergencies
- all members of the community contributing to their safety and resilience.

Connecting with and preparing communities

In its *Review of connecting with and preparing communities for major emergencies in Victoria,*[35] IGEM examined the approach of two agencies, the Country Fire Authority (CFA) and VICSES, that take a lead role in preparing communities for bushfires, floods and storms.

IGEM made three recommendations related to improving sector connections with communities to enhance community preparedness and resilience for major emergencies. The recommendations were for the sector to pursue continuous improvement of community engagement and preparedness programs by conducting assurance activities, drawing on resilience and participation policies and guidance, and setting targets for preparedness outcomes.

In May 2017, EMV released the Government response to the review[36] which supported the recommendations in full and outlined the work underway and planned to realise the recommendations, including the *Community Resilience Framework for Emergency Management*,[37] the *Victorian Preparedness Goal,*[38] the Standards,[7] the *EM-LEARN Lessons Management Framework*[39] and the *VICSES Community Resilience Strategy 2016-19*.[40]

IGEM will monitor the implementation of recommendations from the *Review of connecting with and preparing communities for major emergencies in Victoria* and report on progress as part of the Annual Assurance Summary in 2018.

Collaborating with the private sector and community organisations

In its *Review of connecting and collaborating with the private sector and community organisations*[41] (pending release), IGEM considered how the sector connects and collaborates with private sector and community organisations across the broad areas of governance, mitigation and resilience building, and response and recovery. IGEM considered the purposes for which collaboration is required now and in the future, and identified challenges relevant to sector organisations in connecting and collaborating.

Improving community resilience

EMV has been working with the sector, government, business, local councils and non-government organisations to develop the *Community Resilience Framework for Emergency Management*[37] (the Resilience Framework) which it released in June 2017.

EMV and its partners mapped community challenges and outcomes and undertook broad community engagement to test and discuss the key sector relationships, potential community resilience outcomes and challenges, and the definition of resilience.

The Resilience Framework acknowledges that the Victorian community as a whole is already resilient in many ways and also acknowledges that the journey to build safer and more resilient communities will take decades.

A key aim of the Resilience Framework is to support the sector to align and advance investment toward achieving the shared vision for resilience. The objective is to bring the community to the centre of the sector's strategies, programs and approaches.

The Resilience Framework conceptualises of communities of people as being defined by place or shared interest and explains that resilient communities are connected and able to work together to manage stresses and cope with emergencies.

The Resilience Framework encourages and provides guidance to the sector to consider how its actions contribute towards seven broad community resilience characteristics and provides general examples of how the sector could measure the effectiveness of its contribution.

Social cohesion and community resilience

Social cohesion is an important contributor to community resilience. In May 2015, the Victorian Government established the Social Cohesion and Community Resilience Taskforce to adopt a whole-of-government and whole-of-community approach to address social cohesion, community resilience and marginalisation, and to prevent violent extremism. The Community Resilience Unit (CRU) was formed to support the Social Cohesion and Community Resilience Taskforce.

The CRU is currently developing a community engagement strategy, which provides guidance for the CRU's community engagement activities in promoting social cohesion and community resilience, and preventing violent extremism across Victoria.

VICSES Community Resilience Strategy

In July 2016, VICSES released its *VICSES Community Resilience Strategy 2016–19*[40] to provide guidance to VICSES staff and volunteers on how they can work together to build safer and more resilient communities by building capacity, increasing collaboration and fostering connections. It outlines a three-year road map for design, development, delivery and evaluation of future programs to build community resilience.

The strategy states that a substantial change in community behaviour is not expected in the first three years as sustained behaviour change is a long-term goal requiring a number of years to successfully achieve, track and measure. VICSES will engage operational partners, external stakeholders and academia to explore how to best define and develop key indicators which measure achievement against identified strategic objectives.

Image: Victoria State Emergency Service

Preparing for the impacts of climate change

EMV is leading an Emergency Management Climate Change Program that will work with communities, businesses, government and agencies to integrate climate risks, impacts and projections into all phases of emergency management.[42] Commencing in 2017, this program seeks to:

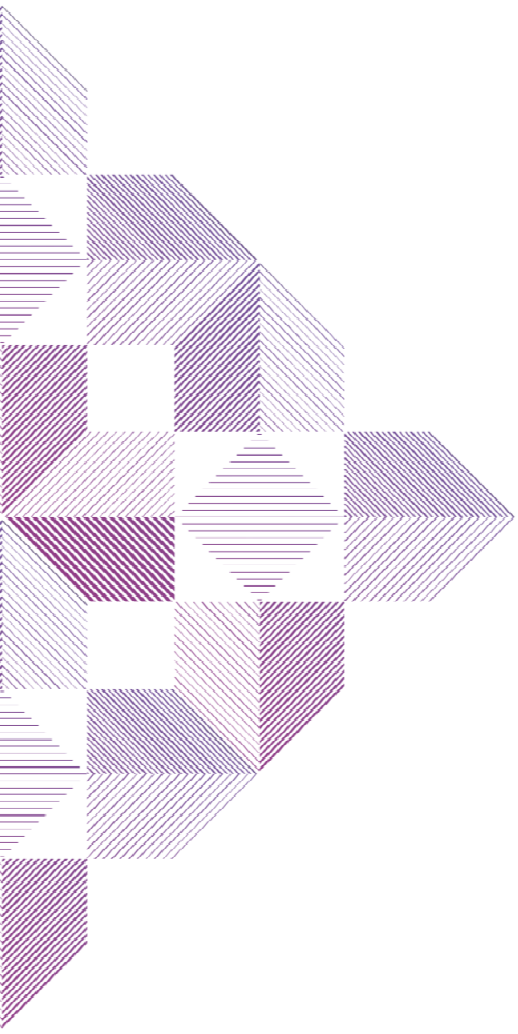
- support decision-makers to consider climate change by preparing guidelines for state, regional and local emergency management planning
- promote the use of local knowledge, expertise and resources by connecting people with communities through the Community Based Emergency Management Program
- incorporate climate change projections into risk data to improve risk management scenario planning
- share information through forums to enable a better understanding by emergency management practitioners of the challenges posed by climate change
- strengthen organisational capacity for agencies to adapt to climate change and reduce their emissions footprint
- work with critical infrastructure owners/operators to improve consideration of climate change in their planning for service continuity.

Improving risk assessment

EMV is developing a State Emergency Risk Assessment Review 2016–17 which assesses Victoria's priority emergency risks including a reassessment of those outlined in the 2012–13 edition.[43]

In relation to fire and hazmat risks in the built environment, the Metropolitan Fire and Emergency Services Board (MFB) has partnered with CFA to refine and pilot the Victoria Built Environment Risk Assessment Process[44] in several municipalities. This assessment process enables the identification, assessment, evaluation and treatment of fire and hazmat risks in the built environment, which are consistent, comparable and evidence-based.

5 Capability and response



EMV defines capability as the sector's collective ability to reduce the likelihood and consequences of an emergency before, during and after it occurs.[8]

The State Emergency Response Plan (SERP)[8] defines emergency response as the action taken immediately before, during and in the first period after an emergency to reduce the effect and consequences of emergencies on people, their livelihoods and wellbeing, property and the environment, and to meet basic human needs.

This part of the Annual Assurance Summary provides a high-level overview of assurance activities undertaken in 2016–17 which consider the sector's capability to reduce the likelihood and consequences of an emergency or the sector's response to an emergency.

[8] Emergency Management Victoria. *Victorian Emergency Capability Blueprint 2015–2025*. Online publication: Emergency Management Victoria; 2015.

5.1 Performance and risk overview

Building sector preparedness

In its *Review of Victoria's emergency management sector preparedness for major emergencies,*[45] IGEM described how preparedness has been implied in the Victorian approach to prevention, response and recovery. This contrasts to some other states and overseas where preparedness is an explicit emergency management function alongside prevention, response and recovery. IGEM identified interrelated principles of preparedness common to the approaches, which were that preparedness is a shared responsibility, preparedness is guided by risk and preparedness applies to all stages of prevention, response and recovery.

IGEM recommended EMV continue leading development and application of a comprehensive sector-wide preparedness model for emergency management arrangements in Victoria. The Government response,[46] released in May 2017, supported the recommendation in full. IGEM will monitor the implementation of the recommendation and report on progress as part of the Annual Assurance Summary in 2018.

As part of work towards the sector-wide preparedness model, EMV released the *Victorian Preparedness Goal*[38] in July 2016 to inform the community on the sector's vision, goal and values and to outline the core capabilities required. The document reflects the interrelated principles of preparedness because it defines the core capabilities which the sector requires in relation to the major risks faced by Victorian communities. It also emphasises that preparedness for prevention, response and recovery is a shared responsibility.

In May 2017, EMV released the *Victorian Preparedness Framework*[47] (the Preparedness Framework) to provide a method to understand sector capability requirements and the critical tasks required to deliver core capabilities. EMV developed the Preparedness Framework as a planning tool to assist the sector to understand the capabilities required for all stages of a major emergency. The Preparedness Framework uses the findings from the *Emergency Risks in Victoria - Report of the 2012–13 State Emergency Risk Assessment*[43] to identify the major risks facing the state, determine the overall preparedness and outline the core capabilities.

Fitness for duty

The SAP[5] envisions a sector workforce with the skills, expertise and support to confidently and safely undertake its role. In its *Review of fitness for duty*[48] (pending release), IGEM examined the legislative and policy arrangements for managing the fitness of paid and volunteer operational sector personnel to competently and safely undertake their roles. The review described:

- agency and sector injury results
- the complex legislative framework governing fitness for duty
- existing protocols and processes which Victoria's emergency responder agencies have in place regarding fitness for duty
- leading practice of some responder and defence agencies in Australia and North America
- considerations, barriers and enablers which Victoria's emergency responder agencies face.

The review makes recommendations to support the introduction of leading practice in fitness for duty across Victoria's responder agencies and the sector.

The review considered physical and physiological fitness for duty. Mental health and substance abuse aspects of fitness for duty were outside the scope of this review. IGEM will continue to engage with the sector around the potential to review these aspects in future.

CFA Training College at Fiskville

In December 2014 the Legislative Assembly referred an inquiry into the CFA Training College at Fiskville to the Environment and Natural Resources Committee (the Committee) instructing it to provide:

- studies of pollution, unsafe activities, health impacts and role of past and present executive management
- an assessment of the feasibility of decontamination/rectification of the training site
- recommendations to mitigate ongoing harm and to provide justice to victims and their families.

The Committee tabled its final report[49] on 24 May 2016, making 125 findings and 31 recommendations. On 24 November 2016 the Victorian Government tabled its response[50] supporting in full, in principle or in part each of the recommendations. At the request of the Victorian Government, IGEM will develop an assurance framework for monitoring the implementation of the Government's commitments. This includes oversight of the safety of the operations of Victoria's Emergency Management Training Centres in close consultation with Worksafe Victoria and in accordance with IGEM's legislative functions.

Strengthening incident management

Incident management involves the processes, decisions and actions needed to resolve an emergency incident. It is a core capability of an emergency management system. The 2009 Victorian Bushfires Royal Commission recommended that personnel involved in managing major incidents be required to achieve a common standard of competency through a multi-agency accreditation process.[13] Since then, responder agencies and EMV have developed and operated common training, development and accreditation for Level 3 Incident Management Team (IMT) personnel.

In its *Review of incident management teams: accreditation and rostering*[51], IGEM assessed the effectiveness of accreditation processes and approaches to rostering personnel into Level 3 IMTs. IGEM found that Victoria has the foundations of a comprehensive system for the supply of skilled incident management personnel and for effective management of IMTs and personnel resources for state-wide readiness and operations. IGEM also identified a number of improvement opportunities to maintain the progress and made recommendations to strengthen Victoria's incident management arrangements.

Thunderstorm asthma

The thunderstorm asthma event that occurred on 21–22 November 2016 affected the health of thousands of Victorians and sadly, is thought to have contributed to the death of nine people. While the State Coroner will investigate the deaths attributed to this event, the Minister for Emergency Services and the Minister for Health and Ambulance Services requested IGEM to review the response to the event.

On 1 February 2017, government released IGEM's preliminary report.[52] IGEM's *Review of response to the thunderstorm asthma event of 21–22 November 2016, Final Report*[3] was released on 27 April 2017.

The review objective was to identify opportunities to learn from the event in order to improve future preparedness and response arrangements and performance.

While acknowledging the rapid onset of the emergency and the unprecedented scale of its consequences, IGEM made 25 findings and 16 recommendations largely in relation to gathering and sharing information and the triggers for activation and escalation of incident management arrangements for rapid-onset emergencies.

IGEM is aware that multi-agency work commenced immediately following the emergency to better understand the factors that caused this event as a basis for predicting and improving the response to future emergencies. The Victorian Government has accepted in-principle all of the recommendations made in IGEM's review and also confirmed that work is already underway to implement the recommendations.[53] IGEM will monitor implementation of the recommendations as requested by government.

State health emergency response arrangements

The Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) is leading a review into Victoria's arrangements for responding to health emergencies and providing health services during emergency events.

The existing arrangements are documented in two interrelated documents - the Public Health Control Plan which is an internal document which guides DHHS' management as the control agency of public health incidents and the *State health emergency response plan*[54] which describes the command and coordination arrangements for pre-hospital care, patient transport, receiving hospitals and other health care facilities. The review is intended to deliver a revised set of arrangements in late 2017 which:

- is consistent with the all communities, all emergencies approach to emergency management
- complies with the Act, the *Emergency Management Manual Victoria*[8] and related guidance
- addresses any gaps in the arrangements identified in recent incidents, debriefs and inquiries.

Emergency call taking and dispatch

IGEM has a legislative responsibility to monitor and investigate non-financial performance of the Emergency Services Telecommunications Authority (ESTA). ESTA provides a critical link between the community and Victoria's emergency service organisations via the Triple Zero (000) service. From July 2016 to April 2017 (inclusive), IGEM conducted 22 screenings,[9] completed two investigations and is in the process of conducting one investigation involving eight separate events.

Image: Blair Dellemijn

[9] Prior to commencing an investigation, IGEM conducts a screening to examine the issues of the matter and, depending on the level of risk, may proceed with a formal investigation.

2013–14 Fire Season Compliance Report – 2016 Final Progress Update

The 2013–14 fire season in Victoria was one that challenged both the sector and communities. Significant fires during that season included the Goongerah-Deddick Trail fire and the Mt Ray-Boundary Track fire.

In response to community concerns and as part of established debriefing processes, the EMC prepared three reports containing improvement actions related to road traffic management, community involvement, initial attack and utilisation of resources, cross-border fire arrangements and other systemic issues. In August 2014, the Victorian Government requested that IGEM report on the implementation progress of the 86 actions.

In its final progress update,[55] IGEM found that 61 actions and seven recommendations from the initial compliance report have been completed and that 25 actions and three recommendations are ongoing core business for relevant organisations.

In particular, IGEM noted the efforts of organisations with respect to strengthening cross-border fire arrangements in the Victorian eastern-border and New South Wales area, as well as the rapid and effective initial attack of fires in East Gippsland during the 2015–16 fire season.

The final progress update concluded IGEM's dedicated reporting on the actions and recommendations from the initial compliance report of 2014. Monitoring of and reporting on the ongoing actions and recommendations will continue as part of IGEM's program of monitoring and as part of the relevant organisations' continuous improvement processes.

Lessons management

EMV released the *Emergency Management Operational Review 2015–16*[2] report to share lessons and to demonstrate how the sector has worked together. The report is developed with support from the State Review Team, a group of sector organisation representatives that provide strategic direction to and state level management of debriefing, monitoring and review activities in the sector. As part of this role, the State Review Team promotes learning within the sector through a lessons management role in line with EMV's *EM-LEARN Framework*.[39]

The report provides an overview of the operating context, presents 14 case studies about specific operations or exercises from which lessons are identified and then presents lessons on cross-cutting themes. These themes were identified by the State Review Team through consultation or emerged from the State Review Team's analysis of sector assurance activities (e.g. debriefs, monitoring and reviews) and observations collected via EMV's online Observation Sharing Centre.

Image: Keith Packenham

5.2 Progress against reform agenda

Response and control arrangements

The SERP[8] outlines the Victorian arrangements for the coordinated response to all emergencies by all agencies with a role or responsibility in relation to emergency response. The EMC is responsible for preparing the SERP, supported by EMV. The SERP forms part of the *Emergency Management Manual Victoria*.

The November 2015 amendments[10] to the Act, enabled updates to be made to the SERP. EMV collaborated across government to update the SERP to clarify control arrangements for major emergencies. In line with legislative requirements, the EMC submitted the updated SERP to the SCRC for approval. The SCRC approved the updated SERP in March 2016, which came into effect on 1 August 2016.

The SERP makes allowance for subordinate plans (sub-plans) to be developed outlining arrangements for specific types of emergency where greater specificity is required. Sub-plans for a range of emergencies already exist, including for biosecurity, bushfire, earthquake, extreme heat, flood, maritime emergencies (non-search and rescue), public transport disruption, storm, tsunami, pandemic influenza and health emergencies. The development of sub-plans continues for a number of emergencies.

Emergency management performance standards

As already described under the Risk and Resilience part of this Annual Assurance Summary, the Act and the SAP[5] call for development of operational or performance standards in relation to responder agency performance. The EMC released the second version of the Standards[7] in December 2016. The Standards for the capability and response element comprise three functions:

- capability development
- readiness and response
- public information.

For each function, the Standards describe the context, the desired outcome, objective, assumptions and then list minimum requirements and criteria that responder agencies report against to EMV, with consolidated information to be provided to the EMC and IGEM.

The Standards for capability and response have applied to responder agencies since 1 January 2016. Work on this is continuing and IGEM will revisit progress in the next Annual Assurance Summary.

Image: Metropolitan Fire and Emergency Services Board

[10] *Emergency Management (Control of Response Activities and Other Matters) Act 2015.*

5.3 Future directions

Training and exercising

The need for a Victorian training and exercising strategy was identified in the White Paper.[9] The then Fire Services Commissioner developed the *State Fire and Emergency Services Training Framework*[56] in collaboration with CFA, the then Department of Environment and Primary Industries, MFB and VICSES in order to lay the foundations of a unified approach to training and exercising across Victoria's fire and emergency services.

The SAP[5] also calls for the development and implementation of a 10-year workforce strategy and sector training framework that delivers a highly diverse and technically competent workforce (Action D2). In its first annual progress report[12] on the implementation of the SAP in May 2016, IGEM found that progress for this action had been affected by operational activity and organisational change.

One of IGEM's functions under the Act is to evaluate state-wide training and exercising arrangements to maintain and strengthen emergency management capability. IGEM is continuing development of its approach to this assurance function in line with the principles of continuous improvement, collaboration and coordination, adding value and reducing burden as outlined in the *Monitoring and Assurance Framework for Emergency Management*.[10]

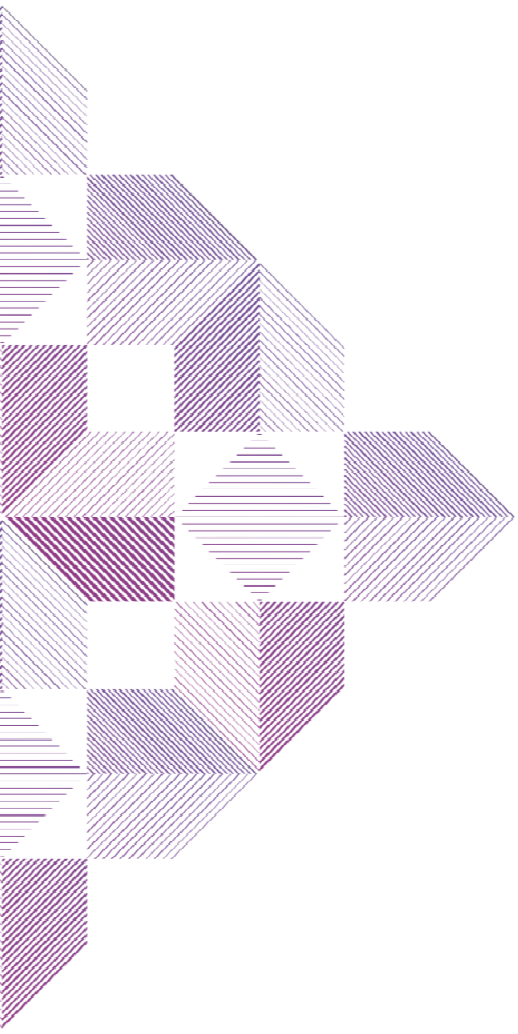
Supporting emergency management volunteers

The Volunteer Consultative Forum (the Forum) members are emergency management volunteers and nominated representatives from sector agencies which have a volunteer base. The EMC chairs the Forum and EMV provides secretarial and administrative support. Recognising that volunteers perform a fundamental role in emergency management in Victoria, the Forum meets to give emergency management volunteers a voice to government on the capacity of the volunteer base, on strengthening the culture of volunteerism and promoting an understanding of the role that volunteers perform.

In 2016, the Forum conducted a survey of emergency management volunteers on their perceptions of volunteer welfare and about the efficiency of emergency management service delivery. EMV reported[57] that the survey results are positive and that volunteers:

- are satisfied with their roles as volunteers and their expectations are being met at a local level
- have a strong connection to their local unit and are positive about their effectiveness and performance
- value and recognise the importance of diversity and inclusion
- consider areas for improvement to include improving organisational support and providing more accessible training and leadership opportunities.

6 Relief and recovery



The State Emergency Relief and Recovery Plan[58] defines relief as the provision of assistance to meet the essential needs of individuals, families and communities during and in the immediate aftermath of an emergency. It defines recovery as the assisting of persons and communities affected by emergencies to achieve a proper and effective level of functioning and explains that recovery is generally a longer term process. It clarifies that both relief and recovery begin when an emergency occurs and that many response, relief and recovery activities are undertaken concurrently.

This part of the Annual Assurance Summary provides a high-level overview of assurance activities undertaken in 2016–17 which consider the arrangements for and the sector's performance in relief and recovery.

Some assurance activities included in this part of the Annual Assurance Summary focus on matters which span across more than relief and recovery alone. For example, even though the subject matter spans risk and resilience and capability and response, the implementation monitoring of recommendations, affirmations and actions from the Hazelwood Mine Fire Inquiry is reported in this part on the basis that they have a strong community recovery focus.

6.1 Performance and risk overview

Community recovery

Beyond Bushfires is a five-year study led by the University of Melbourne in partnership with community, government, emergency, and service agencies to explore the medium to long term impacts of the 2009 Victorian Bushfires on individuals and communities.

The *Beyond Bushfires Final Report 2010–2016*[59] was released in 2016. It detailed the research findings about the interplay between individual, social and community level recovery.

The study involved over 1000 participants and used multiple ways of collecting information to examine the impacts on community mental health, wellbeing and social relationships.

The research study found that over time there was progressive recovery at the community level. However evidence also suggested delayed impacts on individual mental health and extended impacts five years on from the bushfire event.

Close friends and family, social networks and community groups, and natural environment were found to influence resilience and recovery outcomes.

Hazelwood Mine Fire Inquiry

In response to the 2014 Hazelwood Mine Fire event, which resulted in significant health and economic impacts for Latrobe Valley communities, a Board of Inquiry was established to inquire into, report on and make recommendations in relation to the origin and circumstances of the fire, the adequacy and effectiveness of fire management measures, the relevant regulatory regime and the response to the fire and related matters.

In 2015, the Victorian Government reopened the Hazelwood Mine Fire Inquiry to focus on human health impacts and mine rehabilitation. The reopened Board of Inquiry delivered its last report in April 2016.[60-63]

In June 2016, the Victorian Government released its implementation plan[64] setting out the 246 actions that are being undertaken to fulfil its commitment to implement the recommendations and affirmations of the 2014 and 2015–16 Inquiry reports.

IGEM assumed sole responsibility in mid-2016 for monitoring the implementation of all recommendations and affirmations from each report of the Hazelwood Mine Fire Inquiry. IGEM's annual report[65] of November 2016 reported that, overall, significant progress has been achieved following the Hazelwood Mine Fire to improve emergency planning and coordination, health outcomes and mine rehabilitation in the Latrobe Valley. Of the 127 recommendations and affirmations, IGEM found that 56 had been completed, 70 were ongoing and one was not applicable because it fell beyond the scope of implementation monitoring given its future timeframe.

IGEM will continue monitoring the implementation of ongoing recommendations, affirmations and actions from the 2014 and 2015–16 Inquiry reports and report to parliament on progress annually until 2019.

Image: Keith Packenham

6.2 Progress against reform agenda

Reforming relief and recovery

The White Paper[9] recommended a range of improvements to relief and recovery arrangements in order to enable communities to participate in their own recovery. Specifically, it envisaged that relief and recovery should:

- target the unique needs of each community using community-led approaches that engage the community
- operate simultaneously and cooperatively with response procedures
- be timely and seamless with scalable arrangements embedded in legislation and policy
- be informed by effective impact and needs assessments
- have the capacity and capability it needs through investing in partnerships over the long-term, and effectively harnessing public goodwill and participation.

In February 2017, EMV released the *Resilient Recovery Discussion Paper*[4] (the Discussion Paper). The Discussion Paper introduces a model of resilient recovery, which aims to connect community systems and networks to support and plan for community outcomes of wellbeing, viability, sustainability and liveability. It describes components under each community outcome and how each aligns to resilience characteristics.

EMV sought feedback from the sector, businesses and the community on the Discussion Paper. The feedback period closed on 28 April 2017. EMV will consider the feedback in developing recovery policy and strategy to meet the intent of the White Paper.

A Relief and Recovery Reform Steering Committee has also been established to oversee reform progress including the development of the governance, policy and operating arrangements to best meet the four community outcomes identified in the Discussion Paper.

Emergency management performance standards

As already described under the Risk and Resilience part of this Annual Assurance Summary, the Act and the SAP[5] call for development of operational or performance standards in relation to responder agency performance. The EMC released the second version of the Standards[7] in December 2016. The Standards for relief and recovery comprise five functions:

- relief
- context and complexity
- community capacity building
- sector coordination and capacity
- communication.

For each function, the Standards describe the context, the desired outcome, objective, assumptions and then list minimum requirements and criteria that responder agencies report against to EMV, with consolidated information to be provided to the EMC and IGEM.

The Standards for relief and recovery apply to responder agencies as of 1 January 2017. Work on this is continuing and IGEM will revisit progress in the next Annual Assurance Summary.

Image: Emergency Management Victoria

6.3 Future directions

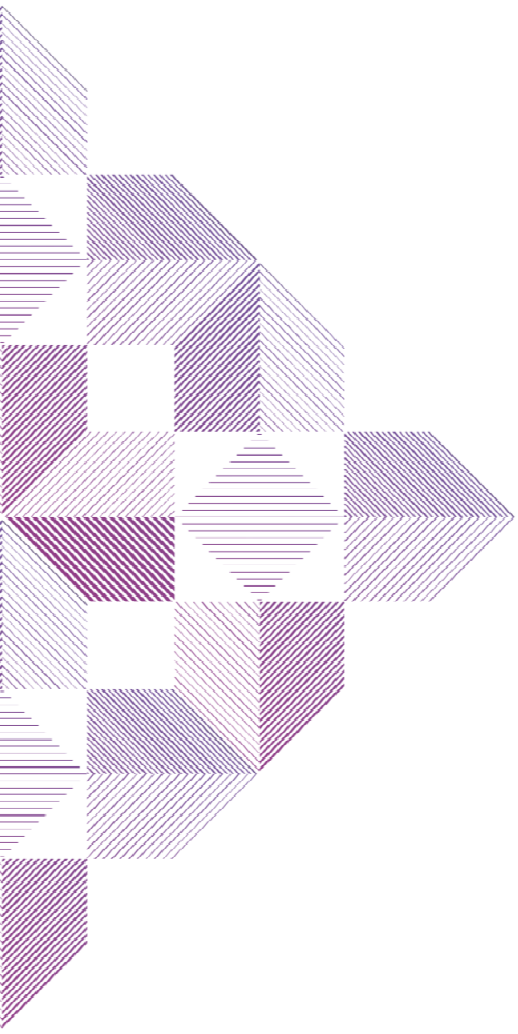
New national funding arrangements for relief and recovery

In May 2015, the Australian Government released the Productivity Commission's *Inquiry Report on Natural Disaster Funding Arrangements*.[66] The Productivity Commission found that the current natural disaster funding arrangements are inefficient and unsustainable, and recommended systemic changes to recovery and mitigation funding – specifically that the Australian Government increase its contribution to mitigation funding and reduce its contribution to recovery funding.

In December 2016, the Australian Government released its response[67] to the Productivity Commission's report. The Australian Government did not accept the recommendation to increase its contribution to mitigation funding and reduce its contribution to recovery funding. The Australian Government also noted that it has been working with states and territories to develop and test new disaster recovery funding arrangements. The proposed new funding arrangements will include the reconstruction of essential public assets, based on an upfront assessment of damages and estimated costs, rather than the current post-event reimbursement model. The proposed new funding arrangements will be tested from late 2016 to 31 March 2018.

In Victoria, EMV has been working with the Department of Premier and Cabinet and the Department of Treasury and Finance to develop a process to test the proposed new funding arrangements. The objectives of the testing process will be to assess the financial cost and regulatory burden of implementation and assess the ability of state agencies and local governments to accurately estimate reconstruction costs. The testing process will also examine the capability, capacity and training that may be required to implement the proposed new funding arrangements.

7 Concluding remarks



IGEM commends the sector for embracing a culture of continuous improvement and in maintaining the momentum in progressing the reform program.

Assurance activities and implementation of improvement actions identified through assurance activities are critical to achieving the vision of *safer and more resilient communities*.

IGEM recognises the time and resources committed by the sector, and all its people, in embarking on this reform journey and improving emergency management in Victoria.

IGEM will continue to report on performance, risks, progress against the reform agenda and future directions in the next Annual Assurance Summary in 2018.

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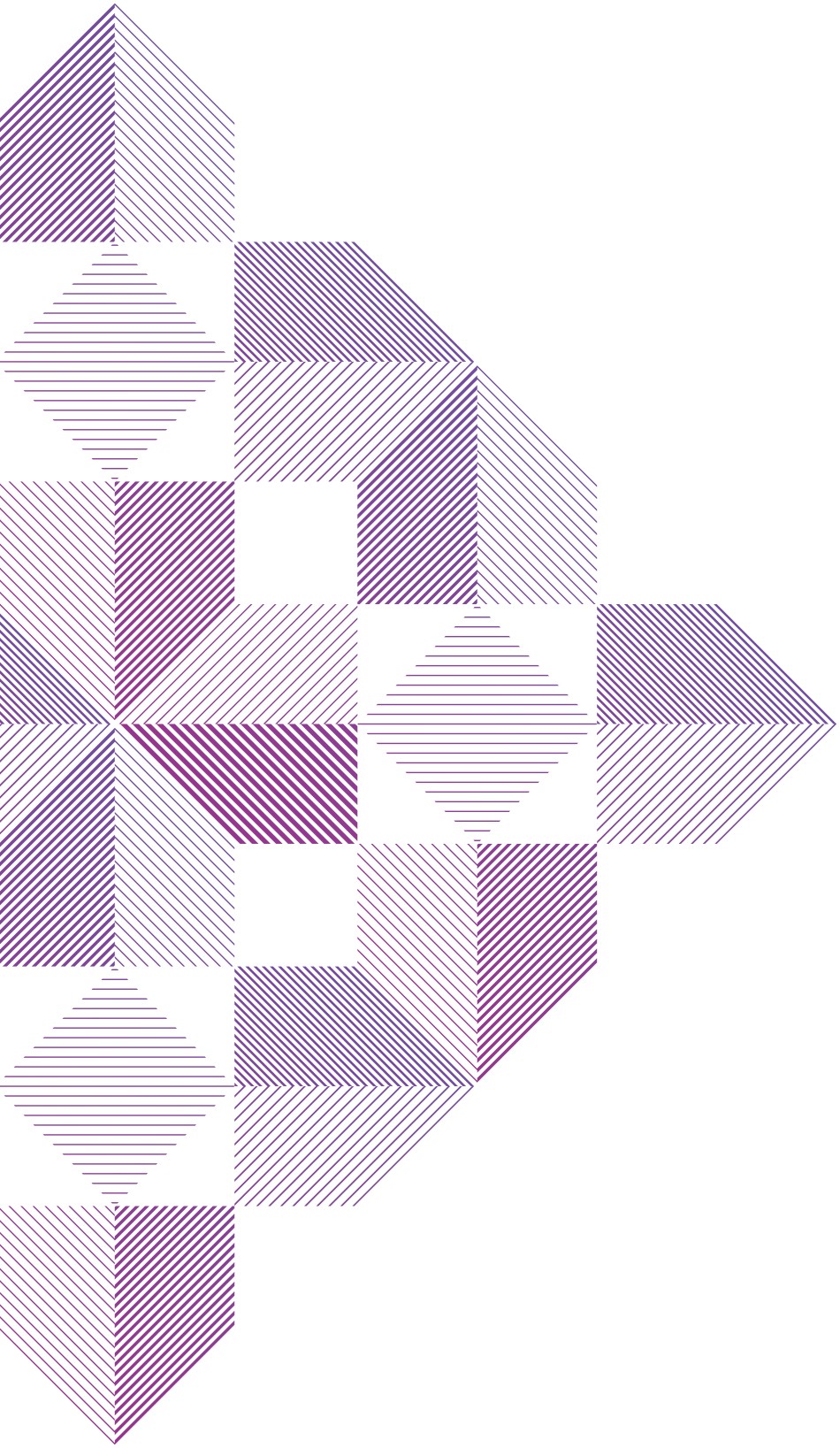

Inspector-General for
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