



STATE HEATWAVE SUB PLAN

**A SUB PLAN OF THE
NSW STATE DISASTER PLAN**

NOVEMBER, 2011

AUTHORISATION

The Heatwave Sub Plan has been prepared as a Sub Plan to the New South Wales State Disaster Plan (Displan) to detail the control and coordination arrangements for the preparation for, response to, and immediate recovery from a Heatwave.

This plan has been prepared by the State Emergency Operations Controller in consultation with the State Emergency Management Committee.

The Sub Plan is authorised in accordance with the provisions of the *State Emergency & Rescue Management Act 1989* (as amended).

**Chair
State Emergency Management Committee**

AMENDMENT LIST

Proposals for amendment or addition to the contents of the NSW State Heatwave Sub Plan are to be forwarded to:

The Executive Officer
State Emergency Management Committee
PO Box 6976
Silverwater, NSW 2128

Amendments promulgated are to be certified in the undermentioned sheet when entered.

Amendment		Entered	
Number	Date	Signature	Date
Original Document	November, 2011		

DISTRIBUTION

This Sub Plan is to be distributed in electronic format and is maintained on the State Emergency Management Committee website at www.emergency.nsw.gov.au.

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DEFINITIONS

Casualty

A person injured as the result of an incident or emergency.

Command

Means the direction of members and resources of an agency/organisation in the performance of the agency/organisation's roles and tasks (Source: SERM Act). Authority to command is established by legislation or by agreement with the agency/organisation. Command relates to agencies/organisations only, and operates vertically within the agency/organisation.

Combat Agency

Means the agency identified in the State Disaster Plan (Displan) as the agency primarily responsible for controlling the response to a particular emergency. (Source: SERM Act).

Control

Means the overall direction of the activities, agencies or individuals concerned. (Source: SERM Act). Control operates horizontally across all agencies/organisations, functions and individuals. Situations are controlled.

Coordination

Means the bringing together of agencies and individuals to ensure effective emergency or rescue management, but does not include the control of agencies and individuals by direction. (Source: SERM Act)

Displan

Means the New South Wales State Disaster Plan. (Source: SERM Act)

District Emergency Operations Controller (DEOCON)

Means the Region Commander of Police appointed by the Commissioner of Police, as the District Emergency Operations Controller for the Emergency Management District. (Source: SERM Act)

Emergency

Means an emergency due to the actual or imminent occurrence (such as fire, flood, storm, earthquake, explosion, accident, epidemic or warlike action) which:

- (a) endangers, or threatens to endanger, the safety or health of persons or animals in the State; or
- (b) destroys or damages, or threatens to destroy or damage, any property in the State, being an emergency which requires a significant and coordinated response.

For the purposes of the definition of emergency, property in the State includes any part of the environment of the State. Accordingly, a reference in the Act to:

- (a) threats or danger to property includes a reference to threats or danger to the environment, and
- (b) the protection of property includes a reference to the protection of the environment. (Source: SERM Act)

Emergency Operations Centre (EOC)

Means a centre established at State, District or Local level as a centre of communication and as a centre for the coordination of operations and support during an emergency. (Source: SERM Act)

Emergency Operations Controller (EOCON)

The member of the NSW Police Force who has been appointed as Local, District or State Emergency Operations Controller. (Source: SERM Act)

Functional Area

A category of services involved in preparations for an emergency, including the following:

- Agriculture and Animal Services
- Communication Services
- Energy & Utility Services
- Engineering Services
- Environmental Services
- Health Services
- Public Information Services
- Transport Services
- Welfare Services

Functional Area Coordinator (FAC)

in this plan means the nominated coordinator of a Functional Area, tasked to coordinate the provision of Functional Area support and resources for emergency response and recovery operations, who, by agreement of Participating and Supporting Organisations within the Functional Area, has the authority to commit the resources of those organisations. (Source: Displan)

Heatwave

In this plan, a Heatwave is considered as a set of meteorological conditions that is described by the Bureau of Meteorology as a Heatwave which may affect a part or the whole of the state. Generally this is a sequence of 3 days of abnormally hot conditions. Thresholds of heatwave will vary depending on the area of impact.

Incident

A localised event, either accidental or deliberate, which may result in death, injury or damage to persons or property, and requires a normal response by a combat agency.

Liaison Officer (LO)

In this plan means a person, nominated or appointed by an organisation or functional area, to represent that organisation or functional area at a control centre, emergency operations centre or coordination centre, a liaison officer maintains communications with and conveys directions/requests to their organisation or functional area, and provides advice on the status, capabilities, actions and requirements of their organisation or functional area.

Public Education

In this plan means public awareness through increasing knowledge to enable people to understand the risk and the necessary actions to take to mitigate the effects of the risk. Public education is delivered prior to the event.

Public Information

In this plan means the information and advice provided to the to the public during an emergency to inform them of the response actions being taken and the specific actions that they should take, given the circumstances, to protect themselves.

Recovery

In relation to an emergency includes the process of returning an affected community to its proper level of functioning after an emergency. (Source: SERM Act)

Response

In relation to an emergency includes the process of combating an emergency and of providing immediate relief for persons affected by an emergency. (Source: SERM Act)

State Emergency Operations Controller (SEOCN)

Means the person appointed by the Governor, on the recommendation of the Minister, responsible, in the event of an emergency which affects more than one District, for controlling the allocation of resources in response to the emergency. The State Emergency Operations Controller is to establish and control a State Emergency Operations Centre. (Source: SERM Act)

State Emergency Recovery Controller (SERCON)

Means the person appointed by the Minister for Emergency Services and responsible for controlling the recovery from the emergency. (Source: SERM Act).

ABBREVIATIONS

BoM	Bureau of Meteorology
DEOCON	District Emergency Operations Controller
Deputy SEOCON	Deputy State Emergency Operations Controller
Displan	NSW State Disaster Plan
EOC	Emergency Operations Centre
EOCON	Emergency Operations Controller
FAC	Functional Area Coordinator
LO	Liaison Officer
PIFAC	Public Information Functional Area Coordinator
SEMC	State Emergency Management Committee
SEOC	State Emergency Operations Centre
SEOCON	State Emergency Operations Controller
SERCON	State Emergency Recovery Controller
SERM Act	State Emergency & Rescue Management Act 1989
SOP	Standing Operating Procedures

BACKGROUND

Heatwaves are estimated to cause more deaths in Australia than any other natural hazard except disease. Research suggests that during the period from the 1800s to the 1990s, heatwaves have been responsible for at least 4,287 fatalities in Australia.¹

Human vulnerability to heat-related illness is determined by physiological, behavioural, environmental and social factors. While the entire community is at some risk of heat-related illness, certain groups are especially vulnerable. These include:

- The elderly;
- Infants and young children;
- People with chronic medical problems or taking certain medications;
- People who are socially isolated; and
- People who work outdoors.

Recent events, both in Australia and internationally, have demonstrated the severe impacts of heatwaves on the health of people. For example, the 2003 European heatwave is estimated to have caused 15,000 deaths in France alone². In Victoria, 374 deaths were attributed to the prolonged period of hot weather in January 2009³, with an estimated 500 deaths in both Adelaide and Melbourne combined.

The 2009 heatwave in southern Australia was exceptional — producing severe, extensive and prolonged heat exposure, with extreme heat stress and a bushfire disaster. While the 2009 Heatwave was well predicted in the 3–7 day lead up, the seasonal forecasts did not anticipate such severe conditions⁴. Many emergency management services relied on responsive solutions to the emerging impacts caused by the heatwave. Communication and cross-agency cooperation generally lagged behind the demands from the overwhelming situations that emerged during the heatwave.

Heatwaves impact on human health, infrastructure, transport, emergency management, and primary industries. Whilst NSW has well established systems in place to counter potential problems, any disruptions to utilities or transport could exacerbate the impact that heatwaves could have on human health.

The preservation of human health will be the primary focus of heatwave response.

¹ Coates, L. (1996). An Overview of Fatalities from some Natural Hazards in Australia, proceedings of the Conference on Natural Disaster Reduction 1996, Surfers Paradise.

² Fouillet A, Rey G, Laurent F, et al. Excess mortality related to the August 2003 heat wave in France. *Int Arch Occup Environ Health* 2006; 80: 16-24.

³ January 2009 heatwave in Victoria: an assessment of health impacts. State of Victoria 2009.

⁴ Executive summary – of National Climate Change Adaptation Research Facility (NCCARF) - Impacts and adaptation response of infrastructure and communities to Heatwaves: the southern Australian experience of 2009

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Sub Plan has been prepared at the direction of the State Emergency Management Committee (SEMC) as a State level Sub-Plan of the State Disaster Plan.
- 1.2 SEOCON is the designated combat agency for Heatwave emergencies in accordance with the State Disaster Plan (Displan).
- 1.3 A Heatwave will generally require a multi-agency coordinated response utilising specialised resources from agencies, including emergency services and functional areas.
- 1.4 District and Local plans for Heatwave are not required as the principles contained herein and the roles and responsibilities do not change.
- 1.5 **Comment - 1**
Australian Bureau of Meteorology advises that they may not have the capability to issue Heatwave warnings during the 2011-12 summer season.

2. AIM

- 2.1 The aim of this Sub Plan is to detail the arrangements for the control and coordination of, the preparation for, response to and immediate recovery from Heatwave events within NSW to reduce the risk or counter the effects on the community.

3. SCOPE

- 3.1 It is accepted that many agencies will be implementing, both before and during heatwaves, procedures to address the consequences of elevated or extreme temperature days based on their own specific trigger points. This Sub Plan details the coordination arrangements that will apply for Heatwave emergencies or periods of extreme heat that may occur in NSW.
- 3.2 This Sub Plan operates within the context of the following plans and arrangements:
- NSW State Disaster Plan (Displan)
 - State Bushfire Plan
 - NSW Functional Area Supporting Plans
 - Agriculture & Animal Services
 - Energy & Utility Services
 - Engineering Services
 - Environmental Service
 - Health Services
 - Transport Services
 - Welfare Services
 - District Disaster Plans, and
 - Local Disaster Plans

4. PREPARATION

4.1 Public Education

Education to the public regarding actions that they may be able to take to prevent, reduce or deal with the effects of severe heat on people will be led by NSW Health.

4.2 Training

Training of members and staff of agencies in response activities related to Heatwave rests with the relevant agency.

4.3 Review and Exercise

The SEOCON will ensure that a review of this document is conducted after any activation of this Plan or at least every five years after the date of approval. The arrangements in this plan are to be exercised at least on a bi-annual basis or at the direction of the SEOCON.

5. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Roles and Responsibilities listed below may be additional to any listed in Displan.

The following functional areas are required to produce Concepts of Operations, to outline and detail the arrangements and strategies which they will implement to achieve the Roles and Responsibilities listed hereunder:

- Health Services Functional Area
- Energy and Utility Services Functional Area, and
- Transport Services Functional Area.

Accordingly, the Concepts of Operations which have been produced by those functional areas are included as Annexes to this Plan

5.1 SEOCON

- Coordinate Heatwave operations and, as necessary, control the allocation of resources in accordance with Displan arrangements.
- Activate this Sub Plan.
- Activate SEOC as necessary.
- Coordinate, via the SEOC, the distribution of Heatwave warnings and other related information to SEMC members and other key stakeholders, including to the public and education services, during Heatwave events.
- Coordinate the allocation of support resources during Heatwave events.

5.2 SEOC

- Inform SEMC Members, agencies and Districts of activation of this plan.
- Monitor the situation.
- Ensure SEOCON is updated regularly.
- Collect and disseminate information and intelligence in relation to the operation.

5.3 DEOCON(s) (in affected Districts)

- Activate the DEOC as necessary.
- Coordinate Initial Impact Assessments.
- Coordinate activities in response to consequences of Heatwave affecting the District.
- Provide regular information/situation reports to SEOC.

5.4 Bureau of Meteorology

- Issue Heatwave warnings when capability exists. (See Comment - 1 at Par 1.5).
- Provide forecasts and briefings regarding the meteorological conditions.

5.5 Fire and Rescue NSW

- Maintain a heightened readiness,
- Assist as requested by SEOC or DEOCON.
- Provide regular information/situation reports to SEOC.

5.6 Rural Fire Service

- Maintain a heightened readiness.
- Assist as requested by SEOC or DEOCON.
- Provide regular information/situation reports to SEOC.

5.7 Ambulance Service of NSW

- Maintain a heightened readiness as per Health Heatwave Concepts of Operations.
- Assist as requested by SEOC or DEOCON.
- Provide regular information/situation reports to SEOC.

5.8 Agriculture and Animal Services Functional Area

- Distribute warnings and other relevant advice to Participating and Supporting Organisations and other associated stakeholders
- Provide advice in relation to the welfare of affected animals.
- Assist as requested.
- Provide regular information/situation reports to SEOC.

5.9 Energy & Utility Services Functional Area

- Distribute warnings and other relevant advice to Participating and Supporting Organisations and other associated stakeholders.
- Coordinate energy and utility services in accordance with the Energy & Utility Functional Area Supporting Plan and Energy & Utility Services Heatwave Concepts of Operations.
- Assist as requested by SEOC or DEOCON.
- Provide regular information/situation reports to SEOC.

5.10 Engineering Services Functional Area

- Distribute warnings and other relevant advice to Participating and Supporting Organisations and other associated stakeholders.
- Provide engineering support and technical advice to agencies engaged in the response to Heatwave operations.
- Assist as requested by SEOC or DEOCON.
- Provide regular information/situation reports to SEOC.

5.11 Health Services Functional Area

- Advise SEOCON whenever NSW Health issues Heat Health Alerts.
- Distribute warnings and other relevant advice to Participating and Supporting Organisations and other associated stakeholders.
- Coordinate the health response to Heatwaves and other extreme temperature events in accordance with HEALTHPLAN and Health Services Heatwave Concepts of Operations.
- Assist as requested by SEOCON or DEOCON.
- Provide regular information/situation reports to SEOC.

5.12 Public Information Services Functional Area

- Distribute warnings and other relevant advice to Participating and Supporting Organisations and other associated stakeholders including the public and education services.
- Coordinate the distribution of warnings, information and other advice to the community in accordance with the Public Information Services Functional Area Supporting Plan.
- Assist as requested by SEOCON or DEOCON.
- Provide regular information/situation reports to SEOC.

5.13 Transport Services Functional Area

- Distribute warnings and other relevant advice to Participating and Supporting Organisations and other associated stakeholders.
- Coordinate transport services in accordance with the Transport Services Functional Area Supporting Plan per Transport Services Heatwave Concepts of Operations.
- Assist as requested by SEOCON or DEOCON.
- Provide regular information/situation reports to SEOC.

5.14 Welfare Services Functional Area

- Distribute warnings and other relevant advice to Participating and Supporting Organisations.
- Assist Health Services to provide health advice to vulnerable groups including to facilities which are regulated or coordinated by Dept of Family and Community Services.
- Assist as requested by SEOCON or DEOCON.
- Provide regular information/situation reports to SEOC.

5.15 Local Government

- Distribute warnings and other relevant advice to local stakeholders.
- Develop and implement strategies to minimise heat stress and the affects of Heatwaves on vulnerable populations.
- Assist as requested by SEOCON or DEOCON.
- Provide regular information/situation reports to DEOCON.

6. RESPONSE

6.1 Activation

- SEOCON will activate this plan when advice is received from the Bureau of Meteorology that a Heatwave is imminent or predicted. (See Comment - 1 at Par 1.5)
- SEOCON may consider activation of this plan when advice is received that the Chief Health Officer is issuing Heat Health Alerts or whenever otherwise considered necessary.
- SEOCON will activate the SEOC to the appropriate level and advise the Minister for Police & Emergency Services, SEMC members and DEOCONs in the affected areas of the situation.
- DEOCON(s) of the emergency management district(s) in which the Heatwave is predicted or occurring is/are responsible for activating the District Disaster Plan, coordinating district emergency operations, opening the District EOC, as necessary, and deploying district resources as required.
- SEOC disseminates operational information to all emergency services and functional areas as directed by the SEOCON.
- Health Services will arrange for community health information to be disseminated as appropriate.

During activation of this plan, the dissemination of information in relation to the Heatwave including warnings, health advice and other messages to stakeholders and the public will be coordinated through the SEOC and the Public Information Functional Area Coordinator to maximise the distribution and consistency of messages from all involved emergency management agencies, functions and stakeholders.

- **Stand Down**

The SEOCON will:

- Consider Stand Down when it has been determined that coordination of the emergency response operations is no longer required.
- Advise decision to Stand Down and cessation of emergency response operations to participating utility, other EOCs and the community.
- SEOCON will hand over recovery operation to the State Emergency Recovery Controller (SERCON) as appropriate.
- Arrange for stakeholders, including the community, to be advised of the cessation of emergency operations and any transition to recovery arrangements.
- Arrange for multi agency debrief(s) to review response operations.

6.2 Control

NSW Health will control the Health response to heatwave in accordance with the arrangements in Healthplan.

The DEOCON is in control of district level operations unless control is exercised by the SEOCON or otherwise as outlined in this Plan or Displan.

6.3 Liaison

Emergency service organisations and Functional Areas are to provide liaison officers by agreement when requested to the:

- SEOC;
- DEOC.

7. ADMINISTRATION AND LOGISTICS

7.1 Logistic Support

Emergency service organisations and functional areas are responsible for their own logistic support in the first instance. Additional support may be coordinated by the SEOC/DEOC.

7.2 Financial Responsibilities

Agencies are responsible for meeting their own costs for both training and emergency operations.

Expenditure of funds by emergency service organisations or Functional Areas during emergency response and/or recovery operations is to be met in the first instance by the providers of resources from within their normal operating budgets. Should expenditure be of such a magnitude as to prevent the providing agencies/functional areas from continuing their normal operations for the remainder of the financial year, NSW Treasury may provide supplementation, however Departments cannot be guaranteed that funding will be provided.

8. RECOVERY

The arrangements for recovery operations in New South Wales are outlined in the NSW State Displan and further described in the State Recovery Plan.

The New South Wales Recovery Plan outlines the strategic intent, responsibilities, authorities and the mechanisms for disaster recovery in New South Wales. The Recovery Plan, together with the guidelines, allow for the development and implementation of a planned recovery following a natural disaster or other emergency.

During a Heatwave, the SEOCON will liaise with the SERCON to discuss recovery arrangements as detailed in the State Recovery Plan.

9. ANNEXES

9.1 **ANNEX 1 - Concept of Operations – Health Services**

9.2 **ANNEX 2 - Concept of Operations - Energy and Utility Services**

9.3 **ANNEX 3 - Concept of Operations - Transport Services**

9.4 **ANNEX 4 – Flow Charts**

ANNEX 1 - Concept of Operations - Health Services

Health Services Functional Area CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS

AIM

To outline the Health Services Functional Area strategies for coordinating and supporting Health services during a heatwave event in NSW.

PREVENTION AND PREPAREDNESS

Australian summers are becoming hotter and dryer, reflected by increasing water restrictions, high fire danger alerts and an increased expectation placed on health services to educate the public on serious health hazards during hot summer periods.

Heatwaves are often seen as a passive threat unlike fire or flood, but heatwaves are known to cause increased deaths as they can affect anybody, and certain circumstances and behaviours can make people more susceptible to heatwaves.

Heatwaves rarely occur in isolation. Infrastructure failure or other natural emergencies can add another level of demand on a community and services. For example, power outages will impact on people's ability to run air-conditioners; bushfires will increase vulnerability by reducing air quality; and public transport disruptions will hinder people's ability to reach a cooler location thus creating an increased impact on Health Services.

NSW Health provides advice to the public before and during heatwaves through a range of outlets including electronic/web based and electronic materials. In addition, NSW Health provides Heat Health Alerts and a range of community advice prior to summer to prepare the community for the impending hot weather. In addition, Local Health Districts review their capacity to maintain services during periods of extreme heat where increased presentation may create added stress on the system.

RESPONSE & RECOVERY

1. The Health Functional Area Coordinator (HSFAC) will advise the SEOCON whenever NSW Health considers issuing a Heat Health Alert.
2. The office of the State HSFAC will distribute advice from the SEOCON to all participating and supporting organisations who support Healthplan
3. The Office of the State HSFAC will monitor presentations to Hospital Emergency Departments for heat related illness
4. The HSFAC will escalate the arrangements within Healthplan to respond to the Heat emergency as required.
5. The Office of the State HSFAC will provide regular information updates and situation reports to the SEOC.

ANNEX 2 - Concept of Operations - Energy and Utility Services

Energy and Utility Services Functional Area CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS

AIM

To outline the Energy and Utility Services Functional Area (EUSFA) strategies for coordinating and supporting the Electricity, Gas, Petroleum and Water sectors during a heatwave event in NSW.

PREVENTION & PREPAREDNESS

Electricity supply is one of the most critical services to maintain during a heatwave. At a national level, the Australian Energy Market Operator (AEMO) is the lead organisation for managing the National Electricity Market (NEM) including the security and reliability of supply. In planning for seasonal changes, or periods of adverse or extreme weather, AEMO carries out assessments of the impacts to electricity supply in the NEM regions. Any impending heatwave conditions are taken into consideration by AEMO in the development and updating of both Medium Term Projected Assessment of System Adequacy (MTPASA) and Short Term Projected Assessment of System Adequacy (STPASA).

In the development of these assessments, AEMO works closely with Bureau of Meteorology (BoM) to identify potential heatwave conditions. During periods of extreme heat, AEMO updates the MTPASA weekly and the STPASA daily. In the event that any potential heatwave conditions have been identified, AEMO contacts the relevant Generators, Transmission and/or Distribution Network Service Providers asking them to curtail/defer any major capital or maintenance works that maybe scheduled on those identified dates.

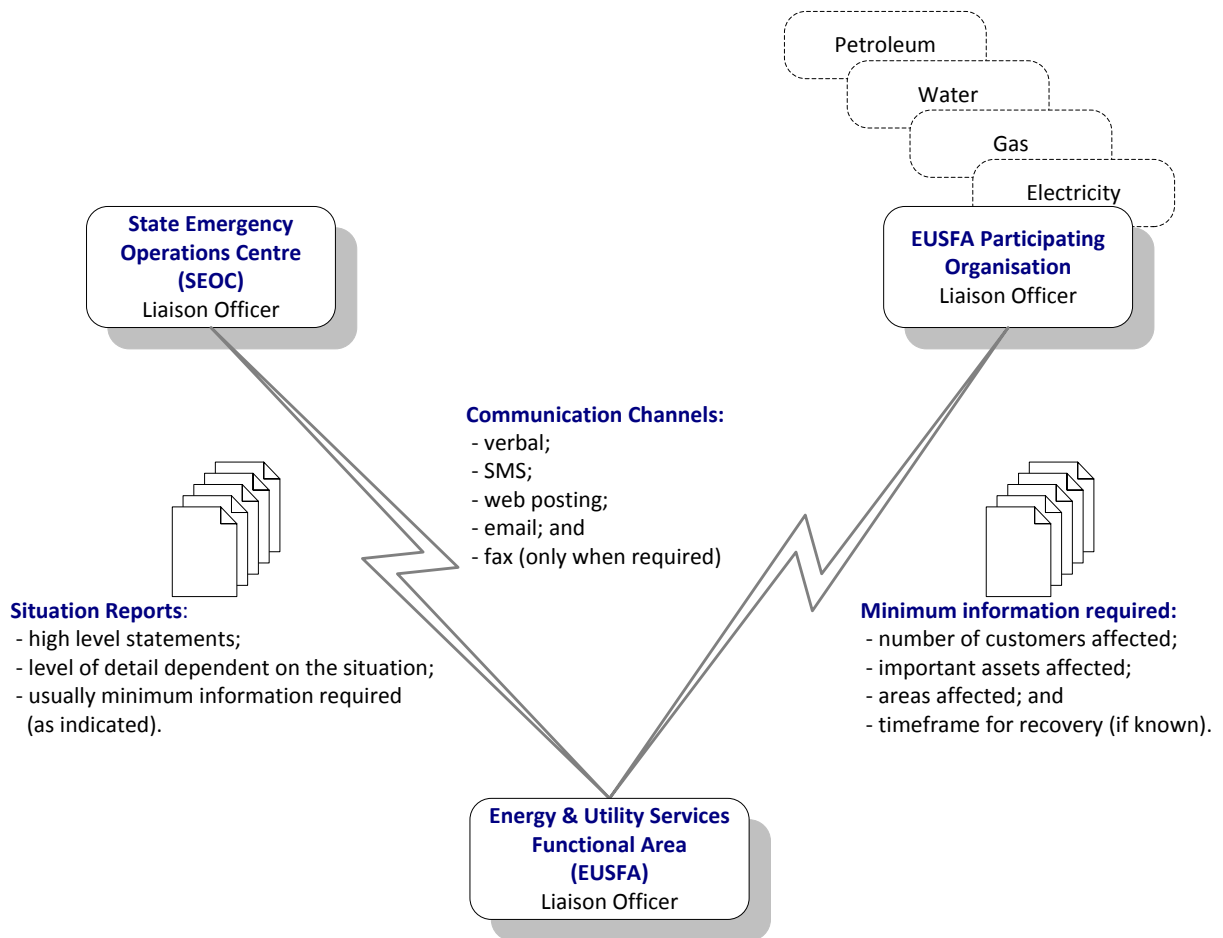
In addition, state and local electricity, gas, petroleum and water providers factor heatwave conditions into planning, design, operation and maintenance of their respective networks. Procedures are developed for system operation in extreme conditions, including heatwave.

Regular assessments of the effectiveness of these processes and procedures are carried out by the providers of those services.

RESPONSE & RECOVERY

1. Conduct business within EUSFA as per normal standing arrangements and as otherwise detailed within the Energy and Utility Services Supporting Plan.
2. Forward to EUSFA Participating Organisations and stakeholders warnings and other information provided via SEOC utilising the communications networked illustrated below.
3. Monitor the status of Electricity, Gas, Petroleum and Water sectors during a heatwave event in NSW, and
4. Provide advice and assistance to the SEOC or DEOCs and information/situation reports to the SEOC utilising, in the first instance, the communications network illustrated below.

COMMUNICATION



ANNEX 3 - Concept of Operations – Transport Services

Transport Services Functional Area

CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS

In accordance with the State Emergency and Rescue Management Act 1989, the Transport Functional Area provides support **to emergency operations**. Under Displan, and in terms of a coordinated approach, this represents support as requested by a Combat Agency or other Functional Area. Tasks for providing transport support to other agencies in this respect might include:

1. the movement of emergency equipment and personnel;
2. the movement of emergency supplies and goods, including water, fuel and food;
3. the evacuation of people and animals; and
4. assistance for medical transport.

Transport's contribution in mitigating the impact of emergencies such as heatwave, is two fold. Apart from assisting emergency operations, Displan recognises the need for transport to maintain as far as practicable:

'the normal operations and activities of public and commercial transport services'.

These principles are therefore reflected in the support of transport to Heatwave operations, being:

1. Displan Arrangements
2. Internal Arrangements

Heatwave - Support to Emergency Operations (Displan)

Examples of Transport support under Displan may include;

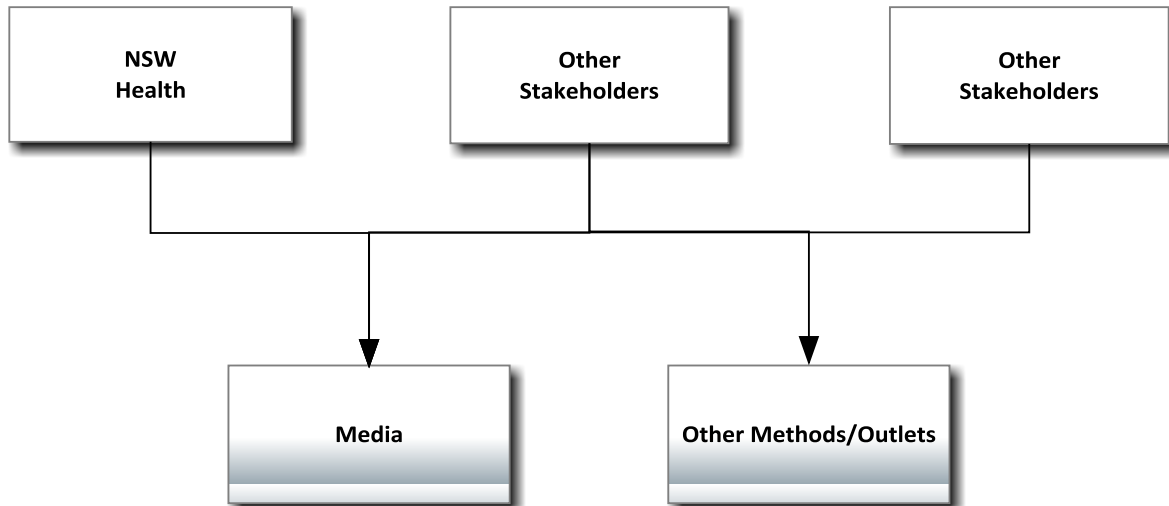
- The provision of buses or similar transport resources to support the functions of other functional areas;
- Assistance for medical transportation;
- Use of community transport and similar resources to assist local operations;
- Assistance in the proliferation of public information

Heat Health - Transport Customer Service Arrangements - Coordinated by Transport

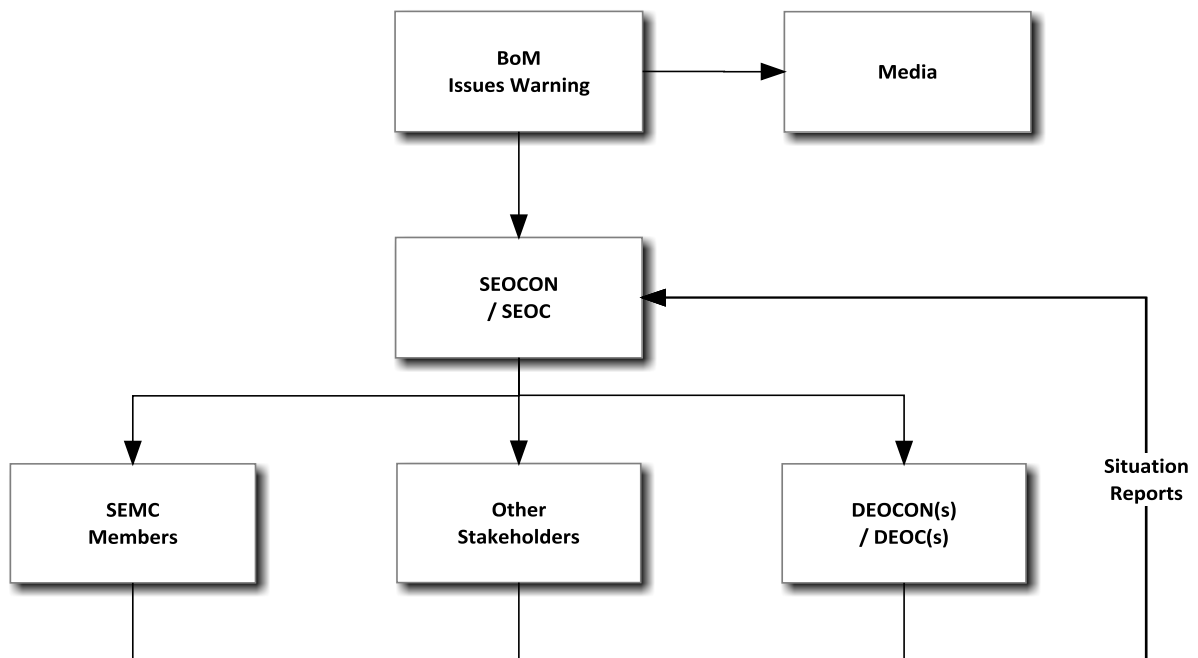
- Enhancing existing advice to travellers in respect of hazards that impact upon their journeys;
- Conveying health warnings to travellers including heat health warnings;
- Supplementing comfort levels of travellers, where practicable;
- Enhancing existing arrangements aimed at reducing the likelihood of travellers becoming stranded or immobilised during journeys; and
- Enhancing existing arrangements to monitor and manage adverse impacts upon transport infrastructure (monitoring rail lines for excess heat effects etc).

ANNEX 4 - FLOW CHARTS

Distribution of Public Education - Before Heatwave Events



Distribution of Warnings of Heatwave Event



(See Comment - 1 at Par 1.5)

Distribution of Public Information - During Heatwave Events

