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COMMUNIQUÉ

Australia-New Zealand Emergency Management Committee Meeting

8 September 2020

A meeting of the Australia-New Zealand Emergency Management Committee (the Committee) was held on 8 September 2020 via teleconference. Representatives were present from the Commonwealth, state and territory governments, the New Zealand government and the Australian Local Government Association.

SUMMARY OF OUTCOMES

[Update on New Zealand's Emergency Management System Reform including establishment of National Emergency Management Agency](#)

The Committee received an update on improvements to New Zealand's Emergency Management System, in particular the establishment in December 2019 of a new National Emergency Management Agency. It was noted that since its inception National Emergency Management Agency has almost constantly been in response or recovery mode dealing with multiple flooding, drought, volcanic eruption and COVID-19.

[Review of the Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements](#)

The Committee has agreed to trial a new streamlined process for activating community recovery assistance under the Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements during the 2020-21 summer season. The new process will ensure that assistance can be activated in a more appropriate and timely manner following a disaster.

[Australian Fire Danger Rating System](#)

The Committee noted progress in finalising the design of the Australian Fire Danger Rating System based on the findings of social research and extensive consultation within jurisdictions. The Committee noted that the protracted 2019/20 fire season and ongoing impacts of COVID-19 had delayed some components of the Australian Fire Danger Rating System program with the degree of impact on implementation currently being assessed.

[National Heatwave Warning Framework](#)

The Committee confirmed the development of a National Heatwave Warning Framework remains a priority, and requires ongoing jurisdictional commitment and contributions to ensure its quality delivery.

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Register.Find.Reunite

The Committee members noted the outcomes of the *Register.Find.Reunite Capability Review*, and agreed to the establishment of a working group to manage improvements to, and determine a way forward for, the Register.Find.Reunite capability.

Update on Mental Health Support for Emergency Services Workers

The Committee members discussed the need for a collaborative approach to sustaining the mental health of Australia's emergency services workers. Members committed to participating in an environmental scan and consultation/stakeholder engagement process to inform the development of Australia's first mental health national action plan for emergency services workers, to lower suicide rates and improve mental health outcomes among Australia's current and former emergency services workers.

Community Outcomes and Recovery Sub-committee (CORS) Update and National Recovery Framework

The Committee agreed to the interim National Recovery Framework developed by the Community Outcomes and Recovery Sub-committee and agreed to its use as a guidance document for any national recovery interventions, should they be required in the 2020/2021 disaster season.

This agreement will remain in place until 30 September 2021, or until it is finalised and reflects relevant agreed recommendations from the *Royal Commission into National Natural Disaster Arrangements* and other jurisdictional reviews and inquiries.

This interim National Recovery Framework provides principle guidance and outlines the extant arrangements for national recovery governance and coordination arrangements for disaster events of national consequence.

Its intended audience includes senior officials and emergency management officials, and recovery practitioners nationally

Mitigation and Risk Sub-committee (MaRS) Update

The Committee noted an update on the work of the Mitigation and Risk Sub-committee, and the delivery of projects on insurance and resilience investment.

New South Wales term as Chair of the Mitigation and Risk Sub-committee concluded on 30 June 2020. The Committee endorsed Commissioner Darren Klemm AFSM, Western Australian Department of Fire and Emergency Services as the Chair of the Sub-committee for a period of two years.

Time-limited Working Groups

The Committee noted the updates provided by the Sendai Framework and National Action Plan time-limited working groups.

