IGEM
Inspector-General for Emergency Management

Annual Forward Plan of Reviews – 2019

Forward Projection of Reviews

Authorised and published by the Victorian Government, 1 Treasury Place, Melbourne.

January 2019

Printed by Doculink, Port Melbourne

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If you would like to receive this publication in an alternative format telephone (03) 8684 7900
or email igem@igem.vic.gov.au

Inspector-General for Emergency Management
GPO Box 4356, Melbourne, Victoria 3001
Telephone: (03) 8684 7900
Email: igem@igem.vic.gov.au

This publication is available in PDF and Word format on www.igem.vic.gov.au

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1 Introduction

1.1 Background

The Inspector-General for Emergency Management (IGEM) is an independent statutory role established under the *Emergency Management Act 2013* (the Act).

The objectives of the IGEM are to:

- provide assurance to the government and the community in respect of emergency management arrangements in Victoria
- foster continuous improvement of emergency management in Victoria.

Supporting the achievement of these objectives, IGEM undertakes system-wide reviews, including reviews of the emergency management functions of responder agencies and government departments as prescribed in section 66 of the Act.

These reviews are based on an Annual Forward Plan of Reviews (the forward plan), developed by IGEM in consultation with the emergency management sector[1] (the sector) and shared with the Minister for Police and Emergency Services (the minister). In addition, IGEM conducts reviews at the request of the minister under the provisions of section 64(1)(c) of the Act.

All IGEM's assurance activities are guided by the Assurance Framework for Emergency Management (the Framework), which provides the foundation for a coordinated and collaborative approach to sector-wide assurance.

Annual Forward Plan of Reviews – 2019

In developing the forward plan for 2019, IGEM considered a series of potential topics for review identified through ongoing discussions with agencies and government departments concerning key issues or risks facing the sector.

IGEM also considered strategic issues emerging from recent events and the outputs of complementary assurance activities conducted throughout the sector in Victoria.

IGEM prioritised these topics through a risk-based assessment process that included a consideration of:

- the significance or magnitude of the topic identified
- the potential for the review to lead to sustainable and systemic improvement
- whether recent reviews or inquiries had examined similar issues
- whether improvement actions addressing the issue are being initiated or are in the early stages of implementation and monitoring, limiting the effectiveness of the proposed review.

[1] Defined in the *Emergency Management Act 2013* as '…comprising all agencies, bodies, departments and other persons who have a responsibility, function or other role in emergency management'.

In addition to the assessment, IGEM has taken into consideration a range of factors including:

- the volume, scale and complexity of IGEM's broader program of assurance activities
- the need to minimise burden on the sector
- the need to retain capacity to respond to ministerial requests.

Based on the assessment and additional considerations, IGEM will conduct one planned review in 2019 titled *10 years of reform in Victoria's emergency management sector* (the review).

Forward Projection of Reviews

In addition, the IGEM Forward Projection of Reviews (the forward projection) ensures previously identified areas for potential review are retained and that a progressive and system-wide approach to IGEM's annual review program is maintained.

The forward projection is developed based on:

- information sourced from government, community and the emergency management sector
- system-wide risk and monitoring activities
- environmental scanning.

IGEM will update the forward projection annually, in line with:

- the confirmation of each forward plan
- a consideration of emerging risks and strategic priorities
- the outputs of complementary assurance activities
- ongoing consultation with the sector.

1.2 Document purpose

This document outlines IGEM's forward plan for 2019 and forward projection of potential review topics.

The intended audience is the emergency management sector in Victoria, and the document is publicly available on IGEM's website (igem.vic.gov.au).

The forward plan is prepared in accordance with section 66 of the Act and provides a high-level description of the review IGEM will conduct in 2019. This includes broad information specific to the context, aim, scope, stakeholders, approach, outputs, publication, implementation and intended review outcomes.

The forward projection provides the sector with a high-level, thematic overview of the potential areas IGEM may review from 2020 and includes broad information on topic and subject matter.

The proposed areas for review are not necessarily listed in proposed order of completion, as priorities may change each year. In addition, the number and timing of reviews conducted each year may fluctuate due to the prioritised conduct of other assurance activities.

2 Annual Forward Plan of Reviews – 2019

2.1 Review of 10 years of reform in Victoria's emergency management sector

Context

There have been many changes to Victoria's emergency management arrangements since 2009. This period of notable reform commenced in the aftermath two significant Victorian emergencies – the 2009 bushfires and the 2010–11 floods.

Additional important reforms have resulted from subsequent emergencies and government inquiries including the 2014 Hazelwood mine fire and the 2016 thunderstorm asthma event.

The safety of Victorians is a priority for the Victorian Government. Emergency management has become increasingly community-centred, with a strong focus on developing community resilience. For example, Victoria now takes an 'all emergencies, all communities' approach to emergency management. This approach places greater emphasis on building community resilience; improving coordination and cooperation between agencies; providing clear and timely information and warnings; and offering tailored and inclusive services for all Victorians.

The opportunity to learn needs to be balanced against, and carefully integrate, an ongoing professional consideration of the enormous emotional and psychological toll these events had and continue to have on affected individuals, groups and communities.

It is now timely to consider if our emergency management arrangements are bringing better outcomes for Victorians – before, during and after emergencies.

Background

The 2009 Victorian bushfires were the most devastating in Australia's history. During this tragic period, 173 people lost their lives, 414 were injured, approximately 430,000 hectares were affected by the fires (including 70 National Parks and reserves, and 3550 agricultural facilitates). In addition, more than one million wild and domesticated animals were lost. The impact on affected communities has been immense and longstanding.

The 2009 fires were a catalyst for the most significant period of reform for emergency management in Victoria.

The widespread floods that occurred between September 2010 and February 2011 inundated 100 towns and affected over 20 per cent of Victoria. Some communities were affected multiple times during this period.

As recommendations from the Victorian Bushfires Royal Commission (VBRC) were being implemented, a subsequent review of the 2010–11 floods commenced. This important review identified a range of reforms including the need to further strengthen the all agencies approach to emergency management. These events also contributed to a significant review of Victoria's framework for emergency management through the *Victorian Emergency Management Reform White Paper* (December 2012).

The Hazelwood Mine Fire, the longest running mine fire experienced in the Latrobe Valley, affected the surrounding communities for significant periods of time. In 2014 in the aftermath of the Hazelwood mine fire, a major inquiry identified further areas for sector reform.

Response and recovery planning processes implemented in events following the 2009 bushfires and 2010–11 floods provided the sector opportunities to assess the effectiveness of prior reforms. This ongoing process of continuous improvement enabled the sector to enhance Victoria's collective capability, capacity and preparedness to support communities before, during and after events of enormous magnitude. For example, the tragic Victorian thunderstorm asthma event in 2016 led to important lessons in coordinating Victoria's preparedness and response arrangements for rapid-onset health emergencies.

Looking across the breadth of independent inquiries and reviews over the past decade, the following issues have been considered:

- cause of event
- adequacy of response
- preparation and planning
- laws, policies, practices, resources and strategies relating to all aspects of emergency threat and risk including prevention, identification, evaluation, management and communication
- effectiveness of regulatory frameworks
- effectiveness of public warnings
- adequacy of service delivery and funding
- prevention of disruption to essential services.

The *Victorian Emergency Management Reform White Paper* identified the following key changes and early reforms that had been implemented:

- establishing the Fire Services Commissioner
- developing and implementing the Fire Services Reform Action Plan
- improving state command and control arrangements
- legislative amendments that enable greater interoperability
- improving flood planning and response information available to agencies and communities.

A broad spectrum of strategies, programs and activities have since been implemented to enhance sector preparedness and support community recovery, renewal and resilience. This has been a shared responsibility between the public and private sector, emergency management organisations and the community.

A review of the effectiveness of a selection of significant sector reforms over the past decade provides the sector an opportunity to learn from, and enhance Victoria's collective capability, capacity and preparedness to support communities. This opportunity to learn needs to be balanced against, and carefully integrate, an ongoing professional consideration of the significant emotional and psychological toll these events had, and continue to have, on affected individuals, emergency service personnel and communities.

Conducting this review will allow IGEM to understand if the stronger focus on community and resilience along with the improvements introduced over the past 10 years are bringing better outcomes for our communities before, during and after emergencies such as fire, flood, storm and heatwave.

With climate change and population growth increasing the severity and likelihood of emergencies impacting communities, there is a need for an emergency management system that can respond to the pace of change.

As such, the review will consider the effectiveness of selected reforms introduced following the VBRC and subsequent reviews and inquiries to assess whether the emergency management model is prepared to respond, not only to fires and floods (Class 1 emergencies) but also for Class 2 emergencies including: land-based, water-based, human, animal, infrastructure and technology emergencies.

Aim

IGEM proposes to review selected reforms that have occurred since 2009 to:

- determine whether they have been effective in delivering outcomes for the sector and the community and
- evaluate levels of community satisfaction with those programs and their engagements with the sector before, during and after emergencies.

Preliminary scope

Following consultation with the emergency management sector and the community, IGEM identified five key themes to scope and guide the review. The sector and the community provided ideas, thoughts and themes on what they believe to be of most significance over the last 10 years of reform.

The resultant five themes are described in more detail in Appendix 1 of this publication:

- governance
- sector capability and capacity
- community engagement and preparedness
- rebuilding and recovery
- community safety and resilience.

Out of scope

The review will not re-examine the cause of the 2009 Victorian bushfires or re-assess elements already considered through the VBRC. The review will also not re-examine the responses to events such as the 2010–2011 Victorian floods, the 2014 Hazelwood Mine fire, and the 2016 thunderstorm asthma event.

The review will not re-address the monitoring activities conducted and acquitted on behalf of the Victorian Government, other than where communities raise concerns as to the longer-term effectiveness of strategies implemented in response to recommendations made.

The review will not cover Class 3 emergencies which include warlike acts or acts of terrorism, hi-jacks, sieges or riots, or any other major emergencies that are not classified as Class 1 or 2.

Stakeholders and consultation

Stakeholders for this review include emergency management sector agencies as prescribed in section 60A of the Act.

This will include many people and organisations who were part of the response to the 2009 Victorian bushfires and the 2010–11 floods. In many cases they have been instrumental in developing and implementing Victoria's emergency management reform.

The community are important stakeholders in this review, and engagement will be designed to respect communities; consider the impact that major emergencies have had on many Victorians; and give consideration to local networks and organisations.

IGEM will consider the clinical advice of experts to ensure a trauma-informed approach throughout the planning and conduct of the review.

IGEM will also consult with subject matter experts and research entities as required.

Proposed approach and timing

The review is planned to be conducted over 12 months, with delivery to the minister scheduled for December 2019. Data collection from engagement activities is scheduled for completion by May 2019.

As detailed in this publication's background, IGEM proposes to review selected reforms introduced following the various reviews and inquiries. IGEM will consider sector and community preparedness arrangements in place leading into the 2008–9 summer season against current arrangements (spanning all elements of mitigation, response and recovery). Where appropriate, the review will identify opportunities to further improve emergency management before, during and after emergencies.

Preparation and planning will include:

- an environmental scan and desktop assessment of relevant policies, legislation, research and practice were undertaken to develop the scope and identify lines of enquiry
- engagement and consultation with the sector and community members
- identifying national and international models, principles and practices for reform in emergency management and the reform theme areas.

Data collection will include:

- literature and document review (internal and external)
- community engagement – seeking the views and experiences of Victorians as they prepare for, respond to and recover from emergencies
- semi-structured interviews with community leaders, relevant staff from local government, Victorian emergency management sector agencies, as well as other relevant organisations, businesses and communities who can provide meaningful input into the review. This targeted consultation will seek to address gaps in available evidence and identify additional individuals to be engaged.

The review will leverage off existing IGEM resources and knowledge to reduce burden on the sector. This will include other IGEM review reports, implementation monitoring reports and sector and third-party evaluations and reviews.

Review output, publication, implementation and outcome

The primary output from this review will be a report for the minister detailing the key observations, findings and recommendations for improvement as appropriate.

In accordance with section 70(1) and section 70(3) of the Act, IGEM will provide agencies affected by the review with a draft copy of the report for comment and will take into account any subsequent submission received from agencies in preparing its final report for the minister.

Any public release of the report or any part of the report is subject to the minister's approval under the provisions of section 70(6) of the Act, and will be supported by a detailed communications strategy.

IGEM will promote and support sector-wide continuous improvement through monitoring and reporting on the implementation of recommendations considered appropriate by the minister (in agreement with other relevant ministers) and provided under section 70(8) of the Act to the State Crisis and Resilience Council for implementation.

The intended outcome of the review is a greater understanding of whether the processes implemented through a decade of significant emergency management reform have been effective in contributing to a safer and more resilient Victorian community.

Review submissions

As part of its commitment to leading practice in assurance, IGEM will engage with relevant sector agencies, departments, organisations, individuals and subject matter experts in the conduct of its review.

IGEM appreciates input from all those who wish to contribute to improving Victoria's emergency management arrangements.

Accordingly, IGEM is interested and will seek submissions, projects, research papers or policies that may inform this review. This includes independent opinions on potential improvements or innovative approaches within the scope of this review.

IGEM will formally correspond with relevant parts of the sector affected by this review to confirm the timing of consultations and submissions.

For further information or to contribute to this review, please contact:

Julie Hoy – Manager Evaluation and Review
Telephone: (03) 8684 7914
Mobile: 0411 284 958
Email: julie.hoy@igem.vic.gov.au

3 Forward projection of reviews

3.1 Systems and platforms for interoperability

Information and communication systems and associated tools are critical to the emergency management sector. They provide enabling platforms across the spectrum of emergency management and include a range of communication networks, information and warning systems and interactive databases.

Effective preparedness and response to emergencies requires the networked components of the sector to work together to ensure a coordinated response. Data availability and information sharing across the sector enables organisations to connect with and provide timely and appropriate advice and services to affected communities.

Systems such as EM-COP, EM-Share and the Predictive Services Framework are now in place. There is an opportunity to review who is using them, if they are being used effectively and if they are contributing to enhanced interoperability.

IGEM proposes to review the emergency management sector's networked capability, capacity and performance in developing and utilising common operating platforms that support interoperability and positive community outcomes.

The review will not include an audit of Information Communication Technology systems.

3.2 Measurement, review, innovation and improvement

The Assurance Framework for Emergency Management describes the coordinated approach to assurance for Victoria's emergency management sector. Assurance activities include a range of measurement tools and processes for debriefs, audits, monitoring, reviews and evaluations, to improve the collective capability, capacity and performance of the sector. The framework is currently under review by IGEM.

Additional activity to review, evaluate and monitor the sector includes the supporting frameworks, Emergency Management Victoria learning arrangements, the State Review Team and the EM-Learn platform. State lessons have been developed and approved by State Crisis and Resilience Council as a result of the latter two activities. IGEM recognises the long history of review, monitoring and evaluation in sector agencies, some of which have developed and implemented formal processes. IGEM also recognises the need for the sector to build on or establish new processes and to close evaluation loops by assessing effectiveness and incorporating improvements.

Effective processes for assurance and improvement are critical to ensure the progressive enhancement of the sector. This includes ensuring appropriate processes for performance measurement are developed and maintained at the organisation and system level. Identifying lessons through these assurance processes – within an environment of supported and shared learning – is an important feature in driving sector-wide improvement.

IGEM proposes to review the effectiveness of selected evaluation, review and improvement methodologies used by the sector in the conduct of assurance activities. It will be valuable to determine if these processes are joined up, and if lessons identified are bringing about improved outcomes.

3.3 Assets and infrastructure

Assets and infrastructure includes property, facilities, vehicles and other resources through which the sector is able to launch the provision of services in support of Victorian communities. They are a key enabler of the sector's capability and capacity and can have a direct influence on performance outputs and outcomes.

Adopting a multi-agency approach to assets and infrastructure programs promotes optimal resource utilisation through the shared use of property, facilities and assets. It also provides for greater efficiencies in the allocation of public money through direct appropriations and grant funding.

The Emergency Management Investment and Asset Strategy 2018–2027 is now endorsed by the State Crisis and Resilience Council. It focuses on the optimisation of investment through co-location and sustainability. The agencies have worked collaboratively to prepare the strategy to guide investment. However, there are still two documents pending, one of which is the annual plan.

IGEM proposes to review the effectiveness of sector-wide arrangements for the coordinated planning and lifecycle management of assets and infrastructure.

3.4 Culture, values and behaviours

The success of the sector is underpinned by and dependent upon the effective networked operation of a diverse group of organisations and individuals within public and private sectors. Organisational culture, values and behaviours are key enablers to effective organisational performance.

Anecdotal evidence suggests ongoing challenges with organisational culture, values and behaviours within the sector. This is in part driven by an array of sector specific characteristics spanning industrial, geographical, social and psychological considerations.

It is important to note that many of the issues that fall into this theme are organisational issues that are known to the sector and government. There are structures and processes in place that can support sector agencies to manage them.

A considerable body of work that has been produced addressing issues of culture, values and behaviour including:

- *Report of inquiry into the effect of arrangements made by the Country Fire Authority (CFA) on its volunteers* (Jones 2011)
- *Independent Review into sex discrimination and sexual harassment, including predatory behaviour, in Victoria Police* (VHREOC, 2014)
- *Fire Services Review* (O'Byrne, 2015)
- *Independent Equity and Diversity Review of the CFA and the Metropolitan Fire Brigade* (VHREOC, 2015).

Emergency management organisations and/or government more broadly have responded to and are taking action in relation to the first three of these reports. The fourth report has been completed, without release.

IGEM may conduct a broader system-based review of culture, values and behaviour towards the identification of leading practice, however this would remain cognisant of progress with the implementation of recommendations from previous reports.

3.5 Emergency relief

Emergency relief is a critical start point for individuals and communities on the road to recovery and renewal. Services include shelter, basic needs, financial support and personal support. Activities are usually initiated from the commencement of the emergency, guided by the outputs of initial impact assessment processes.

The coordination of relief and recovery in Victoria transitioned from the Department of Health and Human Services to Emergency Management Victoria in September 2015.

The change is supported by the relief and recovery reform program in Victoria – developing and implementing the Resilient Recovery Model. This model aims to align relief and recovery with community needs, support positive community outcomes, connect individuals, communities and business into the recovery process and provide a pathway from recovery to resilience.

IGEM proposes to review the effectiveness of selected emergency relief strategies, programs and plans, including an examination of community awareness and satisfaction with services delivered.

3.6 Community-based emergency management planning

In addition to state, regional and municipal emergency management plans, a range of approaches to community-based emergency management (CBEM) have also been developed in Victoria.

Community-based emergency management is a collaborative planning and engagement approach, designed to support communities and organisations in developing a safer, more resilient and sustainable future.

Examples include community emergency management plans, community action plans and community information guides. Some have been highlighted through independent review processes as areas of leading practice, however, in other areas community needs have not been adequately addressed.

Guidance and principles are provided in the document *Community Based Emergency Management* (EMV, 2016). This document also provides outputs, outcomes and a description of success.

The importance of emergency risk management and risk-based planning for communities supports risk identification and mitigation. This occurs traditionally through the Municipal Emergency Management Plan, detailed in Parts 3 and 6 of the *Emergency Management Manual Victoria*. Further, section 60AA(1)(c) of the Act requires '…emergency management plans are to be prepared in a manner that acknowledges and reflects the importance of community emergency management planning'.

IGEM proposes to review approaches to community-based emergency management plans, the application of the guidelines and principles, the use of emergency risk management, the implementation and effectiveness of tools and whether the community has experienced improved outcomes. IGEM will also consider the integration of community-based emergency management planning within broader planning processes.

3.7 Regulation and emergency management

The role of regulation and regulators in preparedness and prevention for emergency management is significant. Enforcing regulatory conditions may help to identify, mitigate and prepare for emergencies, and to improve response and recovery outcomes during emergencies.

- There is a raft of government regulations that require the development of emergency management plans. Potential topics for review include:
- critical infrastructure
- building codes
- land use planning regulations, including hazard overlays
- the education sector
- the health and human services sector
- environment protection
- occupational health and safety.

For example, in areas where the overlay of land subject to inundation operates, minimum floor heights may be required so that the effect of flood will be mitigated. As another example, in some areas subject to the bushfire overlay, there are water supply requirements so that fires can be more effectively controlled and limited.

Emergencies at regulated major hazardous and high-risk business premises are of growing concern to emergency management personnel. These businesses can significantly impact surrounding communities due to their proximity, economic outputs, products and services and as a local source of employment.

IGEM proposes to review selected components of Victoria's regulatory frameworks that are relevant to emergency management to identify their application in improving the identification and preparedness of, and response to emergencies in regulated sites and sectors such as major hazard sites, hazard zones and education facilities.

3.8 Role of non-traditional departments and organisations

Effective emergency management requires sector organisations to connect and collaborate – together and with community and private sector organisations. Connecting and collaborating with others is a way of achieving objectives that cannot be achieved separately. Working in collaboration, organisations can combine strengths, coordinate services, better meet the needs of stakeholders, or create new products and services.

Many agencies, organisations and sectors without primary roles in emergency management have regulatory responsibilities across the spectrum of emergency management. They may also make the decision to support response during and after a major emergency because of corporate values, the impacts on their client base and/or the relevant services they can deliver.

The State Review Team has identified a state-level lesson that the on-going engagement of organisations – whose primary focus is not emergency management – is critical to accurate, timely and informed intelligence before, during and after emergency events.

Similarly, the IGEM 'Review of emergency management for high-risk Victorian communities' (pending release at the time of publication) found that much of the intelligence relating to high-risk individuals resided in those community service organisations and other service providers who were not traditionally engaged in planning, preparedness and response activities.

IGEM's 'Review of connecting and collaborating with the private sector and community organisations' (pending release at the time of publication) identified the challenges involved for the sector and non-traditional partners, as well as barriers and enablers models for effective engagement.

IGEM proposes to review the roles of agencies who do not have emergency management as their primary role to identify their contribution in improving community outcomes before, during and after major emergencies.

3.9 Exercising emergency management arrangements

The Attorney-General's Department's (AGD) *Managing Exercise (Handbook 3)* notes that exercising is an essential component of preparedness and should be used to enhance capability and contribute to continuous improvement.

Exercising is a useful tool to evaluate plans, promote awareness, assess competence and assess equipment, techniques and processes. IGEM has aligned its Statewide Exercising and Training Assurance Plan (the assurance plan) with the AGD definition of exercising.

The success of the evacuation at Wye River and the surrounding townships was in part attributed to the evacuation exercise conducted shortly before the fire started.

Emergency Management Victoria leads and coordinates statewide emergency management training and exercising arrangements in Victoria.

Under section 64(1)(d) of the Act IGEM has the responsibility 'evaluate state-wide training and exercising arrangements to maintain and strengthen emergency management capability'. To support this responsibility, IGEM has prepared the assurance plan. This document details how IGEM will evaluate statewide exercising arrangements and identify the mechanisms in place to maintain and strengthen emergency management capability.

There is currently no statewide system or central policy framework governing exercising of emergency management arrangements. Action to support the development of long-term state-wide capability (Victorian Emergency Management Strategic Action Plan actions D1, D2) is under consideration, but has not commenced.

IGEM considers that the sector will need to develop capability and embed mechanisms and processes into its exercising practices prior to the commencement of assurance activities.

IGEM proposes to review the exercising capability and practices of the sector to assess performance against leading practice.

Stakeholder consultation

As part of its approach to forward planning, IGEM will consult with relevant sector agencies, departments, organisations, individuals and subject matter experts in formalising the review program.

IGEM appreciates input from all those who wish to contribute to improving Victoria's emergency management arrangements.

Accordingly, IGEM is interested in any submissions, projects, research papers or policies that may inform the selection of topics for future review.

IGEM will formally correspond with the sector to confirm each year's review program through the forward plan.

Please email igem@igem.vic.gov.au for further information.

Appendix 1

Review of '10 years of reform in Victoria's emergency management sector' – theme detail

Governance

Governance refers to the overarching legislation, policies and organisational systems that emergency management sector organisations work within. The review will consider changes in executive and operational governance and resultant improvements in co-operation, co-ordination, preparedness and mitigation across Class 1 and Class 2 emergencies.

Evaluating reform at this level includes considering to what extent; arrangements are streamlined and ongoing, roles and responsibilities are clear, decision-making is shared; terminology is consistent; and evaluation and learning systems are in place for continuous improvement.

Sector capability and capacity

Capability and capacity refers to the adequacy of agency operations and extent to which organisations and communities are prepared for, can respond to, and can recover from all emergencies. This includes consideration of networked systems, equipment and resources, sustainable funding, training and accreditation, and the ability of the sector to evaluate the consequences of response activities for recovery outcomes.

Evaluating reform at this level involves examining how interoperability has been improved through better leadership, support for volunteers, a culture of learning and a workforce that is mentally and physically fit for purpose, prepared to work together, and aware of the needs of vulnerable, and culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities.

Community engagement and preparedness

Community engagement and preparedness refers to working with diverse communities to prepare, prevent, respond to and recover from emergencies and their aftermath.

This push has been promoted through more public consultations, safety outreach programs; and targeting funding schemes to build local capacity and leadership. There is greater awareness of the need to tailor engagement to build resilience and share information with people who are vulnerable.

Sharing responsibility for emergency management with the community has also involved integrating local knowledge in agency plans and activities and disseminating evidence and information to communities to inform personal decisions about safety.

Rebuilding and recovery

When emergencies create lasting damage, restoring wellbeing and rebuilding homes, facilities and infrastructure is critical to recovery.

Since the 2008–09 bushfire season the sector has increasingly recognised the need for community-led and trauma-informed approaches in the post-emergency space. Activities and services from private and government agencies need to be co-ordinated; support local initiatives; empower people as active participants; and reach people who are vulnerable.

The review will evaluate if reforms have better prepared the sector to assist people and communities rebuild and recover in ways that are flexible, sensitive, holistic, and orientated to the long-term.

Community safety and resilience

The Victorian government has increasingly framed safe communities as resilient communities. Resilience refers to the capacity of local systems and networks to support people to anticipate, prepare, respond and bounce back from stresses and shocks from all classes of emergencies.

Efforts to create a safer Victoria by building the coping capacity of communities compliments the core business of agencies to protect lives and property. Accordingly, the IGEM review will evaluate the extent to which community safety in Victoria has been enhanced through reforms to fuel management policies and processes, community access and egress, building and planning provisions, information and warnings, smoke protocols, incident management and community resilience.

The review will examine relevant policies, strategies and arrangements established and implemented in the 10-year period following the 2009 Victorian bushfires.

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