

Extraordinary Meeting – 7 December 2010 COMMUNIQUE

As a result of the flood conditions across NSW and the demands this has placed on emergency management agencies, the scheduled State Emergency Management Committee (SEMC) meeting for Thursday 9 December 2010 was cancelled.

Instead, an urgent extraordinary meeting of the SEMC was called for Tuesday 7 December 2010. NSW Premier Kristina Keneally attended to receive an operational briefing and ensure all available resources were in place to help affected communities. Updates were provided on current weather forecasts, emergency operations and strategies.

A number of other priority agenda items originally scheduled for the December meeting also were addressed. The remainder of scheduled agenda items will be carried over to the first SEMC meeting in 2011.

The Extraordinary Meeting was chaired by the SEMC Deputy Chair, Commissioner Greg Mullins AFSM.

Review of State Aviation Emergency Sub Plan

At its meeting on June 10 2010 (SEMC 76), the SEMC requested a review of the State Aviation Emergency Sub Plan. The plan details specific arrangements for control and co-ordination of the response to aviation emergencies within the State's boundaries (including coastal waters). The plan was originally endorsed by the SEMC in 1994 and revised in 2004. It was determined to be timely to again review the State Aviation Emergency Sub Plan in light of the Federal Government's recent review of its Aviation Disaster Plan.

The SEOCon, NSW Police Force Deputy Commissioner David Owens APM, presented the findings of the review to the meeting. A number of amendments were recommended to bring the State Sub Plan in line with the national arrangements and also to reflect the current emergency response practices in NSW. The Committee fully endorsed the revised Sub Plan.

Botany Precinct Sub Plan to the State Disaster Plan

The Committee was briefed on the emergency management arrangements in place for the Botany precinct, south of Sydney. The area concerned includes Port Botany, the Botany Industrial Complex, the Sydney International and Domestic Airports and a number of key roads, such as the M5 East, General Holmes Drive and Southern Cross Drive.

Given expected continued development and expansion of the precinct, the SEMC approved the establishment of a Working Group to develop a Sub Plan to the State Disaster Plan and Community Engagement Strategy for the entire Botany Precinct.

The Working Group will also develop recommendations for a future infrastructure planning strategy for the Botany Precinct to accommodate predicted development.

Emergency Management Committees

Following the review of the roles and functions of the SEMC (September 2010 SEMC Meeting), the Emergency Management Committees Working Group presented its recommendations on the functions and membership of District and Local Emergency Management Committees.

The Working Group presented a series of recommendations, which streamlined functions more consistent with current practice at local and district level and clarified which agencies should be members of District and Local Emergency Management Committees

A further recommendation was made to amalgamate the current 18 Emergency Management districts into 11 to more closely align with Department of Premier and Cabinet regional boundaries, while still remaining consistent with the NSW Police Force regional boundaries. The Emergency Management Districts are consequently proposed to be renamed as Emergency Management Regions. The SEMC considered and endorsed all the recommendations of the Working Group and also approved disbanding the Working Group, now that it had completed its Terms of Reference.

Heat Wave Sub Plan

Heat waves have caused more deaths in Australia in the past century than any other natural hazard. The SEMC was updated on a study by the NSW Department of Environment, Climate Change and Water, *Impacts of Climate Change on Natural Hazards Profile*, released in June this year. The study found that current temperature projections suggest increases in mean maximum temperature of one to three degrees by 2050, increasing the severity of heat waves and their frequency.

In light of this, the Committee agreed to the establishment of a Heat Wave Sub Plan Working Group and approved its Terms of Reference and membership. The Working Group will look at ways to improve cross-agency coordination and response to extreme heat events and develop a Heat Wave Sub Plan to the State Disaster Plan.

The next meeting of the State Emergency Management Committee is scheduled for 3 March 2011.

ENDS