

UPDATED MARCH 2020

Emergency Management Planning Reform

Overview

EMV is leading reform to Victoria's emergency management planning arrangements that apply at state, regional and municipal levels.

The *Emergency Management Legislation Amendment Act 2018* (EMLA Act) was passed through Parliament in August 2018, and seeks to establish an integrated, comprehensive and coordinated framework for emergency management planning.

EMV has established a Program Office to support the implementation of the new arrangements. They will be implemented as phased amendments to the *Emergency Management Act 2013*. The existing arrangements will continue to apply until the relevant amendments take effect. The legislation will take effect in full on 1 December 2020, however it will take some time before all elements are in place and they will continue to evolve over time.

What will change?

- The new framework establishes clearer and more transparent governance arrangements for planning, including formal arrangements at the regional level.
- The Minister's guidelines for preparing emergency management plans will be updated in phases to support each level of planning to reflect the staged introduction of the new arrangements, while also ensuring plans meet the intent of the reform.
- The Emergency Management Manual Victoria (EMMV) will remain in place, with relevant chapters replaced as elements of the reform are implemented.



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- The EMLA Act provides principles to guide us on the journey. The principles focus on collaboration, efficiency and effectiveness, interoperability and integration, the local needs of communities, promoting community resilience and the importance of emergency management planning.
- When changes to municipal planning take effect on 1 December 2020, the municipal emergency resource officer (MERO) will no longer have legislative backing. Instead, the EMLA Act provides for the new role of municipal emergency management officer (MEMO) and formalises the role of municipal recovery manager (MRM). Until this time, the MERO role continues.
- The role of the municipal fire prevention officer (MFPO) will continue under the planning reform, but will no longer include a legislated planning function.
- A new assurance framework will provide oversight and assurance measures to promote consistent, comprehensive and effective planning at all levels. The new framework will be used to assure the SEMP, newly created regional emergency management plans (REMPs), and will replace the current VICSES audit process for municipal emergency management plans (MEMPs).

Timing and deliverables

- To ensure a smooth and orderly transition to the new arrangements, the EMLA Act will be implemented in phases, beginning with the state level.
- Significant operational activity across the 2019–20 fire season has had significant impacts on the Victorian community, agencies and all levels of government.
- Given the compressed timelines to implement the new arrangements, work will progress quickly, and some elements may be developed in parallel.

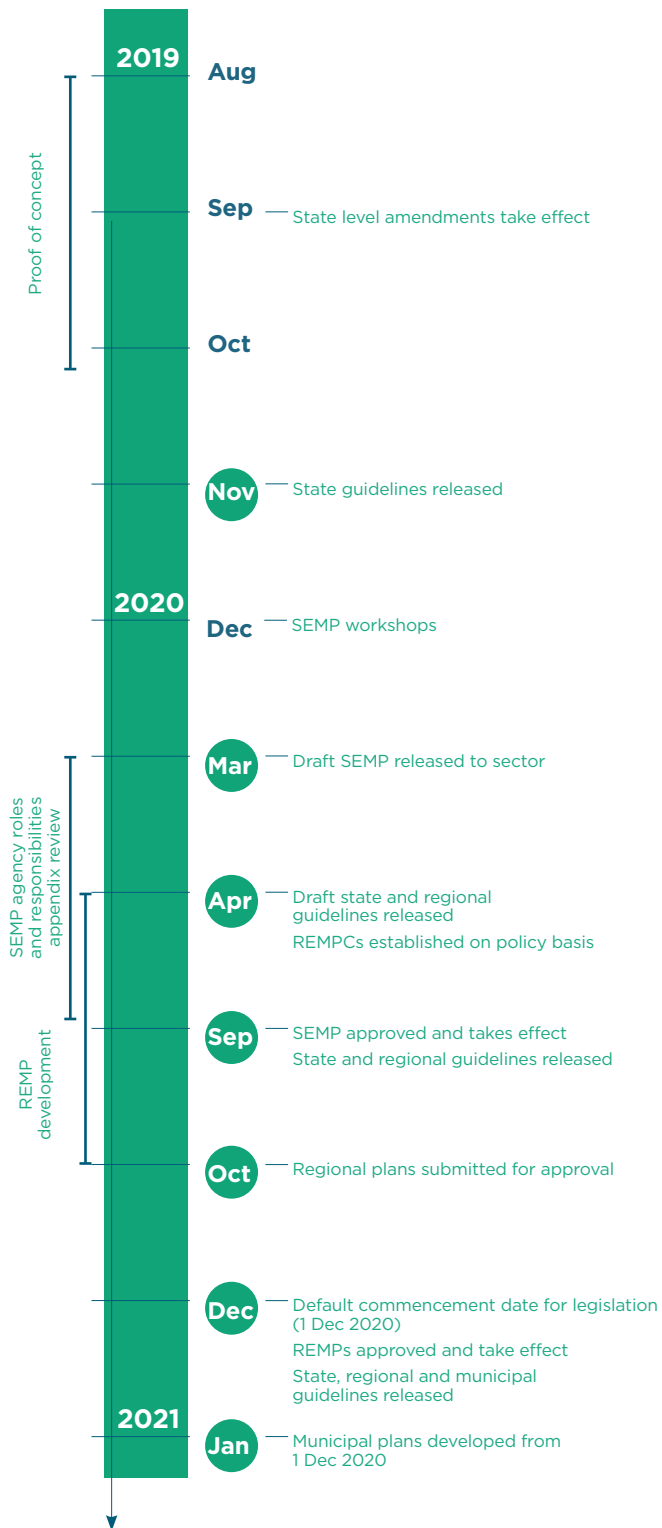
The key deliverables to be in place by 1 December 2020 include:

- Guidelines for preparing the State Emergency Management Plan
- State Emergency Management Plan (SEMP) – replacing the State Emergency Response Plan (SERP) and State Emergency Relief and Recovery Plan (SERRP)
- Guidelines for preparing State and Regional Emergency Management Plans – superseding the previous state guidelines
- Regional emergency management plans (REMPs)
- Draft Guidelines for preparing State, Regional and Municipal Emergency Management Plans – to be issued once the municipal phase takes effect and superseding the previous state and regional guidelines.

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The current MEMPs, including plans for alpine resort management boards, will remain in place until scheduled for review. The intent is for the current three-year cycle to continue, with new MEMPs developed under the updated requirements once due for review post 1 December 2020.

The indicative implementation timeline is:



'Proof of concept' approach

- Three significantly different regions (Barwon South West, Loddon Mallee and Southern Metro) were used in a 'proof of concept' phase to trial the development of a regional plan and refine the guidelines content.
- All eight regions (Fairer Victoria government regions) will then complete their REMP's using a draft version of the Guidelines for preparing State and Regional Emergency Management Plans from April 2020. REMP's will be finalised and submitted to the Emergency Management Commissioner following the release of the SEMP and the finalised guidelines.
- The initial testing with three regions will benefit all REMP preparers by making the final process as efficient as possible to assist with development of the regional plans.
- There will also be an opportunity to pilot the development and assurance of a number of municipal plans within the three proof of concept regions in the second half of 2020.