

Victorian Emergency Management Strategic Action Plan Update #3 2018–21

Progress Report

2019



IGEM
Inspector-General
for Emergency
Management

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Preface

This is the Inspector-General for Emergency Management's (IGEM) fourth progress report on the state's implementation of the Victorian Emergency Management Strategic Action Plan (SAP). The SAP is approved by the Minister for Police and Emergency Services in consultation with other relevant ministers.

The SAP aims to contribute to an efficient and sustainable emergency management system for Victorian communities that reduces the likelihood, effect and consequences of emergencies. The SAP reflects the strategic priorities for the emergency management sector and outlines key actions it is taking to support Victoria in achieving its vision of safer and more resilient communities.

The SAP is an important tool in driving reform and is reviewed annually to ensure that it remains current and relevant to both the sector and the Victorian communities it serves.

In its 2017 and 2018 progress reports, IGEM noted the completion of 14 actions. This progress report extends the reporting period by six months to cover activity between 1 July 2018 and 31 December 2019 and key developments since this period. This report finds that two actions have been completed since July 2018.

While this may appear to reflect a slowdown in progress, many of the remaining actions are complex, long-term initiatives. Furthermore, some SAP actions have changed in scope or timeframes to better align with the sector's priorities. It is important that the sector takes the necessary time to implement sustainable reform while ensuring that it can meet its ongoing operational obligations.

I commend the key role played by Emergency Management Victoria (EMV) in both coordinating the broader implementation of the SAP, and leading implementation of most of the actions currently underway – especially given the challenges and operational pressures that it has faced during the 2019–20 fire season and COVID-19 pandemic.

I also acknowledge that these reforms rely on the contributions of many other organisations – including those with responsibilities that are broader than emergency management – such as the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning which completed Phase 2 of the Councils and Emergencies project in 2019.

IGEM will continue to monitor implementation of the SAP as the sector looks towards the future with the development of its 2030 Strategy for Emergency Management in Victoria. I look forward to observing the continuing momentum of change and improvement in Victoria's emergency management arrangements as this important work progresses.

Tony Pearce

Inspector-General for Emergency Management

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Acronyms

AFAC	Australasian Fire and Emergency Services Authorities Council
AV	Ambulance Victoria
CFA	Country Fire Authority
COAG	Council of Australian Governments
COVID-19	Coronavirus disease
DELWP	Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning
DHHS	Department of Health and Human Services
DJPR	Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions
DRUP	Digital Radio Upgrade Program
EAS	Emergency Alerting Service
EMC	Emergency Management Commissioner
EM-COP	Emergency Management Common Operating Picture
EMOC	Emergency Management Operational Communications
EMV	Emergency Management Victoria
ESLG	Emergency Services Leadership Group
ESTA	Emergency Services Telecommunications Authority
IGEM	Inspector-General for Emergency Management
IDC	Inter-Departmental Committee
LGV	Local Government Victoria
LSV	Life Saving Victoria
MDN	Mobile Data Network
MFB	Metropolitan Fire and Emergency Services Board
MEMEG	Municipal Emergency Management Enhancement Group
MEMP	Municipal Emergency Management Plan
MEMPC	Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee
MMR	Metropolitan Mobile Radio

PSMB	Public Safety Mobile Broadband
REMP	Regional Emergency Management Planning Committee
RMR	Regional Mobile Radio
SCRC	State Crisis and Resilience Council
SEMP	State Emergency Management Plan
SAP	Strategic Action Plan
VICSES	Victoria State Emergency Service

Executive summary

The *Emergency Management Act 2013* requires the Inspector-General for Emergency Management (IGEM) to monitor and report to the Minister for Police and Emergency Services on the implementation of the Victorian Emergency Management Strategic Action Plan (SAP).

As a three-year rolling plan, the SAP is reviewed annually to ensure that it remains current and relevant to meet challenges that arise for the emergency management sector.

SAP Update #3 2018–21 outlines statewide, strategic priorities, with 32 corresponding actions to support Victoria in achieving its emergency management vision of safer and more resilient communities.

This is IGEM's fourth progress report on the SAP. Previous reports have covered implementation progress for the financial year (1 July to 30 June) and reported 14 actions as complete and another two as closed, with no further activity planned.

This report extends the reporting period by six months to cover activity between 1 July 2018 and 31 December 2019, and key developments since this period.

IGEM found that two actions have been completed in this period. In addition, two actions have been closed, with no further activity planned. Of the remaining nine actions: two are progressing satisfactorily; three are progressing with revised timeframes; and two are overdue (including one that is on hold). One action is in the early stages of development and one is yet to commence.

Although significant progress has been made, some SAP actions continue to take longer to deliver than initially anticipated. The reasons for this are varied and include resourcing challenges, competing priorities, and the breadth and complexity of the actions – several of which were realigned at the end of 2019 to better meet the sector's key priorities.

In addition, during 2019 Emergency Management Victoria (EMV), which leads implementation of most actions, underwent an organisational reset. IGEM recognises the challenges and operational pressures that EMV and the emergency management sector faced during the 2019–20 fire season and COVID-19 (Coronavirus disease) pandemic.

IGEM acknowledges the collective work of the emergency management sector to implement major SAP initiatives alongside its ongoing operational responsibilities and delivery of services to Victorian communities.

1 Introduction

Section 12 of the *Emergency Management Act 2013* (the Act) requires the State Crisis and Resilience Council (SCRC) to develop a rolling three-year Victorian Emergency Management Strategic Action Plan (SAP). The Minister for Police and Emergency Services (the minister), in consultation with other relevant ministers, approves the SAP.

The SAP aims to contribute to an efficient and sustainable emergency management system for Victorian communities.

SAP Update #3 2018–21 outlines four themes and eight strategic priorities with 32 corresponding strategic actions to support the state in achieving its emergency management vision of safer and more resilient communities.

The Inspector-General for Emergency Management (IGEM) reports to the minister on the implementation of the SAP.

This is IGEM's fourth SAP progress report, summarising key activities and providing an assessment of implementation progress for the 13 SAP Update #3 2018–21 actions assessed between 1 July 2018 and 31 December 2019, along with key developments since this period.

2 Background

2.1 Strategic Action Plan

As a three-year rolling plan, the SAP is reviewed periodically to ensure that it remains current and relevant to meet challenges that arise for the emergency management sector. Emergency Management Victoria (EMV) publishes each SAP Update on its website following ministerial approval.

The following SAP documents have been published or endorsed by SCRC since 2015:

- SAP 2015–18 – published June 2015
- SAP Update #1 2016–19 – published November 2016
- SAP Update #2 2017–20 – published October 2017
- SAP Update #3 2018–21 – published April 2019
- SAP Update #4 2019–22 – endorsed by SCRC in November 2019.¹

SAP Update #3 2018–21

SAP Update #3 2018–21 includes 32 actions grouped under four themes and eight priorities.

This progress report contains a summary of key activities and an assessment of implementation progress for the 13 SAP Update #3 actions assessed during 2018–19.

SAP Update #4 2019–22

On 21 November 2019 SCRC endorsed SAP Update #4 2019–22.

EMV's development of SAP Update #4 was informed by:

- the mapping of SAP actions against the 2019–20 SCRC key priorities
- an internal review of EMV-led SAP actions in late 2019 to determine if any had been completed through work done outside of the SAP.

In the process of developing SAP Update #4, EMV decided to remove some SAP themes that were very similar to the SCRC key priorities, and to close two SAP actions.

SAP Update #4 contains no new actions. Eight actions transfer unchanged from the previous SAP Update and are assigned new reference numbers. Two actions have been rescoped and assigned new reference numbers. Another two actions have been merged into a single action with a new reference number.

The changes in numbering are recorded in Table 3 on page 15 and noted in the progress summaries for each action. The changes in scope are discussed in the relevant progress summaries.

¹ SAP Update #4 has yet to be published at the time of completion of this report.

2.2 Governance

The SCRC is Victoria's peak body responsible for providing advice to the minister on emergency management policy and strategy, and its implementation. The SCRC is supported by sub-committees and is also responsible for endorsing the SAP and submitting it to the minister for approval.

EMV coordinates reporting on the implementation of the SAP on behalf of the SCRC.

To aid coordination across the emergency management sector, project documentation for SAP actions is often presented to the Emergency Services Leadership Group (ESLG) for consideration.

2.3 Role of the Inspector-General for Emergency Management

The IGEM is a Governor in Council appointment under the Act with legislated objectives to:

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

IGEM's SAP assurance role

Under section 64(1)(e) of the Act, IGEM monitors and reports to the minister on the implementation of the SAP by responder agencies, departments, the Emergency Services Telecommunications Authority (ESTA) and EMV.

This is IGEM's fourth SAP progress report.

IGEM's emergency management planning assurance role

The Act, as amended by the *Emergency Management Legislation Amendment Act 2018*, created a new function for IGEM to monitor, review and assess emergency management planning at a system level. This new function came into effect on 25 September 2019.

This report contains IGEM's initial observations on implementation of the emergency management planning reforms as part of the progress summary for Action E2.

IGEM intends to provide further observations via its ongoing monitoring of government Action 225 in response to the Hazelwood Mine Fire Inquiry.

IGEM is also currently developing an emergency management planning assurance plan (the assurance plan), to be consulted with the Emergency Management Planning Reform Inter-Departmental Committee (IDC), and delivered in mid-2020. The assurance plan outlines to the sector how IGEM will apply its different functions under the Act and undertake associated assurance activities to provide assurance of emergency management planning in Victoria.

3 Approach

3.1 Assurance principles

In undertaking assurance activities, IGEM and the emergency management sector are guided by the *Assurance Framework for Emergency Management*.

The framework seeks to drive a more coordinated, less burdensome and more valuable approach to assurance in the sector through four assurance principles:

- **Continuous improvement** – assurance providers appreciating the complexity of emergency management in a rapidly changing context. It means valuing parts of the emergency management system that continue to work well and seeing where incremental or immediate improvement, or innovation, is necessary.
- **Collaboration and coordination** – assurance providers working together and organising assurance activities to increase efficiency and effectiveness.
- **Reducing burden** – assurance providers respecting and minimising the amount of time and resources which stakeholders need to devote to an assurance activity.
- **Adding value** – assurance providers maximising the potential benefits of assurance activities, such as being proactive, risk-based and reporting on the results of assurance activities that is timely and can be easily understood by decision makers.

Limitations in assurance

Like all assurance providers, the level of assurance that IGEM can provide is limited by factors including the availability of relevant and reliable supporting information.

To provide assurance on implementation progress, IGEM assesses updates provided by agencies, and collects and assesses evidence to substantiate the updates. At times, a lack of available evidence may limit IGEM's ability to report on implementation progress. If unable to view supporting evidence, IGEM will report the progress as 'advised' by agencies. This represents a lower level of assurance.

3.2 Key stakeholders

IGEM places a priority on stakeholder engagement and acknowledges the high level of support and cooperation provided by EMV and the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) in preparing this report.

EMV is responsible for implementing 10 of the SAP actions in this report, with Local Government Victoria (LGV) – part of DELWP – leading two others. EMV and DELWP share responsibility for a final action.

EMV is also responsible for coordinating quarterly progress reports by leads for each SAP action.

Other organisations that supported the implementation of SAP actions underway during the reporting period include:

- Ambulance Victoria (AV)
- Australian Red Cross
- Corrections Victoria (part of the Department of Justice and Community Safety)
- Country Fire Authority (CFA)
- Department of Education and Training
- Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS)
- Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions (DJPR)
- Department of Premier and Cabinet
- Department of Treasury and Finance
- Emergency Services Telecommunications Authority (ESTA)
- Life Saving Victoria (LSV)
- Metropolitan Fire and Emergency Services Board (MFB)
- Municipal Association of Victoria
- Parks Victoria
- Regional Development Victoria (part of DJPR)
- Victorian Council of Churches
- Victoria Police
- Victoria State Emergency Service (VICSES).

3.3 Information collection

IGEM collected a range of information to prepare this report, including:

- project plans that outline the steps and outputs lead agencies will use to deliver an action
- quarterly progress reports prepared by project leads and coordinated by EMV
- publicly available information, such as reports, research papers and webpages
- information collected through its other assurance activities.

IGEM also collects information on SAP progress through attendance at meetings of SCRC and its sub-committees, and other state-level forums.

EMV collated and provided IGEM with a comprehensive progress summary in March 2020, reflecting contributions from the project leads for each action, along with supporting documents such as policies, procedures, contracts, reports, and meeting minutes.

IGEM securely stored and managed all documents in line with the confidentiality requirements in section 72 of the Act.

3.4 Analysis

IGEM monitored quarterly reporting across 2018–19 and the first half of 2019–20 to understand progress as it happened. Where required, IGEM contacted EMV and project leads to clarify information or request additional evidence.

IGEM provided a draft of this report to EMV and project leads for comment and response.

When assessing implementation progress, IGEM considers:

- timeframes for the action, including revised timeframes
- delays and progress on key milestones
- the contribution of the reported activity to the action and the SAP priority it supports
- evidence available to support the reported activity.

For each action, IGEM assigns a 'status' and a 'finding'. Table 1 describes the status that IGEM assigns to each action.

Table 1: Implementation status

STATUS	DESCRIPTION
Complete	Action has been completed satisfactorily or implemented as planned.
Ongoing	Action is still in progress. IGEM will continue to monitor and report on its status.
Ongoing (overdue)	Action is still in progress and is overdue. IGEM will continue to monitor and report on its status.
Closed	Action has not been fully implemented and no further activity is planned.

Findings provide further information on the progress of actions. Table 2 provides a summary of the findings used in this report.

Table 2: Summary of findings

FINDING
IGEM considers that this action has been implemented.
IGEM considers that this action has been partially implemented and notes that no further activity is planned.
IGEM considers that this action is progressing satisfactorily and will revisit in the next progress report.
IGEM notes progress on this action and that timeframes have been revised. IGEM will revisit in the next progress report.
IGEM notes that this action has been updated and is in the early stages of development. IGEM will revisit in the next progress report.
IGEM notes that this action is on hold and overdue. IGEM will revisit in the next progress report.
IGEM notes that this action is overdue and will revisit in the next progress report.

3.5 Reporting

Previous reports have covered implementation progress for the financial year (1 July to 30 June). This project extends the reporting period by six months to cover activity between 1 July 2018 and 31 December 2019, and key developments since this period.

This enables IGEM to report on the outcome of an EMV review of actions that placed eight actions on hold in May 2019 and resulted in two actions being closed in November 2019.

To provide clarity for readers, this report describes the transition from SAP Update #3 to SAP Update #4.

IGEM provided a copy of this report to the SCRC for information and subsequently provided it to the minister for approval to publish on its website (igem.vic.gov.au).

4 Overview of SAP actions

IGEM reported four SAP Update #3 2018–21 actions as complete in its 2017 Progress Report, and another 10 actions as complete and two as closed in its 2018 Progress Report.

Tables 3, 4 and 5 provide details of the remaining 13 actions in SAP Update #3 2018–21. Of these actions:

- two were completed during this period
- two were closed during this period
- two are progressing satisfactorily
- three are progressing with revised timeframes
- one is progressing and overdue
- one is on hold and overdue
- one is in the early stages of development
- one is yet to commence.

Table 3: SAP actions underway in during the reporting period that appear in SAP Update #4

REF (SAP UPDATE #3)	REF (SAP UPDATE #4)	ACTION	LEAD AGENCY	FINDING	STATUS
A1+A3 D3	3.1	Volunteerism and Community Leadership	EMV	IGEM notes that this action has been updated and is in the early stages of development. IGEM will revisit in the next progress report.	Ongoing
B1	4.1	Councils and Emergencies	LGV (DELWP)	IGEM considers that this action has been implemented.	Complete
C3	4.3	Workforce Diversity and Inclusion	EMV	IGEM considers that this action is progressing satisfactorily and will revisit in the next progress report.	Ongoing
D2	1.1	Long-term Workforce Strategy	EMV DELWP	IGEM notes that this action is on hold and overdue. IGEM will revisit in the next progress report.	Ongoing (overdue)
E2	1.2	Emergency Management Planning Reform	EMV	IGEM notes progress on this action and that timeframes have been revised. IGEM will revisit in the next progress report.	Ongoing

REF (SAP UPDATE #3)	REF (SAP UPDATE #4)	ACTION	LEAD AGENCY	FINDING	STATUS
E4	1.3	Performance Standards	EMV	IGEM considers that this action has been implemented.	Complete
G4	4.4	Capability Model	EMV	IGEM notes progress on this action and that timeframes have been revised. IGEM will revisit in the next progress report.	Ongoing
G6+A5	2.1	Impact Assessment Model	EMV	IGEM notes progress on this action and that timeframes have been revised. IGEM will revisit in the next progress report.	Ongoing
H1	4.5	Long-term Communications Plan	EMV	IGEM considers that this action is progressing satisfactorily and will revisit in the next progress report.	Ongoing
H2	4.6	EM-COP Three Year Plan	EMV	IGEM notes that this action is overdue and will revisit in the next progress report.	Ongoing (overdue)

Table 4: SAP actions underway in during the reporting period that do not appear in SAP Update #4

REF	ACTION	LEAD AGENCY	FINDING	STATUS
G1	Review of Emergency Management Delivery Models	EMV	IGEM considers that this action has been partially implemented and notes that no further activity is planned.	Closed
G7	Research Best Practice Model	EMV	IGEM considers that this action has been partially implemented and notes that no further activity is planned.	Closed

Table 5: Actions that have not yet commenced

REF (SAP UPDATE #3)	REF (SAP UPDATE #4)	ACTION
B2	4.2	Local Government Capability and Capacity Action Plans

5 Progress summary

This section contains a summary of key activities and an assessment of implementation progress for the 13 SAP Update #3 2018–21 actions underway or yet to commence during the reporting period.

Actions reported as complete or closed in IGEM's 2017 and 2018 progress reports are not included.

5.1 Theme: Communities and business

Priority A: Build and empower community leadership and develop awareness, shared responsibility and self-reliance to ultimately strengthen resilience.

Objective of Priority A:

Increased capacity of local communities to be ready to withstand, and recover from an emergency, using business, social and community networks to raise awareness, share responsibility and build self-reliance to strengthen resilience.

SAP Update #3 details six actions necessary to realise this objective. Action A2 was completed in June 2017. Actions A4 and A6 were completed in June 2018. Action A5 was merged with Action G6 in April 2017 and progress is reported under that action. Action A3 was merged with Action A1 in April 2018 and has commenced. Its progress is outlined below.

ACTION A1+A3 – VOLUNTEERISM AND COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP

Explore and develop existing, emerging and alternative approaches and examples, to enable different types of leaders and leadership that can assist communities to manage stresses and cope with shocks, including emergencies. Promote the hands on role that community members, including business leaders, play in supporting their communities before, during and after emergencies. Create opportunities for these people to include emergency management in their every-day decision making processes, and influence these approaches to reflect local demographics, together with opportunities to work with and learn from people with different backgrounds including different ages, genders, beliefs, cultures, and abilities.

Commencement	2017–18 Q3
Planned completion	TBC
Lead agency	EMV
Status	Ongoing (as Action 3.1)

EMV merged Actions A1 and A3 in April 2018.

SAP Update #3 contained revised wording for the merged action developed in consultation with the emergency management sector.

In May 2019 SCRC approved placing the action on hold until mid-to-late 2019 to enable an internal review of EMV-led SAP actions.

In November 2019 EMV advised SCRC that, to facilitate a more streamlined delivery of actions that respond to sector priorities, Action A1+A3 had been merged with Action D3 into a new action that reflects the need to further investigate and understand the changing nature of volunteerism in Victoria.

The new action appears in SAP Update #4 as Action 3.1: Volunteerism and Community Leadership.

Explore and develop approaches that allow different types of leaders to emerge from the evolving landscape of volunteerism.

According to SAP Update #4, Action 3.1 is underway and will link closely to the 2030 Strategy, build on work undertaken through the Strategic Priorities for Emergency Management Volunteering in Victoria² and assist in building leaders in the volunteer sector that can support emergency management into the future.

EMV advised that scoping for Action 3.1 will commence in 2020 and that IGEM will be provided with a project plan once milestones and timeframes have been finalised.

Finding

IGEM notes that this action has been updated and is in the early stages of development. IGEM will revisit in the next progress report.

Priority B: Enhance the capability and capacity of local governments to meet their obligations in the management of emergencies.

Objective of Priority B:

Councils with an enhanced ability to meet their legislative and policy requirements and operating arrangements in the planning, prevention, relief and recovery from emergencies.



Source: ©State of Victoria, DELWP. Credit: Craig Moodie Photography

² emv.vic.gov.au/how-we-help/volunteers/strategic-priorities-for-emergency-management-volunteering-in-victoria-0

SAP Update #3 details two actions necessary to realise this objective. Action B1 was completed in December 2019 and Action B2 (SAP Update #4, Action 4.2) is yet to commence. Progress for Action B1 is outlined below.

ACTION B1 – COUNCILS AND EMERGENCIES Clarify and confirm the emergency management roles of local government, and assess councils' capability and capacity to meet their emergency obligations.	
Commencement	2015–16 Q1
Planned completion	31 December 2017 30 November 2019 (revised)
Lead agency	LGV (DELWP)
Status	Complete

LGV addressed Action B1 through phases 1 and 2 of the Councils and Emergencies Project (refer to Figure 1).³

Action B1 was originally due for completion in December 2017. The completion date was later extended to December 2018. The project sponsor subsequently approved a further extension of the completion date to November 2019 to allow for the extensive engagement required with councils.

Figure 1: Phases of the Councils and Emergencies Project



Source: DELWP

Phase 1 of the project concluded in December 2017 with LGV's release of the Councils and Emergencies Position Paper. The document provides a comprehensive overview of 94 roles and activities undertaken by councils to support communities before, during and after emergencies.

In 2018 LGV developed:

- a maturity model to evaluate each council's emergency management capability and capacity – the model has a scale of one (lowest maturity) to five (highest maturity). Each maturity level has corresponding target levels of capability and capacity for each of the emergency management responsibilities and activities that councils undertake
- a web-based platform, built using the maturity model, for councils to:
 - self-assess their target maturity level, based on their risk profile and available resources
 - self-assess their current capability and capacity against their target maturity level for each emergency management responsibility and activity and identify areas for improvement.

In November 2018 LGV successfully piloted the evaluation platform with four Barwon South West region councils. Based on the outcomes of the pilot, LGV made some changes to the evaluation platform and supporting guidance materials for councils.

³ localgovernment.vic.gov.au/our-programs/emergency-management/councils-and-emergencies-project

Full rollout to all councils took place between April and June 2019. All councils completed a self-evaluation, and had it approved by their Chief Executive Officer.

Councils were supported with guidance materials, including factsheets and an online training package, to help them understand and complete their self-evaluation.

LGV also held a series of workshops for councils in April and May 2019. IGEM observed one of the workshops in May 2019, where LGV provided an overview of the project and provided guidance on how to use the evaluation platform.

LGV prepared the Councils and Emergencies Capability and Capacity Evaluation Report, which was endorsed by SCRC on 21 November 2019 and published on LGV's website⁴ in December 2019.

The report identifies the most significant gaps in local government emergency management capability and capacity by state, region and theme, rather than by individual council.

Common issues identified with respect to councils' **capability** to carry out their emergency management functions included:

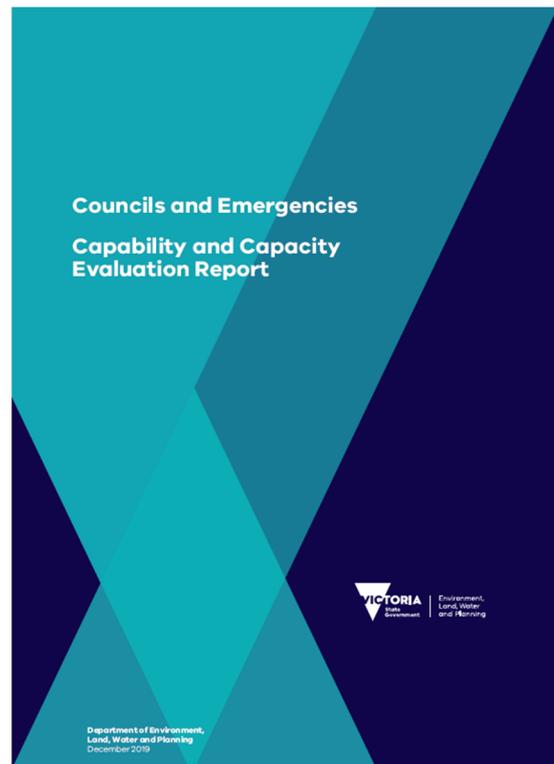
- emergency management knowledge and expertise only being held by few people within council
- a lack of emergency management training
- a lack of clearly written procedures.

Common issues identified with respect to councils' **capacity** to carry out their emergency management functions included:

- a lack of staffing capacity before, during and after emergency events
- constrained budgets
- insufficient funding.

The final stage of the Councils and Emergencies Project (phase 3) will develop strategies to address gaps in councils' emergency management capacity and capability. LGV will undertake this work through SAP Update #4, Action 4.2, which has yet to commence.

LGV advised that the 2019–20 Victorian bushfires have delayed the planned commencement of Action 4.2 to June 2020.



Finding

IGEM considers that this action has been implemented.

⁴ localgovernment.vic.gov.au/resilience-and-emergency-management/councils-and-emergencies-project

5.2 Theme: People and culture

Priority C: Develop sector leadership that instils a positive workforce culture and promotes respect, cooperation, innovation and diversity.

Objective of Priority C:

Emergency management sector leaders who embody respect, cooperation, innovation and diversity, and champion these values across the workforce.

SAP Update #3 details three actions necessary to realise this objective. Action C1 was completed in April 2018. Action C2 was reported as closed in the IGEM's 2018 Progress Report. Action C3 has now commenced and progress is reported as follows.

ACTION C3 – WORKFORCE DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

Consider how workforce diversity, emergency management roles, and the contributions of community to emergency management are represented in communications across the sector and identify how to adopt a stronger, community-centered approach that showcases diversity and inclusion and the breadth of emergency management roles.

Commencement	1 July 2019
Planned completion	TBC
Lead agency	EMV
Status	Ongoing (as Action 4.3)

Action C3 was a new action in SAP Update #3 that aimed to consider how workforce diversity, emergency management roles and community contributions to emergency management were represented in communications across the sector.

The action appears in SAP Update #4 as Action 4.3: Workforce Diversity and Inclusion, with new wording to reflect the recent work of the Emergency Management Commissioner (EMC) and sector partners including the Australasian Fire and Emergency Services Authorities Council (AFAC)⁵ Diversity and Inclusion Group.

Develop a comprehensive shared vision and articulation of the case for change on gender representation, diversity and inclusion in Fire and Emergency; and to conduct an analysis of gender representation, diversity and inclusion in communications across the sector.

Work on this action commenced in July 2019. In August 2019 the EMC approved a plan of activity to develop a comprehensive shared vision and articulation of the case for change on gender representation, diversity and inclusion in the emergency management sector.

A draft discussion paper on the case for change was developed and then presented by the EMC to the AFAC Male Champions of Change⁶ meeting held in Hobart on 30 October 2019. EMV advised that feedback from this session will be used to update the discussion paper.

The final paper and action plan will be presented to the April 2020 Male Champions of Change meeting. EMV will also develop a communication toolkit, and brief agency communications personnel and organisational leaders on the initiative.

⁵ afac.com.au

⁶ malechampionsofchange.com/groups/male-champions-change-fire-emergency/

In mid-2020 EMV intends to commence planning for the second part of this action – an analysis of gender representation, diversity and inclusion in communications across the sector.

Finding

IGEM considers that this action is progressing satisfactorily and will revisit in the next progress report.

Priority D: Create a long-term emergency management employee and volunteer workforce development strategy.

Objective of Priority D:

A sophisticated workforce management approach to build and sustain the emergency management sector.

SAP Update #3 details three actions necessary to realise this objective. Action D1 was completed in July 2018. Action D2 remains ongoing. Action D3 was merged with Action A1+A3 and has now commenced. Progress for Actions D2 and D3 is outlined below.

ACTION D2 – LONG-TERM WORKFORCE STRATEGY

Develop and implement a long term workforce strategy that enhances our understanding of evolving workforce challenges and opportunities and assists in the delivery of a diverse, inclusive, competent and sustainable workforce.

Commencement	2015–16 Q2
Planned completion	30 June 2018
Lead agency	EMV and DELWP
Status	Ongoing (overdue) (as Action 1.1)

SAP Update #3 contained revised wording for Action D2 developed in consultation with the emergency management sector.

IGEM's 2018 Progress Report noted EMV's identification of five 'future challenge' themes to lay the groundwork for a long-term workforce strategy:

- the natural environment
- the human and social environment
- technology, infrastructure and communications
- sector cultures and structures
- stakeholder expectations.

In July 2018 SCRC declined to endorse the development of a business case for work to further progress Action D2. SCRC instead asked the project working group to engage with emergency management sector organisations and other government entities to investigate existing research on the challenges and opportunities facing the sector's workforce.

In March 2019 EMV advised IGEM that this engagement had not identified much relevant research, and that SCRC agreement would be sought to place the action on hold pending the allocation of sufficient resources to enable the necessary research to occur.

In May 2019 SCRC approved placing the action on hold until mid-to-late 2019 to enable an internal review of EMV-led SAP actions.

The action appears in SAP Update #4 (November 2019) as Action 1.1: Long-term Workforce Strategy with a status of 'on hold'. EMV advised that the action remains on hold pending development of the 2030 Strategy.

Finding

IGEM notes that this action is on hold and overdue. IGEM will revisit in the next progress report.

ACTION D3 – VOLUNTEERISM AND COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP

Review and update the *2015 Strategic Priorities for Emergency Management Volunteering in Victoria*, focusing on its implementation, application, the current and future needs of volunteers and highlighting the fundamental importance and value of volunteers, volunteering and volunteerism.

Commencement	2018–19 Q3
Planned completion	TBC
Lead agency	EMV
Status	Ongoing (as Action 3.1)

SAP Update #3 contained revised wording for Action D3 developed in consultation with the emergency management sector.

In May 2019 SCRC approved placing Action D3 on hold until mid-to-late 2019 to enable an internal review of EMV-led SAP actions.

EMV advised that Action D3 was in the early stages of scoping when placed on hold. Finalisation and approval of the project approach and project plan, including detailed milestones, was postponed pending completion of the review.

In November 2019 EMV advised SCRC that Action D3 had been merged with Action A1+A3 into a new action that reflects the need to further investigate and understand the changing nature of volunteerism in Victoria.

The new action appears in SAP Update #4 as Action 3.1: Volunteerism and Community Leadership. (Refer to page 17 of this report for further information on Action 3.1).

Finding

IGEM notes that this action has been updated and is in the early stages of development. IGEM will revisit in the next progress report.

5.3 Theme: Governance

Priority E: Define emergency management roles and responsibilities across all tiers of government, non-government organisations, agencies, business and the community, and make sure they are understood by all involved.

Objective of Priority E:

Streamlined and contemporary legislation, policy, operational arrangements and plans. Each clearly articulates the roles and responsibilities of community, all tiers of government, non-government organisations, agencies and businesses to better integrate the management of emergencies.

SAP Update #3 details four actions necessary to realise this objective. Action E1 was completed in 2018. Action E3 was completed as planned on 30 August 2016.

Action E4 is also now complete while Action E2 remains ongoing. Progress for Actions E2 and E4 is outlined below.

ACTION E2 – EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PLANNING REFORM

Foster key partnerships to enable all stakeholders to undertake their roles and responsibilities. This includes clarifying the roles and responsibilities of community, Commonwealth, State and Local governments (aligned to Priority B), non-government organisations, agencies and businesses in the management of hazards, risks and emergencies.

Commencement	2016–17 Q1
Planned completion	30 November 2017 December 2023 (revised)
Lead agency	EMV
Status	Ongoing (as Action 1.2)

EMV had approached Action E2 through a project to develop guidelines for emergency management planning at state, regional, and municipal levels.

In November 2019 EMV advised SCRC that Action E2 had been updated and renamed 'Emergency Management Planning Reform' to reflect the full scope of EMV's project to lead the implementation of the reforms in Victoria. The updated action appears in SAP Update #4 as Action 1.2:

Lead reform to Victoria's emergency management planning arrangements by establishing a new integrated, coordinated and comprehensive framework for planning at state, regional and municipal levels.

IGEM's emergency management planning assurance role

The *Emergency Management Act 2013*, as amended by the *Emergency Management Legislation Amendment Act 2018*, created a new function for IGEM to monitor, review and assess emergency management planning at a system level (refer to section 2.3). This new function came into effect on 25 September 2019.

This report contains IGEM's initial observations on implementation of the emergency management planning reforms (see the IGEM observations to date further on in this progress summary).

IGEM intends to provide further observations via its ongoing monitoring of government Action 225 in response to the Hazelwood Mine Fire Inquiry.⁷

⁷ Full implementation of the Emergency Management Legislative Amendment (Planning) Bill 2016

IGEM is also currently developing an emergency management planning assurance plan (the assurance plan), to be consulted with the Emergency Management Planning Reform IDC and delivered in mid-2020.

The assurance plan outlines to the sector how IGEM will apply its different functions under the Emergency Management Act and undertake associated assurance activities to provide assurance of emergency management planning in Victoria.

Emergency Management Legislation Amendment Act 2018

The Emergency Management Legislation Amendment Act received Royal Assent on 21 August 2018 and amended the Emergency Management Act to establish new arrangements for emergency management planning in Victoria, for phased implementation through to December 2020.

The new legislation provides arrangements for emergency management planning at the state, regional, and municipal levels, including the preparation of an integrated State Emergency Management Plan (SEMP) in place of the current standalone response and recovery plans.

New Regional Emergency Management Planning Committees (REMPCs) and Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committees (MEMPCs) will have responsibility for developing Regional Emergency Management Plans (REMPs) and Municipal Emergency Management Plans (MEMPs) respectively.

Additionally, under the new emergency management planning arrangements, REMPCs will be required to approve the MEMPs within their region, ensuring consistency and oversight from the planning level above. The EMC will approve the REMPs.

While amendments to the Emergency Management Act have a default commencement date of 1 December 2020, each level of the arrangements – state, regional, and municipal – may come into effect earlier if proclaimed by the Governor of Victoria.

On 25 September 2019, the Governor of Victoria proclaimed the state-level arrangements.

The new legislation provides for guidelines to be issued by the minister to support the emergency management planning process at state, regional, and municipal levels. It also provides that the guidelines will apply to persons and entities responsible for preparing, reviewing, or approving emergency management plans, including:

- the SCRC
- the EMC – state guidelines
- each REMPC – regional guidelines
- each MEMPC – municipal guidelines.

Emergency management planning guidelines

IGEM's 2018 Progress Report noted that EMV had developed draft versions of the guidelines.

During 2018–19, work progressed internally within EMV to prepare the guidelines for stakeholder consultation.

Project governance for this action is provided by the IDC reporting to SCRC. IGEM observes the IDC in line with its ongoing role to monitor, review, and assess emergency management planning at a system level.

In August 2019 EMV briefed the IDC on revised delivery timelines for the emergency management planning reforms, with phased release of the guidelines as follows:

- state level – November 2019
- state and regional level – April 2020
- state, regional and municipal level – 1 December 2020.

In September 2019 EMV circulated an updated draft version of the state guidelines for stakeholder feedback.

SCRC endorsed the final Guidelines for Preparing the State Emergency Management Plan on 21 November 2019. The minister approved the guidelines on 29 November 2019, and they are available on the EMV website.⁸

The guidelines outline the considerations the EMC must have regard to when preparing the SEMP in order to comply with the Emergency Management Act, including that the SEMP must:

- be prepared collaboratively, efficiently and effectively (section 60AA(1))
- interface with existing in force emergency management plans (section 60AC)
- adopt an integrated, coordinated and comprehensive approach to emergency management at a state level (section 60AD)
- be assured, approved and published (sections 60AG, 60AH and 60AI).

The guidelines may also assist preparers of other emergency management plans beyond the scope of the Act to improve the integration of plans with the SEMP.

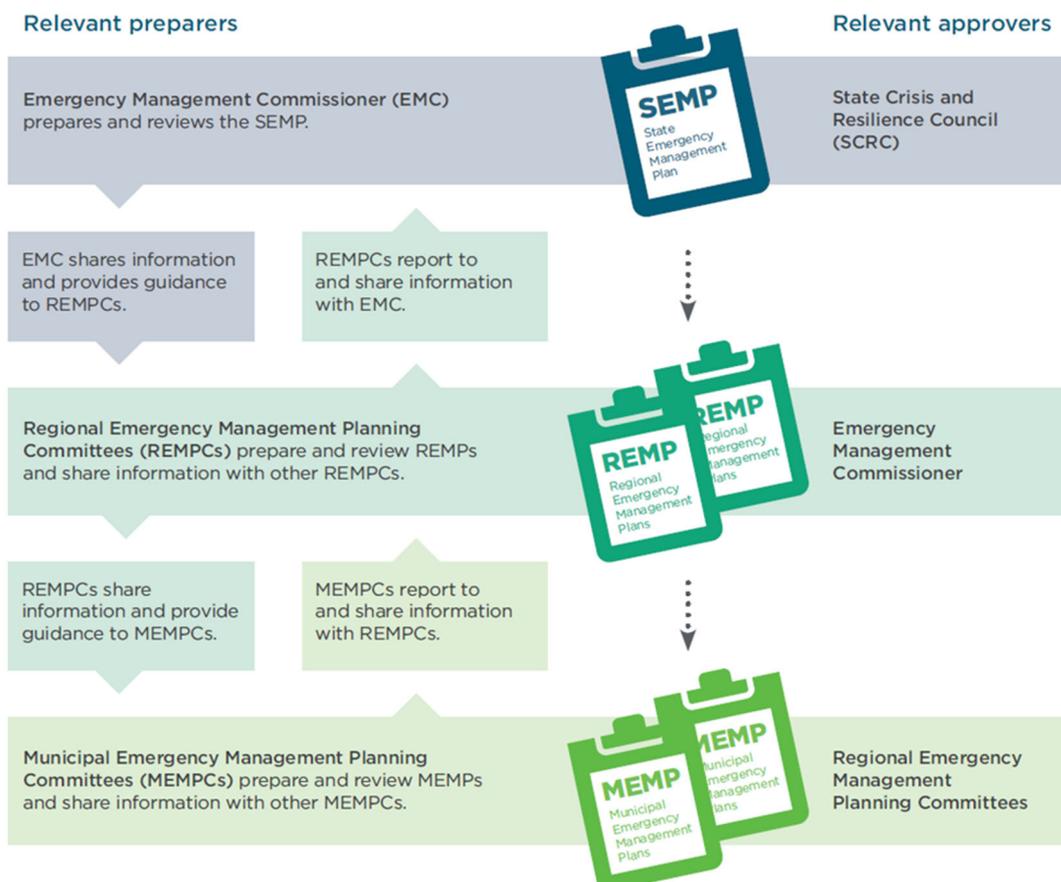
IGEM notes that the guidelines address key aspects of Action E2.

The guidelines emphasise that under Section 60AA of the Act, the SEMP must specify the emergency management roles and responsibilities of agencies.

In terms of fostering partnerships to enable stakeholders to undertake these roles and responsibilities, the guidelines highlight the significance of effective collaboration – this involves sharing information, joint decision-making, complementary arrangements, and a commitment to dispute resolution.

The guidelines also provide a framework for emergency management planning that sets out how the REMPCs, MEMPCs, the SCRC and the EMC should share information with each other (refer to Figure 2).

Figure 2: Framework for emergency management planning (Source: EMV)



⁸ www.emv.vic.gov.au/how-we-help/emergency-management-planning/planning-guidelines

In December 2019 EMV circulated a consultation draft of the state and regional guidelines (Guidelines for Preparing State and Regional Emergency Management Plans) to the emergency management sector.

At the 5 March 2020 SCRC meeting, the EMC noted that the 2019–20 Victorian bushfires – and subsequent recovery activities – continued to impact a significant number of councils and regional and state organisations. In recognition of these impacts, and to enable learnings from the fires to be incorporated into the SEMP, the EMC presented revised timeframes for the emergency management planning reform program as follows.

September 2020 – SCRC approval of the SEMP and regional guidelines, followed by the new regional level emergency planning arrangements formally coming into effect.

October 2020 – REMPs developed over the course of 2020 provided to the EMC for assurance and approval.

1 December 2020 – New requirements for municipal level emergency management planning come into effect, by which time the regional guidelines will be in place.

2021–23 – Implementation of the new municipal-level emergency management planning arrangements where MEMPCs will develop new MEMPs with regard to the municipal guidelines to replace existing municipal-level plans as they become scheduled for review.

EMV has aligned the planned completion date for Action 1.2 to the completion of municipal level implementation in 2023.

IGEM observations to date

IGEM makes the following observations in accordance with its legislated responsibility to monitor, review and assess emergency management planning at a system level, which came into effect on 25 September 2019. These observations cover activity to 31 December 2019 and key developments since this period.

IGEM especially acknowledges the complexity of implementing the emergency management planning reform program, considering EMV's resourcing and operational pressures during the 2019–20 fire season.

IGEM positively notes the time and resources allocated by EMV in establishing and convening the time-limited IDC which seeks to:

- lead and champion the reform program
- provide a critical consultation forum for the reform program to comply with legislated requirements
- be the oversight and advisory group for deliverables of the reform program.

IGEM also notes that the IDC is very well-represented by sector organisations across government. IGEM observed strong engagement and feedback from IDC members, both during meetings and in the context of providing formal feedback on reform program outputs.

IGEM recognises that maintaining this level of buy-in is crucial to delivering the reforms in line with the timeframes outlined above, and for ensuring their sustainability once implemented. IGEM therefore encourages EMV and its sector partners to work together to address the following concerns it has observed regarding the implementation of the emergency management planning reforms:

- IGEM observes that IDC members have sought articulation of the hierarchy, purpose, and audience for the suite of products produced under the planning reform (plans, guidelines, and toolkits). Going forward, there is an opportunity for EMV to clarify the purpose and focus of the SEMP (and the broader suite of products being produced under the reform program) to address these concerns.
- IGEM observes that the scheduling of deliverables for the reform program is complex, and therefore encourages EMV to continue working with stakeholders to optimise the process while meeting legislative requirements.

During 2019, EMV developed the Guidelines for Preparing the State Emergency Management Plan and the State Emergency Management Plan concurrently. This meant that the EMC could not develop the SEMP with reference to finalised guidelines as per the legislation.

IGEM notes that issues arising from the scheduling of the reforms may continue to manifest. SCRC approval of the regional guidelines is scheduled for September 2020, yet REMPCs are set to provide completed REMPAs to the EMC for approval only one month later, in October 2020. These scheduling issues will be compounded by the impacts of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

- An opportunity exists for the greater involvement of community organisations or representatives in the process. A key principle of the new legislation is that emergency management plans are to be prepared in a manner that acknowledges and reflects the importance of community emergency management planning. IGEM observes that it is unclear how the importance of community emergency management planning has been reflected in the SEMP development process to date.
- An opportunity also exists for EMV to provide more clarity going forward on how stakeholder input is shaping the reform process and its outputs. It is not always apparent how EMV has addressed or incorporated extensive written stakeholder feedback on consultation drafts of the SEMP. Stakeholder feedback and issues raised during IDC meetings do not always appear to have been fully considered or addressed by EMV.
- IGEM notes that the timelines for the reform program are very compressed. While the EMC has revised some elements due to the 2019–20 Victorian bushfires, the final deadline of 1 December 2020 has remained. Beyond potential legislative compliance issues, this may negatively impact EMV's ability to properly consider and address the significant levels of feedback from IDC members. IGEM encourages EMV and its sector partners to work together to ensure that this does not affect the quality of the reform program's outputs.

Finding

IGEM notes progress on this action and that timeframes have been revised. IGEM will revisit in the next progress report.

ACTION E4 – PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

Develop performance standards to guide effective and efficient governance and enable the sector to measure its performance.

Commencement	2015–16 Q1
Planned completion	30 June 2017 31 December 2019 (revised)
Lead agency	EMV
Status	Complete

The Emergency Management Performance Standards describe the minimum requirements expected of EMV and responder agencies⁹ to meet the objectives for the emergency management functions they collectively undertake. Responder agencies report on actions taken to comply with the standards and progress towards achieving the desired outcomes.

EMV delivered Action E4 in four stages. IGEM reported stages one to three as complete in its 2017 Progress Report. Stage four is now also complete.

⁹ CFA, DELWP, MFB and VICSES.

During stages one to three, EMV developed the Victorian Emergency Management Performance Standards Version 1.0 (December 2015) and Version 2.0 (December 2016). Version 1 of the standards covered Capability and Response functions only. Version 2 expanded the scope of the standards to also cover Risk and Resilience and Relief and Recovery functions. Both versions were applicable to EMV and responder agencies only.

Stage four initially aimed to expand the standards to selected non-responder agencies, to reflect the sector's approach of shared responsibility for emergency management outcomes.

IGEM's 2018 Progress Report outlined EMV's approach to early consultation with non-responder agencies and noted extensions of the planned completion date to June 2018, and then to December 2019 to enable further consultation to occur.

In August 2019 EMV changed its approach to this action, deciding against expanding the standards to non-responder agencies. EMV reported that its consultation with non-responder agencies and other stakeholders identified that the Risk and Resilience and Relief and Recovery elements of the standards were outside the scope of the Emergency Management Act. EMV had encouraged non-responder agencies to report on the standards, however none had done so due to capacity and capability constraints and the lack of legislative obligation.

EMV instead decided to reissue the standards for responder agencies only, to renew focus on the Capability and Response element, and reflect their core legislated emergency management functions, simplify the content of the standards, and streamline the reporting processes.

EMV published the Emergency Management Performance Standards version 3.0 in December 2019.¹⁰ Version 3.0 supersedes previous versions of the standards and became effective on 1 January 2020 for the commencement of reporting on 1 July 2020. It includes Capability and Response standards for three functions:

Function 1: Capability development

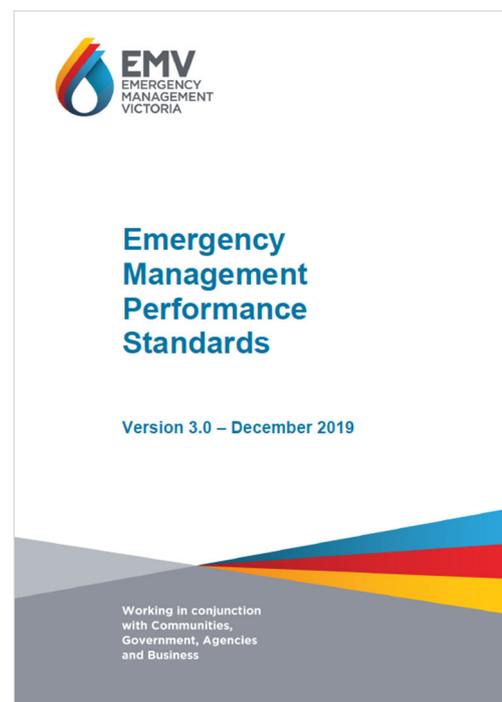
- Desired outcome: The appropriate people, resources, governance, systems and processes are connected, integrated and optimised to provide a coordinated service to the community.

Function 2: Readiness and response

- Desired outcome: Effective and efficient emergency readiness and response that minimises the immediate effects of emergencies on the community.

Function 3: Public information

- Desired outcome: Provision of information through multiple channels before, during and after emergencies that enables community members to make informed decisions about their safety.



Going forward, responder agencies are required to report every six months against the minimum requirements for each function, as set out in the standards. As well as working with responder agencies to maximise the quality and relevance of their reporting, EMV will continue to regularly review and enhance the standards, as required by the Act.

Finding

IGEM considers that this action has been implemented.

¹⁰ emv.vic.gov.au/responsibilities/emergency-management-performance-standards

Priority F: Define a process for understanding and mitigating the consequences for communities that are at high risk of experiencing an emergency, such as those in peri-urban areas, and make sure the process is understood by all involved.

Objective of Priority F:

Consistent and widely understood planning process that supports communities and other stakeholders to implement activities to reduce the consequences of emergencies.

SAP Update #3 details three actions necessary to realise this objective. Action F1 was completed as planned on 31 December 2016. IGEM reported the two other actions as complete in its 2018 Progress Report.

5.4 Theme: Services and systems

Priority G: Formalise an integrated emergency management and service delivery model that facilitates community safety and self-reliance, and supports the people and systems to deliver them in an integrated and coordinated manner.

Objective of Priority G:

An evidence-based all-hazard service model that is relevant, effective and efficient, under-pinned by value-for-money investments in interoperable systems, assets and services. The model is understood by all involved to better coordinate efforts.

SAP Update #3 details eight actions necessary to realise this objective. Action G2 was completed as planned in August 2016. Action G3 was merged with Action H2 and progress is reported under Action H2. Actions G5 and G8 were completed in 2018.

Actions G1 and G7 were closed by EMV in late 2019. Activity for these actions, and the two ongoing actions under this priority – Actions G4 and G6/A5 – is outlined below.

ACTION G1 – REVIEW OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT SECTOR SERVICE DELIVERY MODELS

Review the emergency management sector's current delivery models and methods.

Commencement	2016–17 Q1
Planned completion	30 June 2018
Lead agency	EMV
Status	Closed

IGEM's 2018 Progress Report noted that Action G1 was on hold and overdue.

Action G1 recommenced with the release of SAP Update #3, which contained revised wording for the action developed in consultation with the emergency management sector.

However, in May 2019 SCRC approved placing the action on hold again, until mid-to-late 2019, to enable an internal review of EMV-led SAP actions. EMV advised that the action was in the initial scoping and project plan development stage when placed on hold.

In November 2019 EMV advised SCRC that the action had been closed because its intent was being addressed through business-as-usual activities within EMV. The action therefore does not appear in SAP Update #4.

EMV advised IGEM that the business-as-usual activities through which the action is being addressed are:

- implementation of the emergency management planning reforms (refer to Action E2)
- approval of changes to the State Emergency Response Plan by SCRC in March 2020.

Going forward, the EMV Future Direction Statement 2019–23 outlines that EMV will use data, knowledge and an evidence-based approach to generate lessons that inform strategic decision making and support operations, policy, service design and delivery.

EMV has an ongoing function under the *Emergency Management Act 2013* to lead coordinated investment planning and large-scale strategic projects on behalf of responder agencies, including emergency management planning processes to achieve greater efficiency and effectiveness in the delivery of emergency management services.

Finding

IGEM considers that this action has been partially implemented and notes that no further activity is planned.

ACTION G4 – CAPABILITY MODEL

Progress to an all-emergencies capability model that captures and baselines the state's current capability and capacity, and identifies gaps and opportunities to leverage capability across government, business, and community

Commencement	2015–16 Q1
Planned completion	2016–17 Q3 June 2021 (revised)
Lead agency	EMV
Status	Ongoing (as Action 4.4)

SAP Update #3 contained revised wording for Action G4 developed in consultation with the emergency management sector. The action appears in SAP Update #4 as Action 4.4: Capability Model.

Progress to an all-emergencies capability model that captures and baselines the state's current capability and capacity and identifies gaps and opportunities to leverage capability across government, agencies, business, and community.

Since commencing the action in Q1 of 2015–16, EMV has made good progress in developing an all-emergency capability and capacity model for the Victorian emergency management sector.¹¹

¹¹ The Victorian Preparedness Framework, released in May 2017 and Update #1 released in May 2018, defines capability as 'Our collective ability to reduce the likelihood and consequences of an emergency before, during and after.' The Framework defines capacity as 'The extent to which the core elements (people, resources, governance, systems and processes) of capability can be sustained, before, during and after an emergency.'

The model comprises:

- The Victorian Emergency Management Capability Blueprint 2015–2025, which outlines the current and desired future state of Victoria’s emergency management capability. It aims to have an effective emergency management capability across Victoria that can meet future needs.
- The Victorian Preparedness Goal, which builds on the capability blueprint. It sets out the core capabilities needed to deal with challenges and risks faced by Victorian communities, and how to effectively deliver these core capabilities.
- The Victorian Preparedness Framework, which builds on the preparedness goal. It outlines 21 emergency management core capabilities and the critical tasks necessary to deliver them, describes the steps involved in assessing capability and capacity in the emergency management sector, and provides a methodology on how to develop capability targets.

2018–19 capability assessments

In 2018 the project entered the capability assessment phase. During 2018–19 EMV completed the assessment of the first six capabilities:

- Intelligence and Information Sharing
- Fatality Management
- Impact Assessment
- Health Emergency Response
- Relief Assistance
- Environmental Response.

Capability coordinators¹² and subject matter experts undertook assessments that covered the five core capability elements from the Victorian Preparedness Framework – people, resources, governance, systems and processes.

EMV presented a draft Capability Assessment Executive Report (referred to in IGEM’s 2018 Progress Report as the interim State Preparedness Report) to the Emergency Management Capability and Capacity Steering Committee on 23 May 2019, covering the initial six assessments. EMV intended to present the final Capability Assessment Executive Report to SCRC in July 2019, however the steering committee agreed not to present it in the immediate future, to enable further consideration of the expectations, purpose, and intent of the project.

At its 1 August 2019 meeting the steering committee discussed linking the capability assessment project to other key capability-related initiatives – Emergency Management Planning Reform (Action E2) and the Councils and Emergencies project (Action B1 and SAP Update #4, Action 4.2).

As a result, EMV revised its approach to this action.

In Q4 of 2018–19 EMV advised IGEM that it was considering how to embed preparedness concepts into an ongoing cycle of assurance, strategic investment, and continuous improvement.

Since then, EMV has worked to incorporate capability assessments into the emergency management planning reform process. The assurance checklists developed for state, regional, and municipal emergency management plans (refer to Action E2) include a requirement to assess capability and capacity needs against the Victorian Preparedness Framework. This is designed to ensure that plan developers at all levels:

- consistently apply the framework to identify where emergency management capability can be drawn from to cover unmet needs
- consider including mechanisms to escalate requests for emergency management capacity.

EMV advised that work will be undertaken in Q3 of 2019–20 to rescope elements of this action to better reflect its connection to emergency planning.

¹² Capability coordinators are responsible for the ongoing coordination, development and monitoring of their allocated core capability, as well as leading the assessment with relevant stakeholders in conjunction with the EMV project team.

EMV intends that the Victorian Preparedness Framework will be referenced within the State Emergency Management Plan (SEMP), which is currently being finalised in consultation with the emergency management sector (refer to Action E2). EMV also intends that the SEMF roles and responsibilities appendix¹³ will align the 21 core capabilities against each agency to illustrate how capability and capacity is distributed across the sector, and map all sector activities against each of the critical tasks for each capability.

EMV also advised that a debriefing program is being developed for the 2019–20 fire season and will identify the key capabilities used over this period to be addressed as part of the program. Going forward, the project will likely use a combination of assessing capabilities through actual events, exercising, and self-assessment.

IGEM's 2018 Progress Report noted that EMV had extended the planned completion of this action to June 2021 due to its complexity, the need to further involve stakeholders, and to allow enough time for capability assessments.

EMV has further extended the action's planned completion date to December 2021 and advised IGEM that a process is underway to formalise the timeframe change.

IGEM's Review of impact assessment and consequence management

In August 2019 government released and responded to IGEM's *Review of impact assessment and consequence management*. The review recommended EMV leverage existing impact assessment capacity and capability.

IGEM is monitoring the implementation of this recommendation in accordance with its legislated monitoring function. This monitoring occurs alongside IGEM's ongoing monitoring of SAP implementation.

Finding

IGEM notes progress on this action and that timeframes have been revised. IGEM will revisit in the next progress report.

ACTION G6+A5 – IMPACT ASSESSMENT MODEL

Implement a comprehensive impact assessment model across all hazards and all phases of emergency management that includes processes to collect, analyse, and communicate impact information that strengthens understanding of community diversity and values.

The system will inform decision making, planning processes and activities by communities and the sector, providing opportunities for tailored support and engagement based on community need.

Commencement	2015–16 Q1 (A5) 2015–16 Q2 (G6)
Planned completion	30 June 2019 30 December 2020 (revised)
Lead agency	EMV
Status	Ongoing (as Action 2.1)

¹³ Currently Part 7 of the Emergency Management Manual Victoria, see emv.vic.gov.au/publications/emergency-management-manual-victoria

Impact assessment measures the effects of emergencies on communities through the collection and analysis of impact-related data. It aims to provide timely, accurate, and comprehensive information to responder agencies, departments, agencies, and councils to inform decision-making, and the planning of relief and recovery programs.

Action A5 and Action G6 were merged in Q4 of 2016–17 and appear in SAP Update #4 as Action 2.1.

EMV is progressing this action through the EM-IMPACT Program, which comprises three connected projects:

- **Resilience Dashboard** – This project involves collating community resilience data to create a baseline to contextualise damage assessments after an emergency, inform recovery planning, and help evaluate the outcomes of recovery initiatives. The project links with the broader Victorian Public Service Data Reform Strategy, which aims for better decisions in the public service that are underpinned by data.¹⁴
- **Impact Assessment** – This project involves:
 - developing initial and secondary impact assessment¹⁵ processes and tools for departments, agencies and councils to use in the aftermath of an emergency
 - defining emergency impact metrics – for example, persons displaced, total hospital admissions, communities evacuated, property damage
 - assigning data collection responsibilities and facilitating data collection across the emergency management sector
 - visualising and reporting on the impact assessment data.
- **Needs Assessment** – This project will deliver a process and products for use by responder agencies and other organisations to assess individual and community recovery needs.

EMV produced an overarching program plan for the EM-IMPACT Program in August 2018. The EM-IMPACT Program is overseen by a project control group and supported by two project working groups for the Impact Assessment and Resilience Dashboard projects respectively. An EMV program team leads day-to-day implementation.

During 2018–19 EMV gave presentations to local government and other audiences on the development of the EM-IMPACT Program.

EMV advised that limited activities were undertaken in relation to this action during Q1 and Q2 of 2019–20 due to a lack of resourcing as a result of functional and structural changes within EMV. EMV has since rescheduled a range of project activities and now expects this action to be completed by the end of 2020.

Resilience Dashboard project

EMV is working to develop the Resilience Dashboard for production in coordination with the project working group.

In 2018–19, EMV produced a Resilience Dashboard Framework setting out the dashboard's objectives and outlining how its use will strengthen emergency management practice and decision-making.

¹⁴ vic.gov.au/data-reform-strategy

¹⁵ Initial impact assessment is the collection of high-priority impact data in the first 48 hours of an emergency, typically conducted by responder agency personnel and authorised and coordinated by the Incident Controller.

Secondary impact assessment is an accurate and complete assessment of emergency impacts that contributes to a comprehensive understanding of the damage and loss cause by an emergency. Many emergency management sector organisations, including councils, collect and use secondary impact assessment data for relief and recovery purposes.

According to the framework, the dashboard aims to:

- gather community emergency resilience indicator data in one place
- make community emergency resilience indicator intelligence accessible to the emergency management sector
- aid effective planning for emergency response, relief and recovery
- provide benchmark data for the evaluation of impact assessment and consequence management interventions and initiatives.

EMV and the project working group have also developed a set of resilience themes and a related set of indicator measures for each theme, which will be displayed on the dashboard. The themes are:

- community and cultural capital
- economic capital
- emergency services
- information access
- natural capital
- planning and built environment
- social and community engagement
- social character.

EMV advised that during the first half of 2019 it researched the availability of external resilience data sources and engaged with local government and DHHS end-users on how to best present the resilience information in dashboard displays. Feedback provided to EMV identified a need for more refined and end-user focused tools to best complement on-ground activities.

EMV has yet to move the dashboards into production, with this activity now planned for Q4 of 2019–20.

Impact Assessment project

During 2017–18 EMV developed online prototype tools for initial and secondary impact assessment data collection, reporting and visualisation, and accompanying user guides. The tools were made accessible through Emergency Management Common Operating Picture (EM-COP):

- **The incident impact portal** is the central data collection and reporting tool for all organisations with reporting responsibilities.
- **The impact visualisation tool** displays sector-wide impact information, including the ability to share and analyse impact data.

EMV also developed a data dictionary of key metrics assessed in initial and secondary impact assessments, and allocated responsibility for measuring these to various organisations. The assessment tools and data dictionary were piloted during late 2017 and early 2018.

For the 2018–19 summer season, EMV produced documents for activation of the impact assessment tools, including processes for activating the tools and guidance on the intended use of the tools to collect and visualise initial and secondary impact assessment data. The impact assessment tools were subsequently activated to capture initial impact assessment data for the March 2019 Bunyip and Yinnar complex fires, and the Ballarat fires.

EMV completed further EM-IMPACT Program deliverables during 2018–19, including revision of the portal and visualisation tools, and the integration of damage assessment data from MFB. The visualisation tool allows damage assessment to be viewed at an aggregated and granular level.

In mid-2019 EMV and the Municipal Emergency Management Enhancement Group (MEMEG) developed new secondary impact assessment guidelines and operational documents as part of an initiative to develop an overarching framework for the coordination and delivery of secondary impact assessment across the Victorian local government sector.

Due to the resourcing constraints associated with this project, key activities originally scheduled for Q2 of 2019–20 are now planned for Q4 of 2019–20, including:

- the review and development of impact assessment guidelines to support operationalisation of the tool and underpin processes across the sector
- the development of guidelines on interpreting the functions of the impact assessment model and the available tools.

EMV intends to develop a stakeholder engagement and communication plan, and a schedule to rollout the finished tools and train end-users across the sector on their use.

The impact assessment portal was activated for the 2019–20 Victorian bushfires, utilising assessment data from multiple agencies and organisations. EMV identified several issues and challenges for the impact assessment process, as well as potential improvements to the system to address these challenges.

IGEM's Review of impact assessment and consequence management

In August 2019 government released and responded to IGEM's *Review of impact assessment and consequence management*, which included recommendations in relation to the ongoing EM-IMPACT program.¹⁶

IGEM is monitoring the implementation of these recommendations in accordance with its legislated monitoring function. This monitoring occurs alongside IGEM's ongoing monitoring of SAP implementation.

Finding

IGEM notes progress on this action and that timeframes have been revised. IGEM will revisit in the next progress report.

ACTION G7 – RESEARCH BEST PRACTICE MODEL

Inform the design of services through research and best practice models. Develop and implement guiding principles for use by all agencies and departments to ensure that quality, evidence-based research underpins decisions.

Commencement	2017–18 Q1
Planned completion	TBC
Lead agency	EMV
Status	Closed

IGEM's 2018 Progress Report outlined the work completed by the EMV-led Emergency Management Sector Research Community of Practice¹⁷ on Action G7 during 2017–18. This included scoping and project planning work, and the identification of guiding principles for commissioning, conducting and using research in EMV's existing Emergency Management Research Foundations Strategy.¹⁸

While this action was placed on hold in early 2018 due to resourcing constraints, it recommenced in early 2019. The Research Community of Practice continued to meet irregularly during this period.

In May 2019 SCRC approved placing the action on hold again until mid-to-late 2019, to enable an internal review of EMV-led SAP actions.

¹⁶ igem.vic.gov.au/reports-and-publications/igem-reports/impact-assessment-and-consequence-management and emv.vic.gov.au/publications/government-response-to-the-igem-review-of-impact-assessment-and-consequence-management

¹⁷ emv.vic.gov.au/how-we-help/research/research-networks

¹⁸ emv.vic.gov.au/how-we-help/research/research-foundations-strategy

In November 2019 EMV advised SCRC that the action had been closed because its intent was being addressed through its business-as-usual activities. Therefore, the action does not appear in SAP Update #4.

EMV advised IGEM that it is implementing this action through business-as-usual activities including its establishment of an intelligence and information management unit, and the inclusion of a research and best practice measure in all new starter personal development plans.

Going forward, the EMV Future Direction Statement 2019–23 outlines that EMV will use data, knowledge, and an evidence-based approach to generate lessons that inform strategic decision-making and support operations, policy, service design, and delivery.

Finding

IGEM considers that this action has been partially implemented and notes that no further activity is planned.

Priority H: Enhance systems and platforms to deliver integrated services.

Objective of Priority H:

Improved connectivity and inter-operability between first responders. Improved communication between first responders, support services and the community to improve decision making.



Source: CFA

SAP Update #3 details four actions necessary to realise this objective. Action H4 was completed as planned on 31 December 2017. Action H3 was reported as closed in the 2018 IGEM Progress Report. The remaining two actions, Action H1 and Action H2, are underway and progress is reported below.

ACTION H1 – LONG-TERM COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

Implement the sector's long-term communications plan, with the longer-term aim of moving to a single integrated voice network and sector-wide broadband data service. Review and adapt rollout in line with social, technical, industry and economic environments, and emerging technologies where appropriate.

Commencement	2015–16 Q1
Planned completion	31 December 2017 31 December 2020 (revised)
Lead agency	EMV
Status	Ongoing (as Action 4.5)

Action H1 aims to deliver the Emergency Management Operational Communications (EMOC) Program, which is Victoria's long-term plan to maintain, consolidate and evolve the sector's operational communications¹⁹ capability. The action appears in SAP Update #4 as Action 4.5: Long-term Communications Plan.

Designed to be implemented over a 10 to 15-year period, the EMOC Program aims to move operational communications from their current state – a variety of devices such as pagers, radios and mobile data terminals operating on multiple networks – to smart devices operating on a single Public Safety Mobile Broadband (PSMB) network.

The EMOC Program involves multiple agencies, including AV, CFA, DELWP, ESTA, LSV, MFB, VICSES, Corrections Victoria and Victoria Police. Program governance is provided by the ESLG.

Key elements of the EMOC Program include:

- Digital Radio Upgrade Program
- Public Safety Mobile Broadband
- Supplementary Alerting Service Project
- Mobile Data Network Sole Source Extension Negotiations
- Metropolitan Mobile Radio Extension Program

IGEM's 2018 Progress Report noted a revised timeframe for Action H1 of 31 December 2020. EMV advised this date aligns to the current three-year rolling SAP timeframe. However, EMOC Program implementation will continue well beyond this date with the ultimate scope of the program dependent on the extent of funding that can be secured into the future.

IGEM notes continued progress across the EMOC Program since July 2018 and that plans, and funding are in place to support further progress. The following outlines program highlights for the current reporting period.

¹⁹ Operational communications refers to communications within and between emergency management departments and agencies, non-government organisations and businesses when responding to emergencies and performing business-as-usual activities in the field. See www.emv.vic.gov.au/about-us/current-projects/operational-communications-program

Digital Radio Upgrade Program

EMV completed Stage 1 of the Digital Radio Upgrade Program (DRUP) in August 2019.

Stage 1 transitioned Victoria Police and Corrections Victoria to a secure, encrypted digital radio network, and transitioned VICSES, LSV, and the CFA outer metropolitan brigades to a digital radio network. The program has seen 8000 new digital radios installed at nearly 600 different locations and in over 1000 vehicles for VICSES, LSV, Victoria Police, and Corrections Victoria.

EMV has commenced DRUP Stage 2 to transition AV regional communications to the Regional Mobile Radio (RMR) network, negotiate network enhancements, and upgrade radios. EMV is establishing a program team and program governance arrangements and is working with AV to gather requirements to complete the transition, which is forecast for completion in 2023.

Public Safety Mobile Broadband

The Council of Australian Governments (COAG) endorsed a PSMB Roadmap in December 2018.²⁰ The roadmap envisages a national PSMB communications platform that improves access to information, provides real-time automated situational awareness, and creates a platform for emerging technologies to be integrated into operational practices.

Delivery of the national PSMB program is currently the responsibility of the NSW Telco Authority. EMV advised IGEM the program is approximately 12 months behind schedule due to delays in New South Wales establishing the program management office. Proof of concept trials are planned to commence later in 2020, dependent on funding being secured through COAG.

Supplementary Alerting Service Project

Through this project EMV is procuring a supplementary alerting service app for mobile phone and tablet for use by AV, CFA, and VICSES personnel. The existing pager-based Emergency Alerting Service (EAS) provides good coverage but limited functionality for emergency responders.

EMV oversaw the development of a functional prototype in late 2019 and is currently overseeing integration of the new app with the existing paging network ahead of a planned rollout in mid-2020. Strategic planning and market sounding for a next-generation emergency alerting service to replace the current Emergency Alerting Service (EAS) is planned for the second half of 2020.

Mobile Data Network Contract Extension Negotiations

The Mobile Data Network (MDN) is Victoria's dedicated, secure and purpose-built narrowband data network that provides mission critical dispatch capability to AV. The MDN Deed of Extension, Amendment and Reinstatement was signed by the minister in December 2019, extending this service for AV for a further six years (with an option to extend for a further two years) and securing enhancements to the existing service.²¹



²⁰ telco.nsw.gov.au/content/public-safety-mobile-broadband

²¹ Victoria Police exited use of the MDN in December 2019 and are now using a commercial network service.

Metropolitan Mobile Radio Extension Program

The Metropolitan Mobile Radio (MMR) network is the state's dedicated emergency services secure digital radio network providing mission-critical digital voice services across metropolitan Melbourne and Geelong. The network is used by Victoria Police, MFB, AV, and ESTA.

Since securing an extension to the MMR Service Agreement in December 2017 – to 2025 with an option to extend to 2030 – EMV has led the delivery of a range of technical enhancements to the MMR network under the MMR Extension Program. EMV is in the process of concluding this program, with delivery of remaining outstanding improvements transferring to ESTA.

During 2018–19 EMV continued to support implementation of the EMOC Program, including producing an updated EMOC Program Probity Framework (September 2018) and establishing an EMOC Program trust account to improve financial management practices for operational communications funding allocations.

EMV will engage independent consultants to complete a review of the EMOC Program. The review is due by July 2020 and will inform the development of a medium to long term Emergency Management Technology Strategy for the sector.

Finding

IGEM considers that this action is progressing satisfactorily and will revisit in the next progress report.

ACTION H2 – EM-COP THREE YEAR PLAN

Develop and implement a three year plan to strengthen Emergency Management Common Operating Picture (EM-COP), including improving the interoperability, use, access and consolidation of emergency management information systems and data. The plan should also include the delivery of common principles, standards, definition, systems of work and the agreements required to define the responsibilities for the delivery of data sets.

Commencement	2015–16 Q1
Planned completion	2018–19 Q4 TBC (revised)
Lead agency	EMV
Status	Ongoing (overdue) (as Action 4.6)

EM-COP is an online platform that provides emergency management sector organisations with a common mapping tool, document and information sharing capabilities, communication forums, and a reference library for doctrine and emergency management information. EM-COP also provides the functionality to issue information and warnings to the community using the VicEmergency platform.

Action H2, through which EMV intended to develop and implement a three-year plan to strengthen EM-COP, was placed on hold in Q2 of 2017–18 due to funding and resourcing issues and remained on hold throughout 2018 and 2019.

EMV has yet to set a revised completion date for this action, which was originally planned for completion in Q4 of 2018–19.

SAP Update #4 records that this action is now underway as Action 4.6: EM-COP Three Year Plan. EMV advised that due to the organisational reset of EMV and the introduction of the Emergency Management Technology business unit, a review of strategic planning for EM-COP will be undertaken as part of a broader Emergency Management Technology Sector Strategy to be completed in 2020.

In the meantime, IGEM notes the development of a shorter-term 12 to 24-month roadmap for EM-COP endorsed by the EMC and supported by the then EMV Chief Executive in April 2019. The roadmap identifies high priority areas for improvement to EM-COP and outlines existing technical limitations and constraints with the platform.

EM-COP continues to be maintained by EMV, who advised that a funding request for ongoing maintenance of the platform has been submitted as part of the 2020–21 Victorian State Budget.

Finding

IGEM notes that this action is overdue and will revisit in the next progress report.

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