



COMMUNIQUÉ

Ministerial Emergency Management Intersessional meeting

22 May 2020

A Ministerial Emergency Management Intersessional meeting of the Ministerial Council for Police and Emergency Management was held on 22 May 2020. Emergency management representatives from all Australian, state and territory governments, and the Australian Local Government Association, participated.

The Tasmanian Minister for Police and Emergency Management, the Hon Mark Shelton MP chaired the meeting.

The meeting focused on nationally significant issues arising from the 2019-20 bushfires and subsequent directives of the Council of Australian Governments (COAG), which met on 13 March 2020. Ministers also discussed updates provided on the *Royal Commission into Natural Disaster Arrangements*, the *CSIRO Report on Climate and Disaster Resilience*, and other government reviews into the 2019-20 bushfires.

SUMMARY OF DECISIONS

National Bushfire Recovery Plan

Members noted COAG's directive to implement a National Bushfire Recovery Plan and the work of the National Bushfire Recovery Agency to develop the Plan. Members are committed through their agencies to work with the National Bushfire Recovery Agency to develop and implement the Plan.

Review of Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA) and Betterment Provision

Members agreed to review the DRFA to ensure that assistance under the program is fair and equitable for Australians living in different states and territories, and to streamline the processes for activating Category C and D recovery assistance. Members also agreed to develop national guidance on how the DRFA can be used to make damaged infrastructure more resilient through the rebuilding/restoration process.



Improving the resilience of the National Telecommunications Network

Members noted ongoing collaborations with the telecommunications industry to improve telecommunications network resilience.

National Action Plan for the Implementation of the *National Risk Reduction Framework* and *National Partnership Agreement on Disaster Risk Reduction*

Members endorsed the first National Action Plan to implement the *National Disaster Risk Reduction Framework*, and agreed to finalise implementation plans for the *National Partnership Agreement on Disaster Risk Reduction*, enabling work to commence on priority initiatives.

Mental health support for Emergency Services workers

Ministers discussed initiatives being undertaken to further a collaborative national effort to lower the suicide rates and improve mental health outcomes for emergency services workers, including volunteers and retired and former workers. Ministers reaffirmed their commitment to advancing positive mental health outcomes for these critical members of the Australian community through the development of a national action plan.