

SEMC COMMUNIQUE



October 2022

The State Emergency Management Committee (SEMC) meeting met on 13 October 2022.

Presentations

[ServiceWA App – Bushfire Warnings Notification Service – Department of Premier and Cabinet](#)

In a very helpful move to improve community safety, the ServiceWA app will include a push notification and inbox message to a user when they are in a bushfire warning area. The alert is the same as the alerts listed in EmergencyWA. The app uses location services to send the notification and location data is updated frequently to ensure notifications are only issued to those in the impacted area.

There are currently 941,031 registered users. This move is designed to take advantage of the popular engagement of the community with the ServiceWA app. The ServiceWA app has multiple updates with further updates planned as per the below:

- V1.3 included the FuelWatch service
- V1.4 will include the SharkSmart service
- V1.5 will include the Weather Stations service
- V1.6 will include the Bushfire Notification service

[Seasonal Outlook – James Ashley, WA Manager, Bureau of Meteorology Perth](#)

The Bureau of Meteorology (the Bureau) provided a summary of the upcoming high-risk weather season, including the likelihood of bushfires, tropical cyclones, and the impacts of La Nina on national weather.

It was advised that during the 2022-2023 summer period, the Bureau will issue heatwave warnings for two types of heatwaves:

- Severe Heatwaves: are likely to be more challenging for vulnerable people such as older people, particularly those with medical conditions.
- Extreme Heatwaves: are rare. They are a problem for people who do not take precautions to keep cool — even for people who are healthy. People who work or exercise outdoors are at greater risk.

Discussion Items and Outcomes

[State Hazard Plan – Heatwave](#)

The Department of Health (DoH) has completed a comprehensive review of the State Hazard Plan (SHP) for Heatwave which includes the Bureau's Excess Heat Factor (EHF) measurement.

DoH has been working with national counterparts in adopting the Australian Warning System (AWS) for natural hazards. A 'call to action' section has now been included on the Alert, Watch and Act, and Emergency Warning formats for heatwaves.

Roles and responsibilities for response have been updated to include Aboriginal Health Council of Western Australia (WA), Department of Education, Department of Health (Commonwealth), Tourism WA, Western Australian Council of Social Service, and Horizon Power.

The DoH is seeking to adopt the EHF and National Heatwave Framework into the updated SHP – Heatwave for the 2022-23 high threat period.

SEMC Strategic Plan

The SEMC endorsed the 2022-2025 Strategic Plan. The updated plan places a greater emphasis on climate change and community focused outcomes. The objectives of the 2022-2025 Strategic Plan are:

- **Collaborative Leadership:** Strong relationships enable informed decision-making among district and local emergency management leaders.
- **Effective Governance:** A coordinated and collaborative risk and evidence-based approach to emergency management that is trusted by the sector.
- **Capable Sector:** The emergency management sector has accomplished and innovative organisations and is known for its high performance and improvement culture.
- **Capable Community:** Build safer and more resilient community through a local approach to emergency management.
- **Climate Change:** The sector is prepared, willing and responsive to the impacts of climate change on emergency management.

The 2022-25 Strategic Plan is available on the SEMC website at semc.wa.gov.au.

State Level Project Fund

The SEMC endorsed the establishment of a State Level Project Fund to provide SEMC and its subgroups access to \$1.055 million to fund key state-wide projects that are aligned with the objectives of the 2022-25 Strategic Plan.

The fund is established through underspends in the National Disaster Risk Reduction and National Disaster Resilience Programs. As such, all projects must align with the National Disaster Risk Reduction Framework Priorities.

The SEMC will consider governance arrangements for the fund at the December SEMC meeting.

Climate Change Subcommittee

SEMC endorsed the Terms of Reference to establish the Climate Change Subcommittee. The Subcommittee will provide leadership, advice, and oversight on climate change adaption within the emergency management sector and will guide a project to develop a Climate Change Adaptation Plan.

Nick Sloan, WALGA Chief Executive Officer, has been endorsed by SEMC as the Sponsor of the Subcommittee and Rick Curtis, SEMC Executive Officer, has been appointed Chair.

The first Climate Change Subcommittee meeting will be held on Tuesday 22 November 2022.

State Recovery Activity Update

The SEMC received an update on the state recovery, including the experiences and lessons from recovery efforts over the last eighteen months following the devastation of the Wooroloo Bushfire and Tropical Cyclone Seroja. SEMC was advised of key initiatives that are underway, and informed that further information will be provided at the December 2022 meeting.

GENERAL UPDATES

Resilience Strategy Update

The WA Community Disaster Resilience Strategy is progressing, with a draft Strategy will be published for a further 12-week consultation period.

Local Emergency Management Arrangements (LEMA) Review

Consultation on the LEMA Review is complete, with nearly 100 local governments attending workshops. 16 interviews were conducted with hazard management agencies, support agencies, and other organisations, and one written submission was received. The workshop and consultation summaries, including a solutions framework and opportunities for improvement and testing, are expected to be available by mid-December.

The review is on track for the development of an Improvement and Implementation Plan for SEMC approval in mid-2023.

Emergency Management Plans, Policies and Documents

SEMC has the responsibility for the development, maintenance, and review of Emergency Management plans, policies, and documents. To ensure arrangements maintain their relevancy and ability to manage emergencies in WA, they must undergo continuous improvement.

Department of Health and the Department of Fires and Emergency Services (DFES) State Emergency Management Policy Branch has completed a comprehensive review of the State Hazard Plan – Heatwave, which was approved at the October SEMC meeting.

DFES State EM Policy Branch is currently consulting with EM stakeholders regarding State EM Policy 5.12 – Funding for Emergency Responses (consultation closes 13 December 2022). Following EM sector consultation, the State Emergency Management Policy Branch, in collaboration with the Funding for Emergency Responses Working Group, will consider feedback for endorsement by the Response Capability Subcommittee.

For further information on the State Emergency Management Framework consultations, please contact semc.policylegislation@dfes.wa.gov.au.

Grant Program Updates

Coastal and Estuarine Risk Mitigation Program (CERMP)

The Commonwealth Government, through the National Recovery and Resilience Agency (NRRA), allocated \$50 million in funding from the Emergency Response Fund to the CERMP in 2022-23. The SEMC Business Unit coordinated WA applications with high interest across State government agencies and local governments.

Commonwealth Minister for Emergency Management, Senator the Hon Murray Watt, has announced that WA has received \$19.1 million in grant funding across eight projects.

The SEMC BU will contact successful applicants to finalise arrangements.

Disaster Ready Fund (DRF)

The Australian Government will establish the DRF from 1 July 2023. The DRF will provide up to \$200 million annually to reduce disaster risk and build disaster resilience across Australia. Details of the program are being finalised by the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA). The program guidelines are expected to be published in January 2022.

Next meeting of the SEMC

The next meeting of the SEMC will be held on Monday 5 December 2022.

Contact Us

If you have feedback or questions, get in touch at info@semc.wa.gov.au