



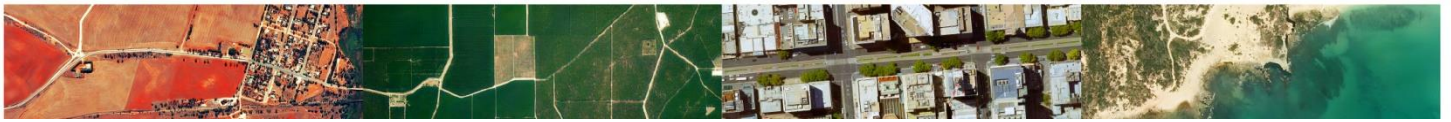
# STATE EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PLAN

Part 3: Guidelines and Frameworks

Annex C: PUBLIC INFORMATION AND WARNINGS

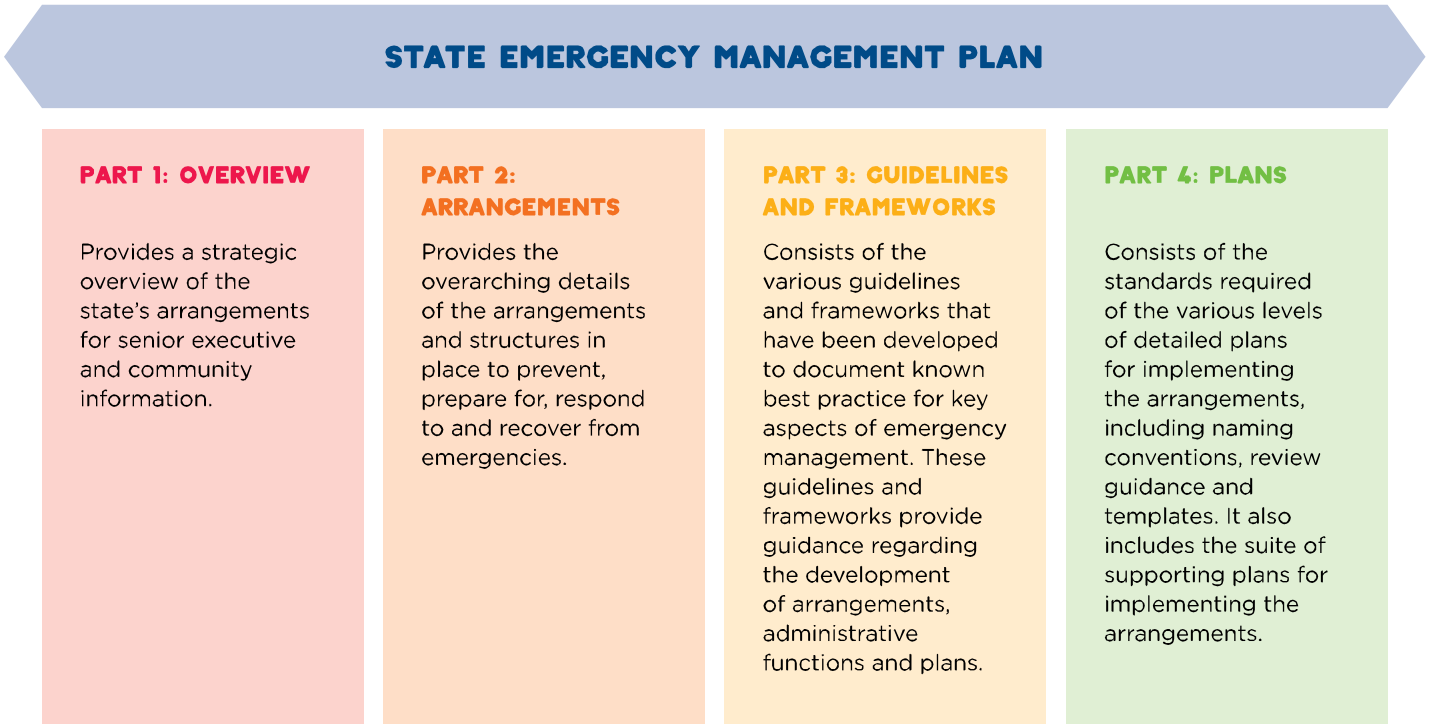


**Government  
of South Australia**



# SEMP STRUCTURE

The State Emergency Management Plan (SEMP) is a four-part plan containing a range of documents that further detail strategies for dealing with emergencies in South Australia. The parts are described in more detail below.



*Figure 1: The South Australian State Emergency Management Plan is actually a series of documents split over 4 Parts with a number of accompanying annexes.*

## SEMP REVIEW

The SEMC shall ensure that the SEMP is subject to a full review every five years. Ongoing updates and continual improvement is to occur in the interim period. Updates will be considered as below.

## SEMP UPDATES

Proposals to amend, review or update the SEMP are managed by the State Emergency Management Committee Secretariat within the Department of Premier and Cabinet.

Inquiries should be directed to:

**State Emergency Management Committee Secretariat**  
Department of Premier and Cabinet  
GPO Box 2434  
ADELAIDE SA 5001  
Email: [SEMP@sa.gov.au](mailto:SEMP@sa.gov.au)

**PUBLIC DOCUMENT**

---

**Contents**

<b>PUBLIC INFORMATION AND WARNINGS</b> .....	<b>5</b>
Legal and Administrative Obligations .....	5
The Core Principles of Public Information and Warnings .....	6
Context of this Document .....	7
Figure 1 National Guidelines .....	9
Community Information and Warning Process .....	10
Terrorism Specific Public Information Arrangements .....	11
Message Dissemination and Supporting Systems .....	11
Table 1: Message Dissemination Methods.....	12
Decision Making and Authorisation / Roles and Responsibilities for Community Information and Warnings .....	14
Message Construction.....	15
Bureau of Meteorology (BOM) Warnings .....	16
Levels of Public Information and Warnings .....	16
Emergency Warnings - Choosing Your Words .....	17
Standard Emergency Warning Signal (SEWS).....	17
Criteria for the use of SEWS .....	17
Decision to use SEWS .....	17
Authority to use SEWS.....	17
Cancellation of the SEWS request .....	18
Emergency Alert.....	18
Use of Emergency Alert by Other Government Agencies .....	18
Warning Message Coordination .....	19
Interactive Voice Response (IVR) .....	19
Agency Emergency Information Call Centres.....	20
State Emergency Information Call Centre Capability (SEICCC).....	20
National Emergency Call Centre Surge Capability (NECCSC) .....	20
Social Media.....	20
Cross Border Warnings .....	21
Consequence Management of Public Information and Warnings.....	21
Impact upon Emergency Triple Zero .....	21
Operational Logs and Recording.....	22

**PUBLIC DOCUMENT**

---

Operational Debriefing .....	22
Figure 2 – National Warning Process.....	23
DOCUMENT CONTROL.....	24

**PUBLIC DOCUMENT**

---

## **PUBLIC INFORMATION AND WARNINGS**

The Control Agency is responsible to ensure that the public is adequately informed and warned so as to support community safety. All agencies also have a responsibility to ensure that public information is provided as part of the normal process of engagement with the community. In an emergency situation, the timeliness of that information becomes even more critical. During a declaration the Public Information Functional Service has a responsibility to ensure that information and appropriate warnings are provided by the Control Agency and to ensure that information gaps are addressed.

Outside of a declaration, SAPOL have the role of providing a coordination function and is responsible for ensuring the control agency is exercising its powers and functions.

To ensure that both of these activities/actions are taking place in a seamless manner, the Public Information Functional Support Group provides an ongoing oversight of all public information activities activated. Full details of the method of operation of the Public Information Functional Support Group are contained in the Public Information Functional Support Group Plan.

The delivery of community emergency information and warnings will be, wherever possible, conducted in consultation with agencies and or functional services to minimise any impact that may arise from the content of the messages. Detailed actions are described in the Public Information Functional Support Group Plan to address this communication flow.

The following is a best practice framework around the issue of public information and warnings with the aim that increased public safety will be achieved by ensuring standardisation in the consideration, construction, dissemination and resultant consequence management of public information and warnings.

To this end, all agencies and individuals responsible for, or involved in, the management of emergency and disaster situations, where public information or warnings are a necessary and expedient tool, are required to comply with the guidance and principles contained within this document.

Public information is part of an ongoing process, utilising a variety of different mediums, in order to educate and inform the public about events and situations that may be of general interest or impact upon their safety in some way. By agencies normalising this information flow to the public, as part of day to day business, communities are more likely to know where to find and more likely to trust specific, threat based, information and act in an appropriate way.

### **Legal and Administrative Obligations**

The following legislative, contractual and national policy obligations relate to the issuing of public warnings:

**PUBLIC DOCUMENT**

---

**National**

Telecommunications Act (Cwlth) 1997

Telecommunications Act (Cwlth) Amendment 2006

Telecommunications Act (Cwlth) IPND Amendment 2009

Telecommunications (Data for Emergency Warning Systems) (Cwlth) Instrument 2009

National Emergency Warning System Contract: Schedules 1-11. Sept 2009

Deed Poll User Agreement – Location Based Number System

Deed Poll User Agreement Schedule A: Notice for Disclosure of IPND Data

Emergency Warnings – Choosing your Words. Edition 2. December 2008. ISBN 1921241691

Link: <http://www.em.gov.au/Emergency-Warnings/Pages/Emergencywarningscommunication.aspx>

National Guidelines and Broadcast Levels Chart for the Broadcast of Emergency Public Warnings ISBN 1 921241268

Australian Emergency Management Arrangements ISBN 978 1 921152 15 3

National Principles for Warnings (MCPPEM approved 2008)

National Telephony Warning System Guidelines V1.3. 05/2012

**State**

Emergency Management Act (SA) 2004

Fire and Emergency Services Act (SA) 2005

**The Core Principles of Public Information and Warnings**

The Core Principles of Public Information and Warnings are;

- Public safety is the highest priority
- The primary responsibility for public information lies with the control agency as per the SEMP
- Information flow should be provided regularly to keep the public informed and should only be restricted in the interests of safety and/or operational security
- Public information and media responses/ releases must undergo all necessary clearances by the responsible agency/ies preparing the response/release
- Agencies aim to coordinate messages to ensure consistency of information being provided
- Agencies should aim to avoid unapproved comment on, or speak on behalf of, another agency's area of responsibility
- All agencies have a responsibility to ensure adequate training and resources to respond to any situation/incident.

The above principles have been adopted from the National Security Public Information Guidelines. Whilst they relate to the release of information on matters relevant to national security, they have equal relevance during any emergency or major incident.

**PUBLIC DOCUMENT**

---

**Context of this Document**

Public Information is one of the 8 Functional Support Groups that perform functional roles that support response and recovery activities during an emergency.

Under the Public Information Functional Support Group (PIFSG), there is an appointed Public Information Functional Support Group Manager (PIFSM).

The PIFSM assists in the effective conduct of response and recovery operations by coordinating the release of official, timely and accurate information to the media and public concerning the disaster/major emergency, including measures being undertaken or planned to respond to such situations.

The primary responsibility for the release of public information rests with the control agency. The coordinating agency or any other agency can assist by amplifying the message (without altering the intent) through their respective communication mediums.

In addition to this the PIFSG will support the release of public information by:

- ensuring the consistent and coordinated free flow of accurate and timely information to the media and the community
- monitoring the preparation and broadcasting of official warnings and public information without taking away the responsibility of the control agency to promulgate information relating to the incident
- monitoring all communication mediums, including social media to identify gaps and/or debunk false or misleading information and,
- providing a single liaison point to ensure accurate, timely and relevant information is provided and disseminated to the community from all organisations or agencies involved in the emergency.

The PIFSG membership comprises media/public affairs representatives from each of the Control Agencies and Functional Support Groups, and other agencies that may be involved in preparedness, response or recovery operations. The PIFSG maintains a contact list of all government media/public affairs representatives.

During any period of major incident or emergency members on the PIFSG contact list may be called upon to assist the Control Agency, Supporting Agency, Functional Support Groups or other agency in releasing or monitoring public information relating to the particular incident or emergency.

Any request by an agency for additional support should be directed through the PIFSM.

These guidelines provide state level protocols required to support a consistent and compliant position on the use of community information and warning systems during emergencies in accordance with nationally agreed guidelines and protocols.

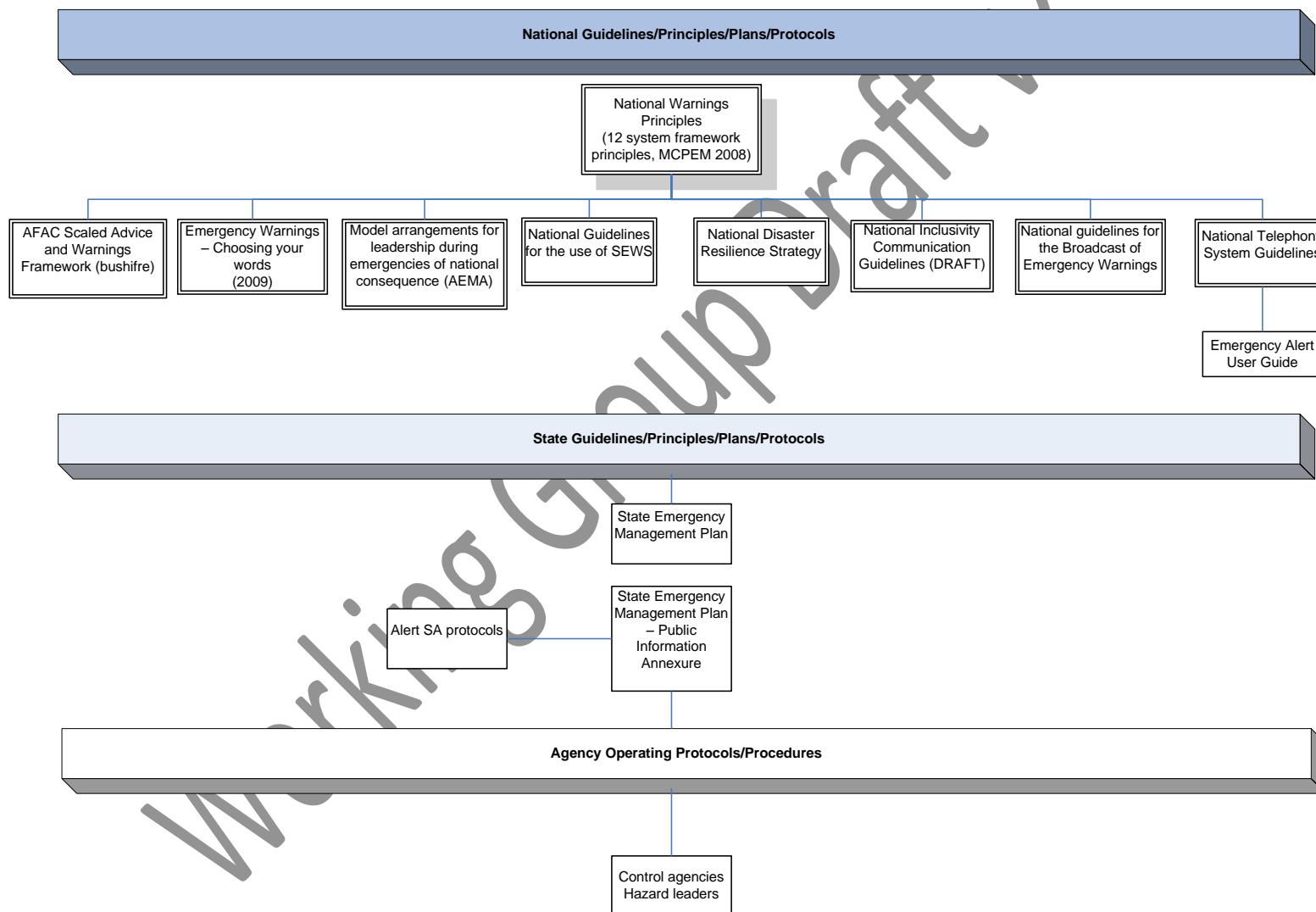
**PUBLIC DOCUMENT**

---

Control agencies will integrate these arrangements into their agency specific emergency management operational practices. Agencies shall ensure that warning procedures are well documented, communicated and understood by all relevant emergency services staff.



**Figure 1 National Guidelines**



**PUBLIC DOCUMENT**

---

## **Community Information and Warning Process**

The twelve principles for dissemination of public information and warnings as approved by the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) in 2008:

1. **Coordinated:** a warning system should avoid duplication of effort where possible and support a shared understanding of the situation among different agencies involved in managing the incident.
2. **Authoritative and accountable:** warnings are to be disseminated on the decision of an authorised person. Authorities should be able to interrogate the system components for later analysis.
3. **Consistent / Standards based:** the information content is coordinated across all of the mechanisms used for warnings. Messages must be consistent across different sources if they are to be believed by the general population. Conflicting messages tend to create uncertainty and will delay responsive action. Any relevant identified standards will underpin the agreed System Framework.
4. **Complete:** message content should include relevant pertinent details, including possibly a direction on the need to consult other sources, presented in a way that is easily and quickly understood by the population. This includes multiple languages in some cases, as well as the use of multi-media for those who are illiterate or people with a disability (eg hearing or vision impaired).
5. **Multi-modal:** warnings are to be disseminated using a variety of delivery mechanisms and in multiple information presentation formats that will, in some circumstances, complement each other to produce a complete picture, with planning and processes to allow for maximum reach to all members of the community and to provide for redundancies in the case of critical infrastructure failure (eg power or telecommunications).
6. **All-hazards:** any emergency warning system developed will be capable of providing warnings, where practicable, for any type of emergency.
7. **Targeted:** messages should be targeted to those communities at risk in order to reduce the complacency that can result from people receiving warnings that do not apply to them – ‘over warning’.
8. **Interoperable:** has coordinated delivery methods capable of operation across jurisdictional borders for issuing warnings.
9. **Accessible and responsive:** capable of responding to and delivering warnings in an environment of demographic, social and technological change. Recognise the

**PUBLIC DOCUMENT**

---

criticality of adopting universal design and access principles, particularly in the development and acquisition of technologies.

10. **Verifiable:** the community is able to verify and authenticate the warnings to reduce incidents of accidental activations and prevent malicious attempts to issue false alerts to a population.
11. **Underpinned by education and awareness raising activities:** the system, any delivery mechanisms that constitute it and the language used in the warning messages it delivers, should be underpinned by appropriate education and awareness raising activities.
12. **Compatible:** with the existing telecommunications networks and infrastructure without adversely impacting on the normal telephone and broadcast system. The system should avoid any adverse operational, technical or commercial implications for the provision of current communications services to consumers and on the integrity of communications networks.

Control Agencies will seek to implement community information and warnings that are consistent with these principles.

### **Terrorism Specific Public Information Arrangements**

During any incident suspected of being terrorist related, the public information spokesperson arrangements will change.

At this time, the only spokespersons for the State Government are the Premier and the Commissioner of Police.

The PIFSM will ensure all agencies are aware of the changes to the public information arrangements. Agencies will be required to work with the Commissioner of Police Media Director and Premiers Media Officer, to ensure that the requirements of the National Counterterrorism Plan are followed.

### **Message Dissemination and Supporting Systems**

Community information and warning methods are utilised by authorities to warn or inform relevant communities of an impending emergency and/or provide them with appropriate information or advice on heightened risk situations.

Control agencies will need to consider the integrated nature of the communication systems and the potential for miscommunication.

The method chosen for issuing information and warnings will vary depending on the nature of the emergency, community demographics, availability of systems and desired action from the community.

**PUBLIC DOCUMENT**

Control agencies should use all possible means to disseminate community emergency information and warnings to ensure, as far as practicable, that individuals within the community have suitable and sufficient information delivered in a timely fashion, regarding emergencies as defined by the State Emergency Management Act 2004 and Fire and Emergency Services Act 2005

The following public information and warning methods are available for use by all control agencies.

It should be noted that the advantages and disadvantages listed are provided as guidance only.

**Table 1: Message Dissemination Methods**

Methods	Advantages	Disadvantages
Emails	Time effective Reviewable by recipient	Availability and currency of database / contact list
Emergency Alert (telephone warning system)	Able to target specific at risk location with warning. Provides a quick alert to a specific community	160 character Short Message Service (SMS) and 5000 for landline. Requires consequence management
Emergency Information Call Centres	Ability for control agencies to provide authoritative information supportive of either an EA or other media campaign	Control agency responsible for providing information content to
Interactive Voice Response (IVR) messages	Ability to manage and satisfy public information request with minimum agency resources.	Time to set up and maintain current and accurate content Likely overflow to available call operators
Leaflets/newsletters	Comprehensive information	Timeliness of distribution Resources for distribution during emergency event
Livestream Video	Person/s in authority can have their complete message broadcast rather than edited by a media outlet – providing a level of comprehensive information. The full conference can be archived allowing the public who may have missed the live version to access it at any time. It is accessible from a desktop or smartphone device with internet access.	Viewing of a Livestreamed event requires a person to have access to an appropriately enabled device. Livestream range is limited by 4G coverage so the conference itself must occur currently within the Adelaide CBD. That is there is no capacity to conduct a Livestreamed press conference from the scene of an incident, however this would not preclude a recorded conference being later downloaded for viewing.

STATE EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PLAN – PART 3 – GUIDELINES AND FRAMEWORKS –  
Annex C – Public Information and Warnings

**PUBLIC DOCUMENT**

Loud hailers	Immediate warning tool that can be used on the ground	Specific target group only
Media releases	Fairly rapid tool to warn media outlets Events likely to be newsworthy and result in rapid promulgation.	Miscommunication Increased media attention and management Availability of media resources Time of day – publishing deadlines etc
Mobile Phone Applications (Apps)	Increasing availability. Ability to push information based on user selected preferences.	Limited by connectivity to data service
Register.Find.Reunite	Provides a self initiated resource for displaced persons to get in contact with relatives etc	Register.Find.Reunite
Neighbourhood/community meetings	Able to provide key safety message to a large group of potentially impacted communities	Timeliness of meeting
Community Outreach Programs	Less confusion in meaning to targeted individuals Positive action response	Resources Time available Risk to personnel
Radio	Local radio warnings well known Carry SEWS signal where required Wide coverage potential	Unknown public access to radio at time of warning Availability of media resources Time of day – publishing deadlines etc
Sirens (if used by control agency)	Local impact	Availability and consistency in application Intent in use and resultant understanding by public may differ May create fear disproportionate to threat
Social media	Accessibility	Moderation of content
Standard Emergency Warning Signal (SEWS)	Alerting sound to increase awareness of broadcasted emergency warnings. Standard signal across all hazards.	Specific criteria for its use.
Television	Carry SEWS signal where required Wide coverage potential	Unknown public access to television at time of warning Time of day – broadcast deadlines etc
Websites	Readily populated and updated content Good accessibility to authoritative information	Unknown public access to internet

**PUBLIC DOCUMENT**

**PUBLIC DOCUMENT**

HF Radio (eg VKS737)	Use of dedicated statewide HF Radio systems that work outside of the normal footprint of other systems	Only reaches those with HF radio
-------------------------	--	----------------------------------

Factors that need to be considered by control agencies when considering the most appropriate method for issuing a warning include:

- Type of emergency, incident or threat
- The community at risk
- Urgency/timeliness of the message
- Impact and threat to lives, property and environment
- Consequences of the message
- Actions required of the community as a result of the message
- Authorisation processes and timescales for this
- Community behaviour and perceptions at the time of issuing the message (including debunking any misinformation or myths surrounding the particular incident)
- Communication mediums that may have been impacted by the emergency, e.g. mobile phone towers, telephone landlines.

In addition to other methods of disseminating public information and warnings, the Control Agency is responsible to ensure that all live televised warnings, or major public information press conferences (e.g. attended by the Premier, State Coordinator and or State Controller) issued for declared emergencies are supported with the use of an accredited Australian Sign Language (Auslan) interpreter. In the event that securing an accredited Auslan interpreter would cause critical delay in the broadcasting of an urgent message to the community the Control Agency will determine if the message should be broadcast without that support.

Control agency plans, hazard plans and support plans will describe the application of these methods as appropriate for the hazard.

It is the responsibility of control agencies to ensure that this is taken into consideration in any community information and warning process.

### **Decision Making and Authorisation / Roles and Responsibilities for Community Information and Warnings**

The Control Agency has the responsibility to issue warnings to the potentially affected community, and to provide advice to other agencies of this notification. Control agencies are responsible for ensuring they have pre-planned triggers, procedures and systems in place to ensure that accurate, timely and relevant warnings can be issued.

The control agency may have arrangements in place with an official warning agency, such as the Bureau of Meteorology (BOM), to issue messages that will be constructed and issued by that official warning agency. During a non declared emergency, SAPOL maintains its coordination role by using the resources and facilities of the Public Information Functional

**PUBLIC DOCUMENT**

---

Support Group to ensure control agencies and support agencies are providing appropriate public information. The PIFSM will be the SAPOL representative for this task.

During a declared emergency the PIFSG Plan will be activated to undertake the same roles and has a responsibility to ensure that information and appropriate warnings are provided by the control agency, and to ensure that any information gaps are addressed. It has an oversight role in ensuring public information and warnings are distributed as appropriate.

The role of the PIFSG is described in *SEMP - Part 3 – Arrangements*. The Public Information Functional Support Group Plan describes its methods of operation in detail and forms part of the *SEMP – Part 4 - Plans*.

To ensure that both of these activities/actions are taking place in a seamless manner, the PIFSG maintains an ongoing oversight of all media public information activities.

During the recovery phase, a Communications Co-ordinator will be appointed to undertake public information duties. To assist in maintaining the continuity in the use of community emergency information and warning systems there will be a handover and ongoing support provided as required from the PIFSG.

### **Message Construction**

The Australian Government defines the purpose of public warnings as achieving two outcomes:

- Inform the community of an impending or current threat
- Promote appropriate responsive actions.

It may not, for example, be appropriate or desirable for a Control Agency to identify information that has the potential to cause widespread panic, for example in the event of a potential or confirmed CBRN incident.

The use of limited information, or indeed, public subterfuge may be appropriate under these circumstances.

Control agencies should also be aware of the definition of an emergency when considering the use of public warning systems.

The issuing of information and warnings to the South Australian community has two outcomes – firstly to inform the community of an impending or imminent threat, and to promote appropriate actions as a result of that threat.

Information and Warnings issued by SA control agencies will be worded to support these two outcomes utilising available information, decision making and risk assessment methods.

## PUBLIC DOCUMENT

---

While control agencies provide information and warnings to the SA community, the overall success of the information and warning is determined by the communities' ability to understand the message and take appropriate actions as a result.

### **Bureau of Meteorology (BOM) Warnings**

Where a BOM warning has been issued, agencies disseminating that warning should use BOM warning terminology precisely.

### **Levels of Public Information and Warnings**

South Australia has adopted the nationally agreed Scaled Advice and Warnings Framework which encompasses:

**Advice** – These messages are to keep people informed and up to date with developments.

**Watch and Act** – These messages support the need for people to be aware of their situation and the circumstances around them and to take action to prepare and protect themselves, their family and neighbours.

**Emergency Warning** – This is calibrated to the highest level of risk to life and aligned with the principle message that the safest option is to not be near the fire or emergency threat. The standard emergency warning signal (SEWS) would be played with this message.

To assist the public in recognising the various warning types used, and their associated meanings, the following colours should be used.

- Advice – Blue
- Watch & Act – Yellow
- Emergency Warning – Red

The following colour formulas are provided as a guide:

- Blue (H:160 S:240 B:120 R: 0 G: 0 B: 255)
- Yellow (H:60 S:100 B:100 R:255 G:255 B:0)
- Red (H:0 S:240 B:120 R:255 G:0 B:0)

Colours should be used by the issuing agency to appropriately identify the warning type in any image or graphic device used to support their publication e.g. web based media.

Control agencies will ensure their community information and warnings align with this framework.

Control agencies should also include in their operational policies the need to down-grade or close off the warnings cycle once the threat has passed or reduced. Advice or Watch and Act messages can support this requirement.



**PUBLIC DOCUMENT**

---

**Emergency Warnings - Choosing Your Words**

Control agencies will endeavour to comply with the guiding principles contained within the 'Emergency Management Australia - Choosing your Words' when drafting and issuing messages.

**Standard Emergency Warning Signal (SEWS)**

The Standard Emergency Warning Signal (SEWS) is a distinctive audio sound designed to alert radio/television listeners/viewers that an official emergency warning is about to be made concerning an actual or imminent emergency that has the potential to affect them.

**Criteria for the use of SEWS**

The SEWS is only to be used in threatening circumstances when it is necessary for the population to take some action to reduce potential loss to life or property. Care must be taken to maintain the status and effectiveness of the signal by limiting its use to significant events as determined by the Control Agency in close consultation with the Coordinating Agency. These may include:

- Major urban or rural fires
- Extreme weather
- Major flooding and/or dam burst
- Major earthquakes
- Major hazardous material emergencies
- Major pollution emergencies
- Human caused events
- Tsunami
- Terrorism.

**Decision to use SEWS**

The decision to use SEWS and to broadcast / transmit an emergency warning rests with the relevant Control Agency who will advise the Coordinating Agency (SAPOL) as soon as practicable.

Control agencies should consider the use of SEWS when developing operational policies for issuing community information and warnings and integrate the use of SEWS into their warnings frameworks.

**Authority to use SEWS**

The SEWS is only to be used under strict instruction. It can only be broadcast when approved by a State Controller, who is also authorised under s17 of the Act.

**PUBLIC DOCUMENT**

---

**Cancellation of the SEWS request**

The cancellation of a SEWS request will be undertaken by the State Controller of the respective Control Agency. Telephone and facsimile message or telephone and electronic communication to the relevant radio/television station and stakeholders will be used to confirm a cancellation.

**Emergency Alert**

Emergency Alert can assist to provide a quick warning delivered via Short Message Service (SMS) or landline messaging to members of the community. The Emergency Alert warning system can be utilised to directly inform the community of emergencies based on a geographical area within a relatively short timeframe.

The warnings are geographically defined to ensure they target the intended communities in the most effective and timely manner. It should not be used as the sole means of communicating with an affected or potentially affected community as there are limitations to the length of content for the message and the time taken to disseminate a message.

To ensure the Emergency Alert warnings reach the appropriate community members, control agencies must consider as a minimum a geographical boundary determined by available information, potential impacts and appropriate risk assessment.

Overall governance of the Emergency Alert system and its use is through the Alert SA State Protocol.

Control agency operational procedures for use of the Emergency Alert system will be embedded into control agency policy and procedures.

To ensure that inappropriate use of the system does not lead to complacency, there is a strict criterion for when an Emergency Alert can be issued.

- a purpose connected with persons being alerted to an emergency or a likely emergency; and
- for the purpose of reasonable testing of whether, in the event of an emergency occurring, persons would be able to be alerted to that emergency ('permitted purposes').

**Use of Emergency Alert by Other Government Agencies**

Agencies that may need to use the Emergency Alert System are the identified Control Agencies in the SEMP. These include Agencies where access to the EA system is not provided under law and include, but is not limited to;

- Department of Primary Industries and Regions
- SA Health
- Department for Planning, Transport and Infrastructure
- Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources

**PUBLIC DOCUMENT**

---

- Safe Work SA

Triggers for the use of Emergency Alert by other Government agencies are the same as those that would be applied to any event that may be considered as an Identified Major Incident (IMI), Major Emergency (ME) or Disaster, where the use of Emergency Alert is considered as an option to warn people about an emergency situation as defined by the Emergency Management Act 2004.

Control agencies without direct access to Emergency Alert are able to request its use via the Commissioner of Police in his/her capacity as the State Coordinator under the State Emergency Management Plan. The final decision as to whether the incident meets the legislative criteria for issuing the message using the Emergency Alert system rests with the State Coordinator.

Requests for the use of Emergency Alert by hazard leaders will be managed on a case by case basis.

If an Emergency Alert was issued by SAPOL (as the coordinating agency) on behalf of the control agency, then the requesting agency would also be asked to meet the associated costs for issuing the message and any supporting systems or consequence management strategies put in place such as supporting information call centres and usage charges of the system.

### **Warning Message Coordination**

In the event that multiple Emergency Alert warnings are simultaneously required by the one Control Agency, the relevant Control Agency will decide the prioritisation of the messages.

In the event that multiple agencies require the use of Emergency Alert simultaneously the State Coordinator will provide direction and decision making in the prioritisation of the messages.

### **Interactive Voice Response (IVR)**

IVR is an automated telephone answering system which provides recorded messages relating to an incident and allows callers to be directed to further information or a call centre operator. IVR information may be used for significant incidents in its own right or as an adjunct to the Emergency Alert system.

IVR messages should support the intended community emergency information and warnings process and not contradict any aspect of the information already provided. Overall governance of IVR system and its use is through the Alert SA State Protocol.

Agencies are responsible for developing and publishing appropriate operational policy and procedure to define and support the use of IVR including content management and supporting systems during incidents.

**PUBLIC DOCUMENT**

---

**Agency Emergency Information Call Centres**

Emergency information call centres such as the CFS Bushfire Information Line and SES response and information line work to support the incoming calls and enquiries for information from the community.

These calls may be as a direct result of issuing a warning to the community or a request as a result of an increased risk to the community.

Control agencies are responsible for maintenance, testing and training of their individual agency emergency information call centre.

**State Emergency Information Call Centre Capability (SEICCC)**

The State Emergency Information Call Centre Capability is a call centre capability able to provide emergency information to the community relating to the response and recovery phases of major incidents. This service can be activated where the control agency or the State Recovery Office (SRO) is not able to manage the incoming call volumes from the community. These calls may be, but not exclusively, prompted by the sending of an Emergency Alert message.

Control agencies and the SRO should ensure agreements are in place to support the SEICCC and the necessary information flows to enable information provision to the SA community through this method.

**National Emergency Call Centre Surge Capability (NECCSC)**

In the event of an emergency where the Control Agency's call centre capability and that of State Emergency Information Call Centre Capability reaches peak capacity and is unable to meet demand, or it can be reasonably anticipated that such circumstances are likely to occur, assistance can be requested from the Commonwealth to access the NECCSC.

All requests for assistance must be made via the Chief Executive, SA Fire and Emergency Services Commission whom is the State point of contact for the NECCSC.

**Social Media**

Control agencies may decide to utilise social media channels to support the dissemination of their community information and warnings. The use of social media in disseminating community information and warnings will be documented by control agencies with consideration of multi agency incidents and the management of multiple messages.

When considering the use of social media, recognition of existing topics or hashtags (# tags) that are being used needs to be included and strategies for multi agency response considered. The Control Agency, in conjunction with the PIFSGM, is responsible for determining the hashtag for use with Twitter during large scale, multiple agency events to ensure consistency of messages is maintained.

**PUBLIC DOCUMENT**

---

Control agencies are responsible for the distribution of their messages and supporting agencies should seek to support dissemination of community information and warnings through the redistribution of information whilst maintaining the originators ownership for that message.

The Alert SA website (<http://www.alert.sa.gov.au/>) is provided by the CEIWS program board to bring together the social media feeds from SAPOL, MFS, CFS and SES as well as RSS feeds from the BOM.

Other Agencies are able to request the placement of “ad-hoc” feeds on the Alert SA Website by contacting the CEIWS Program Senior Project Officer.

**Cross Border Warnings**

For emergencies impacting or crossing State borders, Control Agencies will be responsible for engaging with other impacted State/s to discuss cross-border issues and warning requirements. These arrangements should mirror existing cross-border arrangements.

Control agency operating procedures for community information and warnings are to reflect these cross-border considerations.

The overriding principle is that if the emergency is life threatening the warning should be issued without delay. Where practical, the Control Agency issuing the warning should advise the other State/s that the emergency may be or is impacting on that State and that the warning issued has cross-border coverage.

**Consequence Management of Public Information and Warnings**

Control agencies are responsible for ensuring that appropriate information should be made available at alternate information sites (radio, web, information call centres etc) prior to the release of the warning to reduce the reliance on telephony information services.

It is recognised that on some occasions, community information and warnings will need to be issued without the establishment of supporting systems and/or notifications to other potentially impacted agencies. In the event that an emergency warning is required to be issued immediately and it has not been possible to ensure consultation has occurred with any other agency likely to be impacted prior to it being issued, control agencies will commit to ensuring that the situation will be communicated to these other agencies as soon as possible after issuing.

**Impact upon Emergency Triple Zero**

Control Agencies issuing an emergency warning are responsible for ensuring all state emergency call centres have been advised to allow the agency to monitor the impact upon

**PUBLIC DOCUMENT**

---

Emergency Triple Zero (000) and their respective public information lines and call centres operators.

To minimise the potential impact created by members of the public dialling Emergency Triple Zero (000) seeking information by rather than to report or access emergency assistance, control agencies should ensure that Emergency Warnings clearly identify their public information lines in the construction of the messages to the community.

Interactive Voice Response (IVR) lines provide pre-recorded incident information to a caller (as well as the option to speak to someone), will further assist the agency call centres to manage potentially large call volumes during emergency events, whilst minimising the impact on call centre operators.

**Operational Logs and Recording**

All control agencies are to ensure that they maintain accurate records of all decision-making activities, processes and messages issued to the community. These arrangements should be documented within control agency operational procedures.

**Operational Debriefing**

At the end of the emergency, a post emergency assessment and debriefing process is also to be undertaken by the relevant control agencies to routinely review the effectiveness of community information warning systems, including, but not limited to:

- the degree to which the warnings resulted in intended changes in behaviour
- the appropriateness of information provided
- the effectiveness of warning delivery methods, and
- the cost benefit and cost efficiency of the warning system and/or methods used

This process may form part of a broader debrief for an incident.

PUBLIC DOCUMENT

Figure 2 – National Warning Process



**PUBLIC DOCUMENT**

---

**DOCUMENT CONTROL**

Version	1.1
Classification/DLM	PUBLIC, I2, A2
Authority	State Emergency Management Committee pursuant to Section 9(1)(b) of the <i>Emergency Management Act 2004</i>
Managed & maintained by	Department of the Premier and Cabinet
Issued	16 December 2016
Review date	30 May 2018