SOUTH AUSTRALIAN EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

ASSURANCE FRAMEWORK

Government
of South Australia

STATE EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PLAN (SEMP)		
Part 1 Arrangements	Part 2 Strategies, Guidelines and Frameworks	Part 3 Supporting Plans
Governance arrangements, roles and responsibilities, and structures in place to reduce risk from hazards, and to plan and prepare for, respond to and recover from emergencies.	Various strategies, guidelines and frameworks that support the state's emergency management arrangements.	Required plans that support the state's emergency management arrangements (including hazard risk reduction plans, capability plans, control agency plans, functional support group plans, zone emergency management plans and operations manuals).

Figure 1: The SEMP is a series of documents split over 3 parts with accompanying annexes. This framework sits under Part 2 of the SEMP.

The South Australian Emergency Management Assurance Framework can be found at: https://www.dpc.sa.gov.au/responsibilities/security-emergency-and-recovery-management/state-emergency-management-plan

The Soth Australian Emergency Management Assurance Framework is reviewed every two years

The custodian of the South Australian Emergency Management Assurance Framework is the State Emergency Management Committee (SEMC) who may delegate this responsibility to a sub-committee of SEMC. At the time of publication, the Emergency Management Assurance Sub-Committee and the Department of the Premier and Cabinet has been delegated this responsibility.

AUTHORISATION

All emergency management arrangements in South Australia are governed by the Emergency Management Act 2004 (the Act).

The State Emergency Management Plan (SEMP) is prepared under Section 9(1)(b) of the Act to guide the management of all emergencies. It is a function of the State Emergency Management Committee (SEMC) to prepare and keep the SEMP under review, and to ensure arrangements reflect best practice.

PURPOSE

Continually improve the arrangements based on learnings from responding to, managing, and assisting with recovery from an emergency.

This framework will also assist agencies with emergency management responsibilities to:

- understand the residual risks of emergency management capabilities across the state.

- identify opportunities between agencies to build and share capability and capacity and improve overall performance in emergency management activities.

- consistently and regularly monitor the efficiency and effectiveness of emergency management capability.

- provide an effective method of applying lessons identified from emergency management activities.

- identify additional gaps and risks within emergency management capability and capacity.

SCOPE AND AUDIENCE

The South Australian Emergency Management Assurance Framework is developed for all agencies and organisations with responsibilities under the SEMP to assure their emergency management plans. It sets out the requirements for agencies to meet their assurance responsibilities. It is a high-level strategic document and does not include operational level details for undertaking assurance activities.

GOVERNANCE

The governance arrangements in place for the South Australian Emergency Management Assurance Framework and assurance activities are described in the below table.

Group	Assurance responsibilities
Participating agencies	Participating agencies undertake assurance activities according to this framework and the assurance plan. They are responsible for reporting on their assurance activities to EMAS. Where assurance activities are expected to exceed the required timeline by 6 months, the agency head must seek approval from SEMC through their CEO for the delay. Any significant delays in assurance activities will lead to a revised timeline for plan reviewing and peer review.
Emergency Management Assurance Subcommittee (EMAS)	EMAS is a subcommittee of SEMC that provides advice and implements emergency management assurance planning. EMAS has primary responsibility for overseeing the development, application and functioning of the Assurance Framework.
State Emergency Management Committee (SEMC)	SEMC monitors the capacity of agencies and other groups with functions under the SEMP to properly carry out those functions. EMAS reports on its activities to SEMC and recommends further opportunities for improvement.

Emergency Management Cabinet Committee (EMCC)	EMCC receives reports on emergency management assurance activities that require escalation regarding capability and capacity within emergency management in South Australia.

SOUTH AUSTRALIAN EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT ASSURANCE OUTCOMES

The *South Australian Emergency Management Assurance Outcomes* (Assurance Outcomes) (https://www.dpc.sa.gov.au/responsibilities/security-emergency-and-recovery-management/state-emergency-management-plan) sets out the outcomes that the SA Emergency Management sector (the sector) has collectively agreed are what all agencies involved in emergency management are seeking to achieve. Assurance activities will measure performance against these outcomes and indicate the sector's progress and maturity towards achieving them.

| Themes	Outcomes
Building capability and capacity	The State has the capability to deliver on its emergency management arrangements
	Resources are prioritised and shared across agencies to increase capacity
Managing risks	Risk is managed to eliminate or reduce the likelihood or consequence of emergencies
	The community is empowered to learn about their risks and risk reduction strategies
Community engagement	Agencies build resilience and trust in the community by proactively engaging and sharing information with them
	Community engagement is inclusive and caters to the diverse nature of the community
Planning	Plans are developed, maintained, relevant and actionable
	Agencies are aware of all plans and responsibilities as mandated in the SEMP
Lessons management	Lessons are shared, communicated and actioned
	Lessons management identifies practices that are working well and opportunities for improvement
Collaboration and connectiveness	Agencies work together cooperatively to deliver better outcomes for the State
	Decision making is informed by connecting with diverse stakeholders

ASSURANCE ACTIVITIES AND LEVELS

Assurance activities are the actions that agencies undertake to provide confidence to the South Australian Government that there are effective systems and processes in place to prevent, prepare for, respond to and recover from emergency events. These activities also help identify and address gaps in emergency management planning and help agencies better understand the risks and vulnerabilities in their arrangements. The below table describes the assurance activities that agencies and organisations with responsibilities under the SEMP will undertake.

Activity	Description	Frequency
Level 1		
Debrief	Debriefs (both hot debriefs and after event debriefs) allow individuals to share what they felt worked well and which areas require improvement during or directly following an incident or event.	Following each exercise and event
Attestation	Self-assessments are undertaken by agencies to evaluate their own capability and maturity. It helps agencies measure how effective their current plans are, how they align with their goals and strategies, and identify areas needing improvement.	Annual
Level 2		
Peer review	Peer reviews involve stakeholders assessing the quality of an agency's emergency management planning against a matrix.	Every 3 years
Exercises	A controlled activity to test, practice and evaluate existing emergency management processes, plans or capabilities in place and identify areas for improvement.	A minimum of every 2 years if not activated for event *(Control, Capability and Functional Support Group plans)*
Level 3		
Cross sector capability review	Independent cross sector reviews that assess whether the sector has the capability to meet future goals or challenges associated with a plan. It identifies strengths and gaps in reaching these future goals as well as strategies for overcoming challenges.	On an as needs basis
Audit	An audit is conducted by someone independent of the agency to assess whether the information presented in an agency's plan accurately reflects the position of that agency. An audit may also measure an agency's maturity in achieving the Assurance Outcomes.	On an as needs basis
Inquiry	Generally established with a statutory authority to provide Parliament with an independent review of the performance of government agencies.	As requested

Assurance activities are undertaken at various levels in order to measure and assess capability, capacity and performance, as shown in Figure 2 below.

Figure 2: Assurance activities and level of assurance
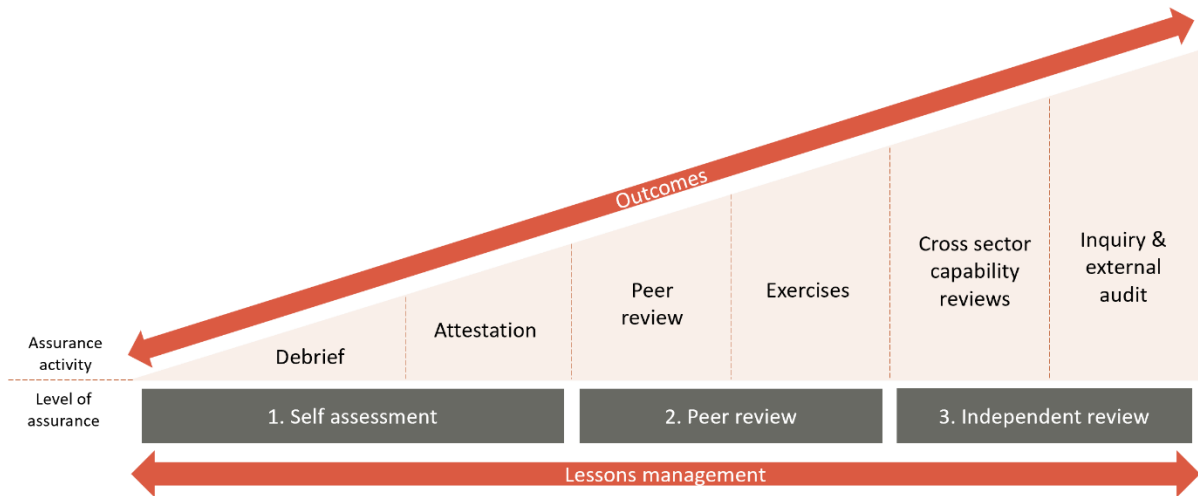
Assurance levels recognise that a tiered approach is necessary to provide differing levels of independence, scope and complexity to assurance activities, as well as the level of assurance provided to SEMC and EMCC as a result. The below table defines the three different levels that South Australian assurance activities fit in.

Level	Activity	Description
1	**Self-Assessment**	Assurance activities involve an agency reporting on their own emergency management capability or capacity and identifying the current effectiveness of their emergency planning and activities. Due to the absence of independent enquiry, analysis or source material, these activities provide the lowest level of assurance.
2	**Peer Review**	Assurance activities involve one or more agencies reviewing elements of an agency's emergency management capability. It provides additional insights to the strengths and opportunities for improvement for delivering emergency management services as outlined in the SEMP. Peer reviews offer a higher level of assurance and understanding of an agency's emergency management capabilities compared to Level 1.
3	**Independent Review**	Level 3 assurance activities are inquiries and reviews conducted by independent reviewers or auditors. They provide independent and objective assurance regarding an agency or the sector's ability to act on its emergency management arrangements. Level 3 assurance activities are designed to provide a greater level of assurance and understanding about an agency or the sector's capability but require a greater resourcing effort and cost.

REPORTING ARRANGEMENTS

Establishing lines of reporting is essential for efficient and effective implementation of the Assurance Framework. These lines of reporting outline the responsibilities and accountabilities for all involved in completing and reporting assurance activities. Without these lines, assurance activities can become lost or not actioned. Details for the lines of reporting is described in the below table.

Level	Lines of reporting
1 & 2	Participating agencies are responsible for reporting their assurance activities to EMAS (through DPC SERM). Results from these activities flow upward from EMAS to aggregate and report to SEMC and EMCC. EMAS assess the reports and makes any additional recommendations for assurance by SEMC. SEMC will have oversight of each agency and their level of assurance maturity, providing more transparency over the status of EM planning, enabling SEMC to achieve their legislative responsibility of providing oversight and leadership of emergency management planning.
3	The independent reviewer will obtain information from relevant agencies or groups as required and then collate and interpret the results. These results are then reported to the relevant agencies and to EMAS to interpret and report to SEMC and EMCC.

GLOSSARY

Term	Description
Assurance	Part of governance in which management provides accurate and current information to the stakeholders about the efficiency and effectiveness of its policies and operations, and the status of its compliance with their statutory obligations.
Capability	The collective ability to reduce the likelihood and consequences of an emergency before, during and after.
Capacity	The extent to which the core elements of capability can be sustained before, during and after an emergency.
Emergency Management	A range of measures to manage risks to communities and the environment. It involves the development and maintenance of arrangements to prevent or mitigate, prepare for, respond to, and recover from emergencies and disasters.
Governance	Establishment of policies, and continuous monitoring of their proper implementation, by the members of the governing body of an organisation. It includes the mechanisms required to balance the powers of the members (i.e. accountability), and their primary duty of enhancing the prosperity and viability of the organisation.
Risk	The effect of uncertainty on objectives. For emergency risk assessments, the effect is usually a negative deviation from the expected and is characterised by hazardous events and the likelihoods of particular consequences.
Participating agency	An agency with a role or responsibility under the SEMP to deliver on emergency management arrangements.
State Emergency Management Committee	Strategic planning committee established by the Emergency Management Act 2004 responsible for the state's emergency management arrangements.

ACRONYMS

Term	Definition
EMAS	Emergency Management Assurance Subcommittee
EMCC	Emergency Management Cabinet Committee
SEMC	State Emergency Management Committee
SEMP	State Emergency management Plan

DOCUMENT CONTROL

Version	Approved Version 2.0	8
Classification	Official	
Authority	State Emergency Management Committee pursuant to Section 9(1)(b) of the *Emergency Management Act 2004* (SA)	
Managed and maintained by	Department of the Premier and Cabinet	
Review cycle	Biennial	
Issued	February 2024	
Scheduled review date	February 2026	
Disclaimer	Users should ensure that they have the current version before taking action based on this plan	

Version	Date	Summary of change
1	18 May 2017	Version 1
1.1	7 July 2017	Minor amendments accepted
2.0	February 2024	Version 2.0