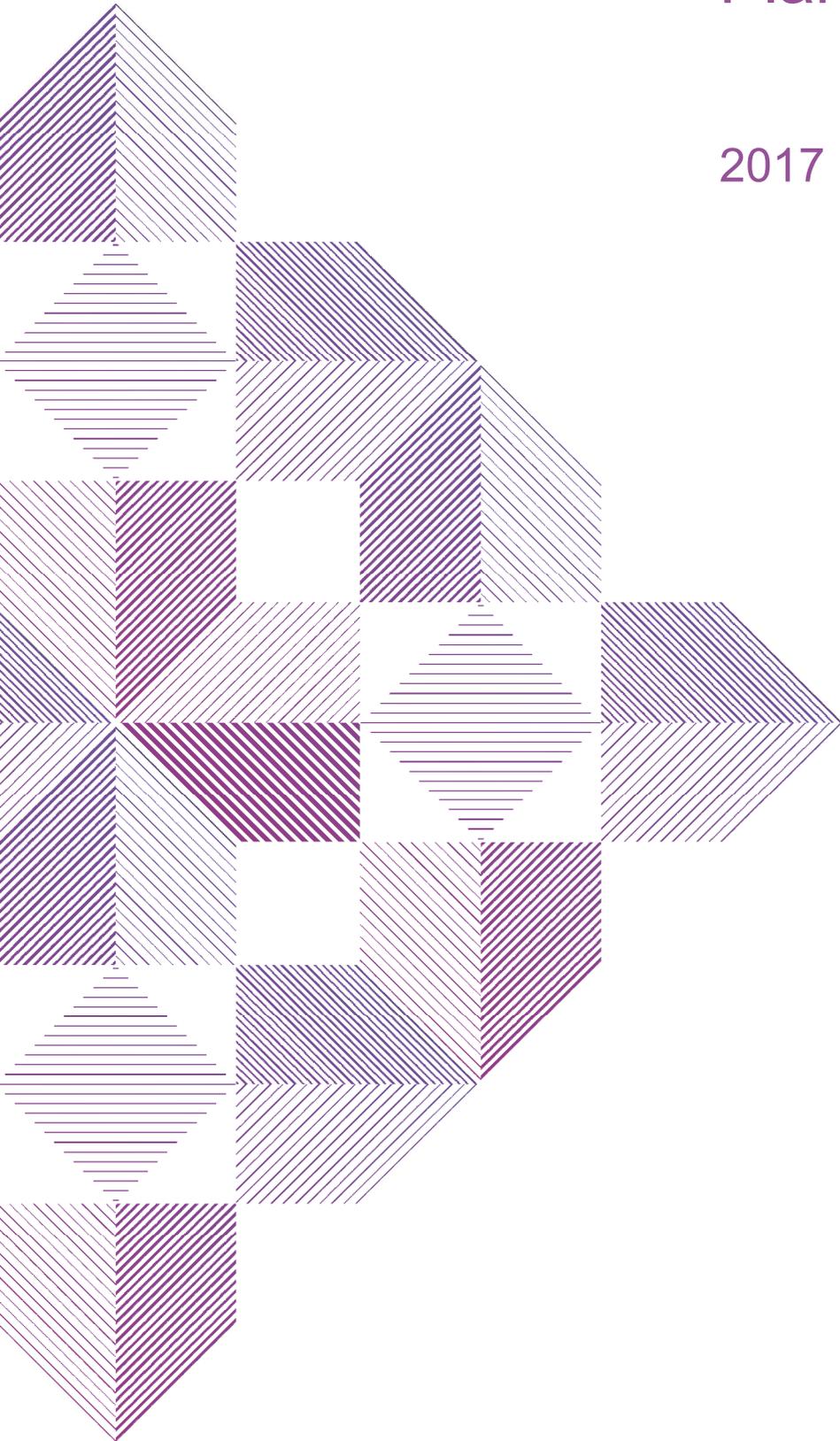


# Annual Forward Plan of Reviews

2017



Inspector-General for  
Emergency Management



Authorised and published by the Inspector-General for Emergency Management, 121 Exhibition Street, Melbourne.

December 2016

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# 1 Introduction

The objectives of the Inspector-General for Emergency Management (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 the *Emergency Management Act 2013* (the Act).

These reviews are based on an Annual Forward Plan of Reviews developed by IGEM in consultation with the emergency management sector<sup>1</sup> (the sector) and shared with the Minister for 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.

In developing this plan, 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 emergency management 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.

Based on this assessment, IGEM will conduct two planned reviews in 2017. These are:

- Review 1: Governance
- Review 2: Emergency management for high-risk Victorian communities

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<sup>1</sup> 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

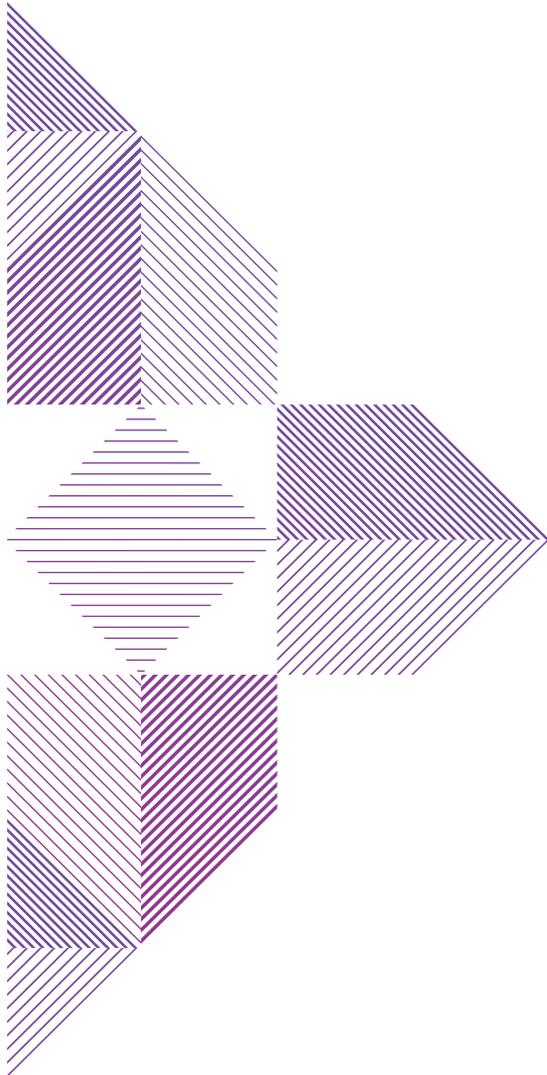
## 2 Document purpose

This document outlines the IGEM Annual Forward Plan of Reviews for 2017 (the forward plan). The intended audience for this plan is the emergency management sector.

It has been prepared in accordance with Section 66 of the Act.

The forward plan provides a high-level description of the two reviews IGEM will conduct in 2017, including broad information specific to the context, aim, scope, stakeholders, approach, outputs, publication, implementation and intended outcomes relating to each review.

Further project planning detail specific to the conduct of each review will be available during the course of each review upon request by contacting [igem.info@justice.vic.gov.au](mailto:igem.info@justice.vic.gov.au)



## 3 Review outlines

### 3.1 Review 1: Governance

#### Context

There have been significant changes to governance arrangements within the emergency management sector in Victoria since 2009.

The Emergency Management Act 2013 (the Act) gave legislative effect to changes brought about following recommendations from the 2009 Victorian Bushfires Royal Commission; the Review of the 2010–11 Flood Warnings and Response; and the Victorian Emergency Management Reform White Paper (2012). All identified shortfalls in the governance arrangements at the time and recommended improvements to the emergency management governance framework.

The Act established the State Crisis and Resilience Council (SCRC), Emergency Management Victoria (EMV), the Emergency Management Commissioner (EMC) and the IGEM. Under the new governance regime, there are the following three SCRC subcommittees: Relief and Recovery; Capability and Response; and Risk and Resilience. The SCRC was established as Victoria's peak crisis and emergency management advisory body to develop and coordinate policy and strategy across the emergency management spectrum and to oversee its implementation.

In addition, the Emergency Services Leadership Group (ESLG), chaired by EMV and attended by response agency heads, contributes to the sector's overarching governance arrangements, in part through its contribution to the development and implementation of the *Victorian Emergency Management Strategic Action Plan 2015–2018* (SAP). The ESLG supports the delivery of relevant elements of the SAP to achieve the most effective and efficient outcome for the State. The ESLG is an administrative body, which determines its own remit.

As a result of the refined governance arrangements, there is greater interoperability and accountability in decision-making, including strategic policy matters, and an increasingly integrated approach to the preparation for, response to and recovery from emergencies in Victoria. There has also been an increased burden placed upon sector individuals and organisations in meeting the expectations of the various governance structures.

Approaching three years after the introduction of the new legislated arrangements and given the ongoing reform process in the emergency management sector, it is timely to consider how effectively the governance arrangements are working in practice to foster sustainable and sector wide improvement. For example, are the structures and decision-making processes under the new arrangements having a positive impact? Are they consistent with leading practice and the Victorian Government's Public Sector Reform program?

#### Aim

The aim of this review is 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.

#### Preliminary scope

The scope of this review includes a consideration of strategic governance arrangements in place from 1 July 2014 (following the commencement of the Act). Accordingly, the review will focus on the specific governance structures established under the Act.

#### Stakeholders and consultation

Stakeholders for this review include, but are not limited to relevant agencies as prescribed in Section 60A of the Act. In addition, IGEM will consult with subject matter experts and research entities as required.

## Proposed approach

In the conduct of this review, IGEM will:

- identify the current strategic governance structures and decision making processes
- assess the impact and effectiveness of these governance arrangements by evaluating whether they adequately support strategic decision making, promote shared accountability and provide a system-wide platform to support reform and sustainable improvement
- evaluate whether the current governance arrangements are consistent with the Victorian Government's Public Sector Reform program.

The review will, where appropriate, identify opportunities for improvement to the emergency management sector's governance arrangements.

## Review output, publication, implementation and outcome

The primary output from this review will be a report for the minister detailing the analysis undertaken, complete with observations and recommendations 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, subject to the minister's approval under the provisions of Section 70(6) of the Act will be supported by a detailed communications strategy.

IGEM will promote and support sector-wide continuous improvement in working with the sector toward the monitored 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 SCRC for implementation.

The intended outcome of this review is enhanced emergency management governance.

## IGEM contact

For further information on this review, please contact:

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## 3.2 Review 2: Emergency management for high-risk Victorian communities

### Context

Community risk varies as a consequence of many factors including, for example, location.

High-risk communities can include those established within or near bushfire prone areas, peri-urban areas, active fault-lines, or floodplains. Levels of risk can be influenced by structural, social, cultural, environmental and personal factors (including age, mobility, language or illness). Vulnerabilities and potential consequences can also fluctuate over time. Accordingly, it is important for the emergency management sector to be aware of, prioritise and address all of these factors before, during and after emergencies occur.

As an example, the rapid growth of Victoria's peri-urban areas has resulted in an increased number of residential developments adjacent to areas prone to the occurrence of natural hazards, such as forest and grassland. These peri-urban areas present the emergency management sector with unique challenges due to their demographic composition, their limited infrastructure and their positioning on the rural-urban interface. In recent years, there have been a number of fast-moving grassfires and bushfires in peri-urban communities in Victoria.

These include a 1600 hectare grassfire in Melbourne's outer north in February 2013, (Donnybrook, Craigieburn, Campbellfield and Epping). This fire resulted in the loss of a house and several sheds and the evacuation of a childcare centre at the Northern Hospital. It also caused major traffic disruption and presented difficulties in evacuation. Incidents such as this highlight the vulnerability of peri-urban communities to harm during certain types of emergency.

The Victorian emergency management sector has made a concerted effort to identify, better understand and support its high risk communities, especially since the 2009 bushfires. Accordingly, there is an opportunity to review the effectiveness of the work undertaken by the sector, including a consideration of some of the strategies implemented to mitigate the risk to these communities.

### Aim

The aim of this review is to assess the effectiveness of how the emergency management sector identifies, plans for and mitigates the consequences of emergencies for high-risk Victorian communities.

### Preliminary scope

The review will examine the emergency management sector processes and tools for identifying high risk communities, the vulnerabilities in those communities and how the sector addresses these issues in their planning processes. The review will draw on the known risks identified within the *Emergency Risks in Victoria* document and other risk identification processes to select a range of case studies to identify if, and how they are being addressed through planning processes.

### Stakeholders and consultation

Stakeholders for this review include, but are not limited to relevant agencies prescribed in Section 60A of the Act together with selected Victorian communities. IGEM will consult with subject matter experts and research entities as required.

## Proposed approach

In the conduct of this review, IGEM will:

- consider and assess how the emergency management sector identifies, prioritises and connects with high risk Victorian communities
- identify and evaluate the effectiveness of strategies and programs (state, regional or local) which strive to build resilience and support preparedness, response and recovery activities within high risk communities.

The review will, where appropriate, identify opportunities for improvement to emergency management practices within high risk communities in Victoria.

## Review output, publication, implementation and outcome

The primary output from this review will be a report for the minister detailing the analysis undertaken, complete with observations and recommendations 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, subject to the minister's approval under the provisions of Section 70(6) of the Act, will be supported by a detailed communications strategy.

IGEM will promote and support sector-wide continuous improvement in working with the sector toward the monitored 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 SCRC for implementation.

The intended outcome of this review is enhanced emergency management for high-risk Victorian communities.

## IGEM contact

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## 4 Review submissions

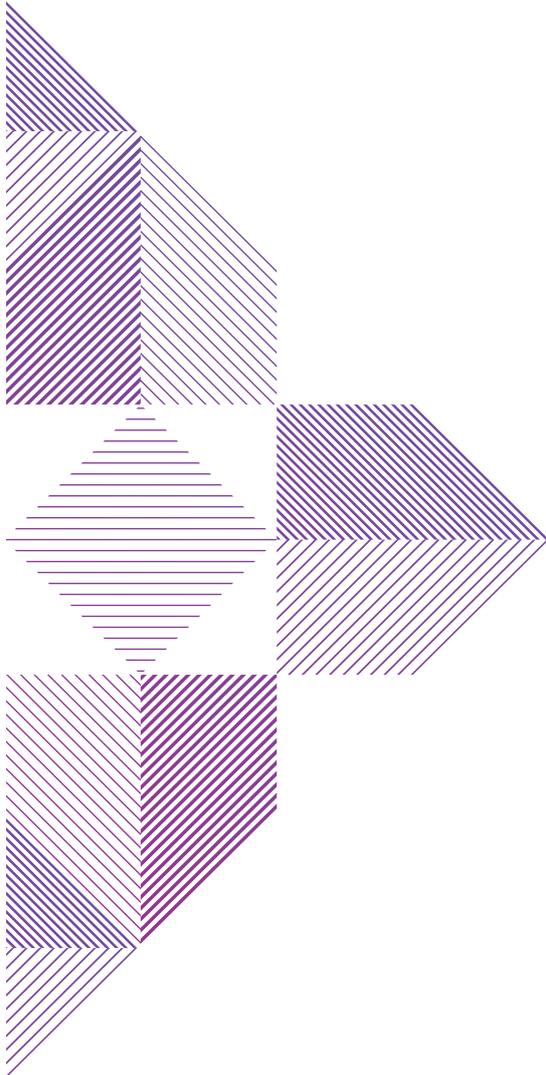
As part of its approach to each review, IGEM will engage with relevant sector agencies, departments, organisations, individuals and subject matter experts.

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

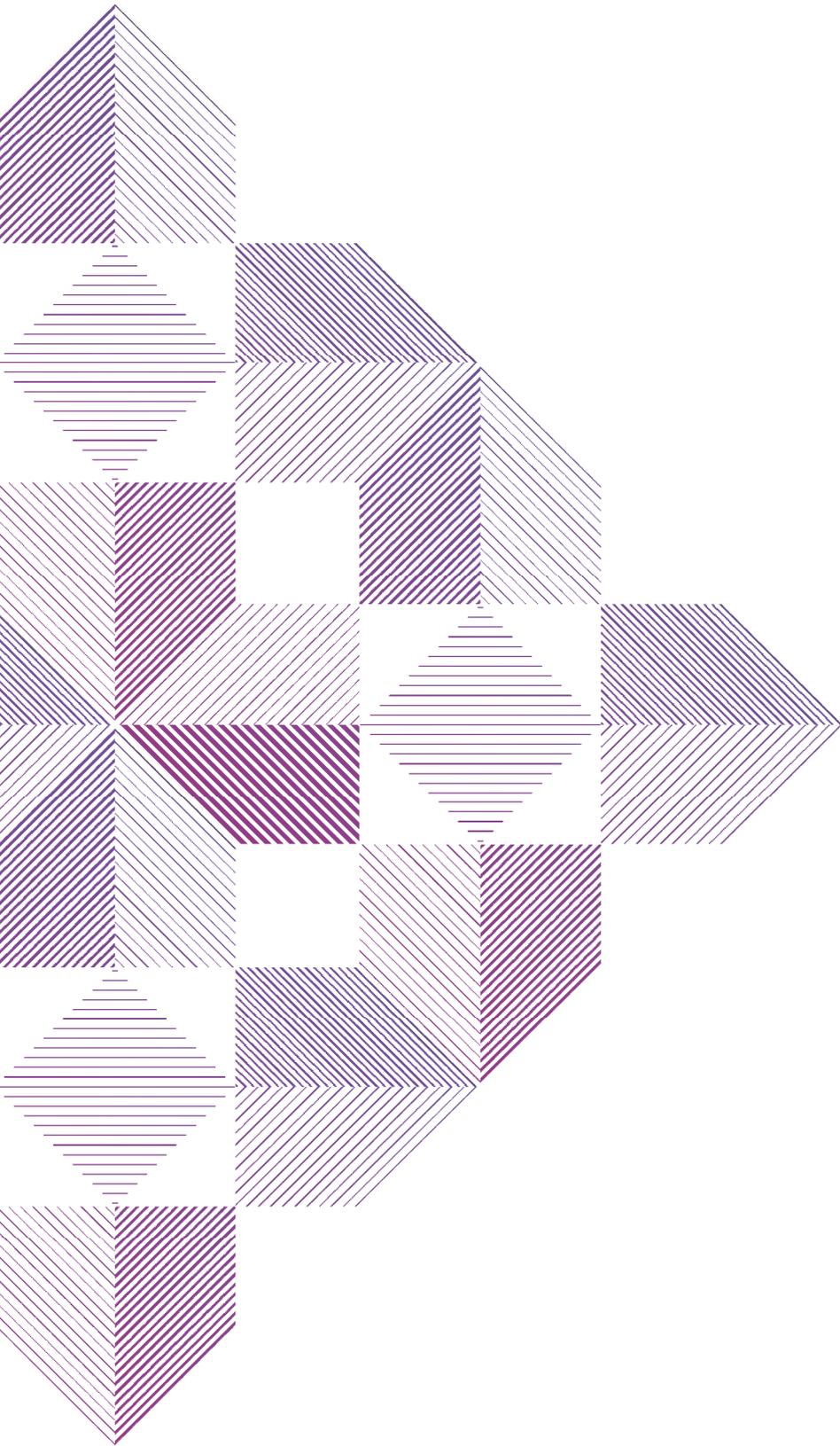
Accordingly, IGEM is interested in any submissions, projects, research papers or policies that may inform its reviews. This includes independent opinions on potential improvements or innovative approaches within the scope of each review.

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

In the interim, for more information or to contribute to any of these reviews, please contact the relevant IGEM contact noted in each review outline or email [igem.info@justice.vic.gov.au](mailto:igem.info@justice.vic.gov.au)







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