

Terms of Reference: 2023-24 Severe Weather Season Review

Purpose

Section 16C of the Disaster Management Act 2003 outlines the following functions for the Office of the Inspector-General of Emergency Management, including:

- to regularly review and assess the effectiveness of disaster management by the State, including the State disaster management plan and its implementation;
- to regularly review and assess the effectiveness of disaster management by district groups and local groups, including district and local disaster management plans;
- to regularly review and assess cooperation between entities responsible for disaster management in the State, including whether the disaster management systems and procedures employed by those entities are compatible and consistent;
- to identify opportunities for cooperative partnerships to improve disaster management outcomes;
- to report to, and advise, the Minister about issues relating to the functions above; to make all necessary inquiries to fulfil the functions above

Approach

That the Inspector-General of Emergency Management conduct a review, in accordance with these functions, for the significant weather events, relating to the 2023-24 Severe Weather Season, commencing 1 October 2023 through 30 April 2024, including associated bushfires, severe storms, rainfall, flooding, tropical cyclones and tropical lows, noting that the review may consider any further significant weather events that may occur prior to the conclusion of the traditional severe weather season.

The Office of the Inspector-General of Emergency Management (the Office) will assess:

1. the effectiveness of preparedness, response, and transitional arrangements and activities undertaken by Queensland Government (including Government Owned Corporations and Statutory Bodies), relevant Local Governments, Commonwealth and other agencies engaged in operations in all of the Local Government Areas;
2. the timing and effectiveness of new Australian Warning System (AWS) messaging that were issued to the community during the events;
3. the communities' awareness of their local disaster management plans and the anticipated and or expected activities of the State's disaster management arrangements (locally led, regionally coordinated, State facilitated, and Commonwealth supported activities); and

4. the coordination and deployment of personnel and equipment.

The Office will work closely with relevant Local Governments, local, State and Commonwealth government agencies and entities, including the Bureau of Meteorology, and any other relevant organisations, agencies or entities.

The Review will identify enhancements to inform and ensure continuous improvement in Queensland disaster management arrangements. The scope of these enhancements will be bound by the Standard for Disaster Management in Queensland and other relevant doctrine.

In conducting the Review, the Office will engage with impacted communities and consider the views of community members, relevant agencies and operational staff, and also be informed by any relevant expert advice.

In conducting the Review, the Office will also have regard to other relevant reviews that have been conducted, or which may have been announced or commenced which are relevant to this review, including for example: reviews by other governments, coronial inquiries, and commissions of inquiry.

Report

In providing its report, the Inspector-General of Emergency Management is to provide an interim report into any or all of the matters raised through undertaking the review. The interim report is to be provided by 30 July 2024.

The final Review Report, including executive summary, is to be provided by 29 September 2024.