

## Meeting 86 – 6 September 2012

# COMMUNIQUE

On 6 September 2012, the State Emergency Management Committee (SEMC) held its third meeting for the year.

The NSW Rural Fire Service Commissioner Shane Fitzsimmons and Mr Barry Hanstrum, NSW Regional Director, Bureau of Meteorology provided a seasonal outlook for the upcoming bush fire season.

The SEMC was briefed on the progress of a number of projects and made some key decisions.

### **State Emergency Plan**

The State Disaster Plan is currently being reviewed and will be renamed the State Emergency Plan (EMPlan) to better describe the its purpose. Amendments to the *State Emergency and Rescue Management Act 1989* are currently before Parliament to facilitate this name change.

The Committee considered a draft of the EMPlan and agreed to it in principle. Work will continue on refining the document with a view to finalising and releasing it shortly.

### **Review of the 2012 NSW Floods**

From late November 2011 to the end of April 2012, NSW experienced one of the most significant and sustained flood events in the State's history. In this period, flooding affected 75 per cent of the state, with a total of 111 Local Government Areas having Natural Disaster Declarations made.

The NSW State Emergency Service Commissioner Murray Kear gave a presentation on the flood events, highlighting the large scale and sustained nature of the events. The flood event was the busiest period in the operational history of the NSW State Emergency Service.

Given that the floods were the first large scale event to impact NSW in a number of years, the Committee conducted a comprehensive review of the response to, and recovery from the floods.

The Committee considered the final report of the review and its recommendations. A number of projects will be initiated as a result of the review to improve the State's response to future major events.

### **State Natural Disaster Risk Assessment**

The Committee noted that the public document "Government, You and What to Do – A Guide to Natural Disasters in NSW" will be released shortly.

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The document will be posted on the Ministry for Police and Emergency Services website at <http://www.mpes.nsw.gov.au>.

### **Kooragang Island Precinct Plan**

The review into the pollution incident at the Orica Australia Pty Ltd ammonium nitrate plant in August 2011 by Mr Brendan O'Reilly recommended a precinct plan be developed for Kooragang Island.

The Deputy State Emergency Operations Controller, Assistant Commissioner Alan Clarke gave the Committee an update on the development of the Kooragang Island Precinct Plan. An exercise will be held to test the plan prior to its finalisation.

### **Major Hazard Facilities Working Group**

The Major Hazard Facilities Working Group has developed a Concept of Operation and Planning Tool to assist in the preparation for and management of incidents at major hazard facilities. These documents are currently being reviewed by District Emergency Management Committees and Local Emergency Management Committees prior to their finalisation.

### **National Emergency Management Activities**

The Committee was updated on work being done at a national level. In particular, the Committee noted that Telstra will commence the Location Based Emergency Alert system in late November 2012 with Vodafone commencing in November 2013.

### **Agency, Functional Area and Working Group Reports**

The Committee was also updated on the activities of emergency service agencies, functional areas and a number of Working Groups.

*The next meeting of the State Emergency Management Committee is scheduled for 6 December 2012.*

**ENDS**