



Regional Emergency Management Planning

UPDATED JULY 2020

Regional Emergency Management Plan Proof of Concept

Overview

In late 2019, EMV's planning reform team requested three of the previous Regional Emergency Management Planning Committees (REMPCs) participate in a proof of concept for developing a draft Regional Emergency Management Plan (REMP) for their respective regions; Loddon Mallee, Barwon South West and Southern Metro. This draft REMP would, in turn, inform EMV's planning reform team in the development of the regional implementation of emergency management planning reform, including the REMP template.

Each of the three regions considered opportunities that a collaborative approach to planning could provide across an 'all communities - all emergencies' setting. In addition to an assessment of interoperability, efficiency and coordination, considerations included the identification of opportunities for shared training, exercising, community engagement and education. The focus throughout the trial was to explore these opportunities from a regional perspective, ensuring that there was no overlap with municipal or state level arrangements.

Each of the three regions approached the task from a perspective relevant to their situation, environment and identified regional needs. Importantly, the outcomes from each of the groups were developed to different levels of maturity but were not dissimilar in trajectory. As such, proof of concept REMPs identified a range of topics that have been flagged as conversation starters in the new REMP template.

Outcome of the Proof of Concept Phase

The benefits of the proof of concept phase have been realised and, now that IREMPCs for each region are established, EMV has developed a template for each region to use in the development of its REMP.

The proof of concept REMPs were developed without the ability to reference the draft State Emergency Management Plan (SEMP) or draft Ministerial Guidelines for preparing the State and Regional Emergency Management Plans (Guidelines), as both documents were still in development themselves. The draft SEMP, draft guidelines and a structured document template is now provided to support REMP development.

EMV's planning reform team acknowledges the work of the three previous REMPCs in embracing the opportunity to commence early planning and inform the direction of REMPs for all regions.

Synthesised Feedback from the Proof of Concept Debrief, 28 October 2019

This feedback is a summary of a combined debrief following the proof of concept phase and is intended to provide REMP Development Working Groups with learnings that will inform and provide a head-start for the development of their REMPs.

What were the proof of concept region's key observations of the REMP development process?

- The overall REMP needs to be brief – less is more
- It is important to focus on the benefits and opportunities of the planning process instead of the requirement to develop a REMP and the timeline to do it.
- Knowledge gaps exist - the process of writing the draft REMP was informative and instructional for those involved.
- There are a multitude of existing plans already
- Those driving content for the REMP must also engage with reference materials (namely the draft State Emergency Management Plan and draft Regional Guidelines)

- It is useful to have someone with good plan writing skills
- Good preparation put us in good position to develop the Plan; the Working Group needs to develop and work to a work plan that details who does what.
- A focus on consequence and risk management planning was useful, particularly with the identification of emerging risks
- The REMP is a great tool for underpinning the complex bushfire space and is a great example of the opportunities that come from the reform work.

Development process of the proof of concept draft REMP

A REMP Development Working Group was established and worked to a schedule that captured key dates for development, consultation, assurance and approval. A Table of Contents was developed which generated healthy discussion around what to include in and exclude from the REMP.

It was agreed not to write 'another plan' for how to undertake mitigation, response and recovery but instead to support regional integration and collaboration of existing State, regional agency, and municipal plans to provide effective planning and service delivery.

Engaging stakeholders throughout the REMP development process

The chair acknowledged willingness of individuals to participate on proof of concept planning group during a very busy period. Stakeholders were well engaged and genuinely interested in contributing however there were questions raised related to reporting lines and endorsement amongst agencies. This disproves the usual narrative that agency business is a barrier to involvement with the development process. There is appetite for being a part of this opportunity.

If the region was to start the REMP development process again, it would:

- Emphasise that the REMP is a driver of reform, best practice and opportunity.
- Engage with EMV's strategic workshop that educates REMPC members on their remit and knowledge gaps. (EMV will deliver one such workshop for each IREMP shorty).
- Recognise that key stakeholders are under-invested in the detail and struggle to articulate a comprehensive transition plan
- Engage more broadly
- Identify live sources of data that the REMP can reference instead of replicating.

Information gaps in the development of the proof of concept REMP

The information gaps identified by the proof of concept regions have now been addressed and are available for IREMPs in the following documents and resources:

- Emergency Management Planning Resource Library
- draft State Emergency Management Plan
- draft Regional Guidelines, including an overview of plan governance, remit and deliverables.
- Emergency Management Legislation Amendment Act 2018
- A base REMP template, including references to SEMP content to be used by all REMPCs.