



# Inquiry into the 2019–20 Victorian Fire Season

## Overview of implementation of recommendations

### Background

The Inspector-General for Emergency Management (IGEM) conducted the independent Inquiry into the 2019–20 Victorian Fire Season from January 2020 to July 2021. Over two phases, the Inquiry's focus included Victoria's:

- preparedness for the 2019-20 fire season (Phase 1)
- response to fires in large parts of the North East, Gippsland, and Alpine regions (Phase 1)
- relief and recovery efforts (Phase 2).

Through the Inquiry, IGEM made 32 recommendations to improve the State's emergency management arrangements in how Victoria prepares, responds, and recovers from emergencies.

### Tracking the progress of change

By ministerial request, we now publicly report on the work of departments and agencies in implementing the Inquiry's recommendations committed through the government response and implementation plan.

IGEM's 2021 progress report on Inquiry Phase 1 recommendations is available online at: <https://www.igem.vic.gov.au/publications/publications/progress-report-2021-10-year-review-fire-season-inquiry-phase-1>

The 2022 progress report has been submitted to government and is awaiting ministerial approval to publish. Release of this report is at the minister's discretion.

An implementation statement for Inquiry Phase 2 recommendations has been developed, however, has not been published yet. IGEM will provide an update on implementation of Phase 2 recommendations in its next progress report.

### This overview

This overview summarises implementation highlights from the Fire Season Inquiry Phase 1 report.

It includes use of these abbreviations:

- CFA - Country Fire Authority
- DELWP – Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning
- DJPR – Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions
- DoT – Department of Transport
- EMV – Emergency Management Victoria
- FFMVic – Forest Fire Management Victoria
- VicPol – Victoria Police

# Inquiry into the 2019–20 Victorian Fire Season

Overview of implementation of  
recommendations



## Overview of implementation status (as at 28 October 2022)

	10 Year Review	Phase 1 Fire Season Inquiry Report	Phase 2 Fire Season Inquiry Report
<b>Total Recommendations and actions</b>	5 recommendations 26 actions	17 recommendations 113 actions	15 recommendations
	<i>Total – 22 recommendations, 139 actions</i>		
<b>Completed or closed</b>	17 actions	75 actions	Implementation statement has been developed, however, has not been published yet
<b>In progress</b>	9 actions	38 actions	
<b>Total</b>	<b>92 actions completed or closed, with 47 actions in progress</b>  (58 completed or closed in 2021, and a further 34 actions completed or closed in 2022)		

# 1. Fire Season Inquiry Phase 1 report

**Table 1:** Reporting highlights for selected community interest Phase 1 recommendations

Recommendation	Reporting highlights
<p><b>FSIP1 Recommendation 2 – Victorian arrangements for fuel management (DELWP)</b></p> <p>IGEM’s Phase 1 report found that the level of fuel management conducted by private land managers and fire agencies is inhibited due to structural and policy issues within these organisations and conflicts between various, complex legislative requirements.</p> <p>IGEM recommended that the State review and where necessary amend fuel management legislation to address these issues.</p> <p>As part of its response, the government committed to continue to work with Traditional Owners to implement the Cultural Fire Strategy.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The <b>Cultural Fire Strategy</b> was launched on 10 May 2020</li> <li>• As part of the strategy, the Aboriginal-led <b>Cultural Fire Leadership Group</b> was established, bringing together Traditional Owners and land managers to deliver local cultural fire plans</li> <li>• <b>Secured dedicated funding</b> - The 2021–22 Victorian State Budget provided dedicated funding of \$22.5m over four years, with \$6.3m ongoing to support Traditional Owners</li> <li>• More information can be found at the FFMVic website: <a href="https://www.ffm.vic.gov.au/fuel-management-report-2018-19/statewide-achievements/cultural-fire-strategy">https://www.ffm.vic.gov.au/fuel-management-report-2018-19/statewide-achievements/cultural-fire-strategy</a></li> </ul> 

Recommendation	Reporting highlights
<p><b>FSIP1 Recommendation 5 – Community perceptions of the fuel management program (DELWP, CFA)</b></p> <p>The Phase 1 report found that a significant percentage of the community were not satisfied with current fuel management practices on public land, and that these beliefs were not easily reconciled due to fundamental differences in the values and experiences underpinning them.</p> <p>Recommendations were made for DELWP to lead a community engagement program to improve the Victorian community’s understanding of fuel and land management, including the concept of residual risk.</p>	<p>To improve community perceptions of Victoria’s fuel management program:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Simplified communication materials have been produced</b> about the fuel management program, the concept of residual risk and how fuel management effectiveness is evaluated, and what bushfire risk means at a state, regional and community level. These materials have been produced as a result of community engagement and market research DELWP commissioned in 2021. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➢ These materials are available at FFMVic’s website: <a href="https://www.ffm.vic.gov.au/bushfire-management-facts">https://www.ffm.vic.gov.au/bushfire-management-facts</a></li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Consideration of behaviour change to address bushfire risk</b> – a working draft of the whole of sector strategy for bushfire management takes into account research undertaken into key risk reduction behaviours involving a survey of community members from across Victoria to support people to take action to address bushfire risk in their local area and on their own land.</li> </ul>
<p><b>FSIP1 Recommendation 6 – Mechanical treatments (DELWP, DoT)</b></p> <p>The Phase 1 report found that Victoria’s use of mechanical treatments had not increased since DELWP committed to do so in 2015–16, indicating that it was not using mechanical means to compensate for lost opportunities due to the reduced planned burning weather windows.</p> <p>Recommendations were made to increase the application of non-burning fuel management treatments.</p>	<p>A 365-day fuel management program continues to be delivered, consisting of planned burning and mechanical fuel treatments such as slashing and constructing strategic fuel breaks.</p> <p>To find out more about fuel management in individual regional areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• browse the interactive map via the FFMVic website: <a href="https://www.ffm.vic.gov.au/bushfire-fuel-and-risk-management/joint-fuel-management-program">https://www.ffm.vic.gov.au/bushfire-fuel-and-risk-management/joint-fuel-management-program</a></li> <li>• for information on the strategic fuel breaks (including roadside vegetation management) contact: <a href="mailto:strategicfuelbreaks.feedback@delwp.vic.gov.au">strategicfuelbreaks.feedback@delwp.vic.gov.au</a></li> </ul> 

Recommendation	Reporting highlights
<p><b>FSIP1 Recommendation 11 – Evacuation (VicPol, EMV)</b></p> <p>The Phase 1 report found that information in evacuation guidance documents was considered and comprehensive. However, the report identified instances of dissatisfaction among community members around evacuation during the 2019–20 fires, including in relation to traffic management points. The most common frustration was a lack of adequate information and communication about road access.</p> <p>To address this, IGEM recommended that Victoria Police (VicPol) reflect on events of the 2019–20 fire season to review and enhance evacuation plans and processes.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Evacuation exercises</b> – conducted in each emergency management region, with sector partners and community members, to test, review and enhance evacuation policies and procedures (VicPol). During 2022, VicPol completed exercises in the Eastern Metropolitan, Gippsland, and North West Metropolitan regions. A focus of these exercises were visitors and tourists planning to travel to these locations.</li> </ul> 
<p><b>FSIP1 Recommendation 16 – Cross-border interoperability (EMV)</b></p> <p>The Phase 1 report found that opportunities existed at state, national and international levels to continue to improve interoperability.</p> <p>Recommendations were made so that EMV and the sector work with New South Wales and South Australia to identify and address key cross-border operational and resource management issues to improve interoperability and maximise capability and capacity when cooperating during cross-border emergencies.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Nationally consistent messaging</b> – the implementation of the new nationally consistent <u>Australian Warning System (AWS)</u> and <u>Australian Fire Danger Rating System (AFDRS)</u> in Victoria to ensure cohesive and consistent warnings and advice messages are broadcast along borders (EMV).</li> <li>• <b>Considerations of cross border risks and opportunities in regional and municipal level planning</b> – all <u>Regional Emergency Management Plans (REMPs)</u> include a section on cross border considerations (risks and opportunities), however there may be opportunity to develop and expand on these sections in future REMP versions as all REMPs are due to be reviewed by November 2023. <u>Municipal Emergency Management Plans (MEMPs)</u> are being progressively updated in accordance with their three-year review cycles, with all MEMPs due to be reviewed by 1 December 2023. It is intended that MEMPs will contain similar considerations and arrangements as those outlined for REMPs, however they will be specific to the municipal district. Current REMPs and MEMPs can be accessed via the EMV website <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ REMPs - <a href="https://www.emv.vic.gov.au/responsibilities/emergency-management-planning/remps">https://www.emv.vic.gov.au/responsibilities/emergency-management-planning/remps</a></li> <li>➤ MEMPs - <a href="https://www.emv.vic.gov.au/responsibilities/emergency-management-planning/memps">https://www.emv.vic.gov.au/responsibilities/emergency-management-planning/memps</a></li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Cross border training and exercises</b> – EMV plans to establish a cross-border training network and schedule cross-border training exercises.</li> </ul>

Recommendation	Reporting highlights
<p><b>FSIP1 Recommendation 17 – Vulnerable communities (EMV, DJPR, DoT)</b></p> <p>The Phase 1 report found that the methods used to assist vulnerable people to access and understand emergency information were limited, and that tourists might face greater risk in an emergency due to an absence of local knowledge.</p> <p>To address this, recommendations were made to EMV to develop and implement processes for disseminating information to all Victorians and tourists in an emergency event.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>VicEmergency Uplift project</b> - will support the VicEmergency app and the accompanying website to better accommodate the needs of culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities.</li> <li>• <b>Strengthening Telecommunications Against Natural Disasters (STAND) program to strengthen telecommunications resilience</b> - DJPR has partnered with the Australian Government and other stakeholders such as Optus, Telstra, and TPG to strengthen telecommunications resilience in socially and geographically isolated communities in bushfire and disaster-prone areas. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➢ The <b>Mobile Network Hardening Program (MNHP)</b> includes a range of resilience improvements including permanent on-site generators, transportable generators, bushfire hardening, and batteries. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MNHP Stage 1 provided funding to Optus, Telstra, and TPG to improve network resilience by upgrading battery backup power at base stations funded under the Australian Government's Mobile Black Spot Program, including <u>94 stations in Victoria</u>.</li> <li>• Under MNHP Stage 2, the Australian Government will provide \$10.9m for Optus, Telstra, and TPG to deliver 544 resilience upgrades at mobile base station sites across Australia, including <u>138 facilities in Victoria</u>.</li> <li>• Across MNHP Stages 1 and 2, this includes funding for upgrades at 22 locations in East Gippsland LGA, 10 locations in Towong LGA and 5 locations in Alpine LGA.</li> </ul> </li> <li>➢ As part of the <b>National Broadband Network (NBN) satellite services program</b>, the Australian Government allocated \$7m to deliver 2000 STAND NBN satellite community Wi-Fi services nationally, including 344 sites in Victoria. Examples of sites include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Omeo Recreation Reserve</li> <li>▪ Ensay Hall</li> <li>▪ Ensay Recreation Reserve</li> <li>▪ Mallacoota Main Hall</li> <li>▪ Goongerah Community Hall</li> <li>▪ Orbost Cricket Club Oval</li> <li>▪ Buchan Rec Res</li> <li>▪ Bruthen Hall</li> <li>▪ Mount Beauty Community Centre</li> <li>▪ Mount Beauty Swimming Pool and Sports Centre</li> <li>▪ Corryong Upper Murray Events Centre</li> <li>▪ Corryong Youth Club Hall</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>VicTraffic app</b> – the app will be upgraded to inform users of the impacts on the road network due to emergencies (DoT)</li> </ul>

**Table 2:** Reporting highlights for remaining Phase 1 recommendations

Phase 1 Report	
Recommendation	Reporting highlights
<p><b>FSIP1 Recommendation 1 – Preparedness and training (EMV)</b></p> <p>The Phase 1 report identified some areas for improvements to training and preparedness. IGEM recommended that recruitment, briefings, training, plans and procedures be completed before seasonal events were likely to occur.</p>	<p>Ahead of the 2020–21 summer season:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>EMV released an updated Emergency Risks in Victoria report. The report contains information on significant emergency-related risks facing Victoria and the arrangements in place to manage them. The report is available at: <a href="http://emv.vic.gov.au/publications/state-emergency-risk-assessment-reports/emergency-risks-in-victoria-july-2020">emv.vic.gov.au/publications/state-emergency-risk-assessment-reports/emergency-risks-in-victoria-july-2020</a></li> <li>DELWP commenced the recruitment of project firefighting personnel in July 2020</li> <li>EMV increased the State Control Centre workforce capacity to boost public information, intelligence, logistical support, and emergency management planning functions. EMV adapted preparedness arrangements to comply with Chief Health Officer directions and COVID-19 safe practices. Pre-season preparedness briefings were moved online.</li> </ul>
<p><b>FSIP1 Recommendation 3 – Effectiveness of Safer Together (DELWP, CFA)</b></p> <p>IGEM recommended several ways to improve the effectiveness of Safer Together, including increased involvement from a wider range of agencies and improvements to fuel management monitoring, evaluation and reporting.</p>	<p>DELWP has delivered an expanded Safer Together program with increased involvement from Emergency Management Victoria (EMV), Country Fire Authority (CFA), Department of Transport (DoT) and local government. For more information see <a href="http://safertogether.vic.gov.au">safertogether.vic.gov.au</a></p> <p>DELWP has looked at how the fuel management Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting Framework and the annual Fuel Management Report can better capture fuel management activities on roadsides and private land. For more information see <a href="http://ffm.vic.gov.au/fuel-management-report-2020-21/topics-of-interest/fame">ffm.vic.gov.au/fuel-management-report-2020-21/topics-of-interest/fame</a></p> <p>DELWP is currently developing a whole-of-sector strategy to guide land and fire management in the context of a changing climate, growing population and changing demographics.</p>
<p><b>FSIP1 Recommendation 4 – Barriers to cross-tenure fuel management (DELWP, CFA)</b></p> <p>IGEM recommended that a single entity lead and coordinate policy, practice, reporting and assurance for fuel management activities on public and private land.</p>	<p>DELWP has set up an Office of Bushfire Risk Management (OBRM) for a consistent sector-wide approach to fuel management. OBRM is supported by an independent advisory panel.</p> <p>Land managers and landholders retain primary responsibility for managing bushfire risk on their land. OBRM develops, maintains and coordinates the implementation of a comprehensive, end-to-end operating framework for bushfire risk management. Land and fire managers use this framework to achieve shared risk reduction outcomes.</p> <p>For more information see <a href="http://ffm.vic.gov.au/fuel-management-report-2020-21/topics-of-interest/fame">ffm.vic.gov.au/fuel-management-report-2020-21/topics-of-interest/fame</a></p>

**Phase 1 Report**

Recommendation	Reporting highlights
<p><b>FSIP1 Recommendation 7 – Fuel management tools (DELWP, CFA)</b></p> <p>IGEM recommended the development of new land and fuel management tools for use by all fuel management organisations.</p>	<p>The DELWP and CFA Risk 2.0 project has improved the datasets and models for bushfire risk modelling and improved how agencies model the effects of mechanical fuel management on fire behaviour. For more information see <a href="http://ffm.vic.gov.au/fuel-management-report-2020-21/topics-of-interest/fame">ffm.vic.gov.au/fuel-management-report-2020-21/topics-of-interest/fame</a></p> <p>DELWP has developed a strategic plan identifying priority investment areas for bushfire science, fire ecology and knowledge and predictive services.</p> <p>DELWP ensures that all land and fire management agencies and local government have ongoing access to current bushfire risk information.</p>
<p><b>FSIP1 Recommendation 8 – Fuel management reporting (DELWP)</b></p> <p>The Phase 1 report found a lack of measurable objectives and inconsistencies in reporting processes with Victoria’s fuel management program.</p> <p>IGEM recommended that DELWP develop common objectives and reporting requirements for all fuel management organisations.</p>	<p>DELWP has begun work to add information on private land, roadsides and public land managed by other agencies to the fuel management Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting Framework and the annual Fuel Management Report.</p> <p>The framework and annual reports are available at <a href="http://ffm.vic.gov.au/monitoring-evaluation-and-reporting">ffm.vic.gov.au/monitoring-evaluation-and-reporting</a></p> <p>DELWP has also worked with CFA and Parks Victoria fuel managers to identify new data sources that may be useful for future reporting.</p> 

Phase 1 Report	
Recommendation	Reporting highlights
<p><b>FSIP1 Recommendation 9 – Appropriateness of the current residual bushfire risk target (DELWP, CFA)</b></p> <p>IGEM recommended that DELWP and CFA review the residual bushfire risk target to ensure the target remains fit for purpose.</p>	<p>DELWP has completed work to support the review of the current residual bushfire risk target in consultation with stakeholders and the community:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DELWP has developed a new spatial dataset to better capture where assets such as houses and other buildings are located</li> <li>• DELWP has also improved modelling of the impact of fuel management on environmental values, including threatened species.</li> </ul>
<p><b>FSIP1 Recommendation 10 – Community understanding of roles and responsibilities (EMV)</b></p> <p>IGEM recommended that EMV provide clear guidance on the emergency management roles and responsibilities of individuals, communities, the private sector, responder agencies and government and develop a communications strategy to ensure the roles and responsibilities are understood.</p>	<p>EMV released Victoria’s first State Emergency Management Plan in September 2020 and updated it in October 2021.</p> <p>The plan defines the concept of shared responsibility for emergency management and sets out the roles and responsibilities of individuals, households, sector agencies, businesses, and community groups.</p> <p>The plan is available at <a href="http://emv.vic.gov.au/responsibilities/semv">emv.vic.gov.au/responsibilities/semv</a></p> <p>The government continues to invest in a range of communication strategies to build understanding of what individuals, households and communities can do to mitigate emergency risk.</p>
<p><b>FSIP1 Recommendation 12 – Regional tier of control (EMV)</b></p> <p>IGEM's Phase 1 report found that the regional tier of control was underutilised and poorly understood during the 2019–20 Victorian fire season.</p> <p>IGEM recommended that EMV review, update and confirm arrangements for all tiers of control and hold exercises to increase awareness of the arrangements.</p>	<p>EMV published Regional Emergency Management Plans in November 2020 on behalf of Victoria’s eight Regional Emergency Management Planning Committees. The plans clearly set out who is responsible for what at the regional level.</p> <p>The plans for Gippsland and Hume and the six other regions are available at <a href="http://emv.vic.gov.au/responsibilities/emergency-management-planning/remv">emv.vic.gov.au/responsibilities/emergency-management-planning/remv</a></p> <p>In mid-2021 EMV helped the committees test and refine these arrangements by conducting several emergency scenario exercises and sharing the results.</p> <p>Other exercises held by the sector provide ongoing opportunities to test control arrangements at all tiers – state, regional and municipal. IGEM observes many of these exercises.</p> <p>In 2021 EMV led a sector review of the State Emergency Management Plan – the overarching set of emergency management arrangements for Victoria. The revised plan was published in October 2021 and will be updated regularly in future as required.</p> <p>The State Emergency Management Plan is available at <a href="http://emv.vic.gov.au/responsibilities/semv">emv.vic.gov.au/responsibilities/semv</a></p>

**Phase 1 Report**

Recommendation	Reporting highlights
<p><b>FSIP1 Recommendation 13 – Incident tier of control (EMV)</b></p> <p>The Phase 1 report found that incident management practices used during the fires were sometimes inconsistent.</p> <p>To address this, IGEM recommended the review and update of rostering and handover processes along with guidance and training on their use.</p>	<p>The updating of rostering and handover processes and related training and guidance for Incident Management Teams remains in progress.</p> <p>Long-term work is underway to better equip Incident Management Teams with the skills they need to operate in increasingly complex situations.</p>
<p><b>FSIP1 Recommendation 14 – Shift rostering and fatigue and safety management (EMV)</b></p> <p>The fires placed a lot of strain on the sector and impacted the occupational health and safety of its personnel.</p> <p>IGEM recommended a personnel and asset deployment system that could meet the needs of an emergency while still supporting the health and wellbeing of personnel.</p>	<p>The actions in response to Recommendation 14 did not include a new deployment system of the type IGEM proposed.</p> <p>However, EMV is currently leading a review of Victoria’s emergency management operating model that may lead to improvements in rostering and fatigue and safety management. The review is supported by research on how other states and countries do their rostering and resourcing.</p> <p>EMV is also developing a software system to bring together data on health and safety incidents across the emergency management sector and enable the identification and analysis of trends.</p> 

## Phase 1 Report

### Recommendation

#### **FSIP1 Recommendation 15 – Emergency management capacity (EMV, DJPR)**

The Phase 1 report found that the fires placed a lot of strain on the sector's ability to respond. IGEM also observed a lack of collective understanding of current and future capacity requirements across the sector.

IGEM recommended that EMV and the sector develop a capacity model, looking at things like career, volunteer and surge emergency management personnel, and emergency risks and climate scenarios.

### Reporting highlights

The **Emergency Management Operating Model Review** being led by EMV is a key piece of work that addresses Recommendation 15. The review is ongoing.

EMV and the sector also plan to assess all 21 **Victorian Preparedness Framework core capabilities** to understand how the state currently measures up and where further investment might be needed.

The core capabilities set the foundation for emergency management preparedness, response and recovery activities.

The first four assessments are currently at various stages of completion:

- Operational Management
- Fire Management and Suppression
- Search and Rescue
- Fatality Management

The VPF is available at [emv.vic.gov.au/how-wehelp/emergency-management-capability-in-victoria/victorian-preparedness-framework](http://emv.vic.gov.au/how-wehelp/emergency-management-capability-in-victoria/victorian-preparedness-framework)

Councils play a vital role in emergency management. Local Government Victoria's **Councils and Emergencies Project** evaluated the emergency management capability and capacity of Victoria's 79 councils and provides **the knowledge base for future improvements**.

More information on the project is available at [localgovernment.vic.gov.au/our-programs/emergency-management/councils-and-emergencies-project](http://localgovernment.vic.gov.au/our-programs/emergency-management/councils-and-emergencies-project)

## 2. Fire Season Inquiry Phase 2 report

The Phase 2 report examined the progress and effectiveness of Victoria's immediate relief and recovery arrangements in relation to the 2019–20 Victorian fire season and included 15 recommendations (see Table 3). The Inspector-General delivered this report to government on 30 July 2021.

### Emergency Recovery Victoria (ERV)

- On 17 October 2022, Bushfire Recovery Victoria (BRV) transitioned to Emergency Recovery Victoria (ERV) as part of the government's response to Recommendation 13 of the Phase 2 report to create a permanent and comprehensive entity dedicated to recovery management.
- ERV operates as a **standalone business unit** of the Department of Justice and Community Safety.
- It is intended that ERV will:
  - work closely with the recovery sector to help build stronger communities that are better prepared for, and recover faster from, emergencies
  - be better integrated with the emergency management sector to ensure a seamless transition from response to recovery.
  - work with local government and communities to ensure they lead their own engagement processes, collectively determine their recovery priorities and plan how they will achieve them.

### Phase 2 implementation statement

- On **30 June 2022 SCRC endorsed an implementation statement** (CD/22/430169) outlining the government's approach to implementing all recommendations from the Phase 2 report as part of its broader commitment to strategic relief and recovery reform.
- IGEM has been provided with a final version of the statement however, as of November 2022 the **government had yet to approve the statement for public release**. Therefore, IGEM is unable to provide an update on implementation progress against the statement in this report.

**Table 3:** List of Phase 2 recommendations

<p><b>Recommendation 1</b></p>	<p>The Inspector-General for Emergency Management recommends that Emergency Management Victoria and the entity referred to in Recommendation 13, or otherwise responsible government department – in consultation with the emergency management sector – establish policies and platforms to improve operational and personal information-sharing between relief and recovery organisations. These policies and platforms should enable:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) timely and comprehensive sharing of data related to impacts and consequences of emergencies</li> <li>(b) increased ability to provide streamlined and proactive relief and recovery support services and financial assistance to affected individuals, families, businesses and community groups.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Recommendation 2</b></p>	<p>The Inspector-General for Emergency Management recommends that Emergency Management Victoria and the entity referred to in Recommendation 13, or otherwise responsible government department – in collaboration with the relevant relief and recovery organisations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) identify the core capabilities required for operational relief and recovery roles at state, regional and incident levels</li> <li>(b) coordinate capability development opportunities to develop a consistent level of capability in relief and recovery for relevant agencies at the state, regional and incident levels.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Recommendation 3</b></p>	<p>The Inspector-General for Emergency Management recommends that the Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions work with the Municipal Association of Victoria, councils and local relief and recovery organisations to provide centralised capability development opportunities to increase local capability and capacity to plan and deliver on their relief and recovery responsibilities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) for emergencies of variable scale, complexity and duration</li> <li>(b) in a manner that caters to the needs of diverse communities.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Recommendation 4</b></p>	<p>The Inspector-General for Emergency Management recommends that Emergency Management Victoria and the entity referred to in Recommendation 13, or other responsible government department – in consultation with the emergency management sector – develop and resource a strategy to coordinate spontaneous volunteers that can be activated before, during or after emergencies.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 5</b></p>	<p>The Inspector-General for Emergency Management recommends that the entity referred to in Recommendation 13, or otherwise responsible government department, works with the emergency management sector to develop a recovery funding model that enables:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) timely estimation of recovery costs based on the impact of the emergency</li> <li>(b) consistency in government-based recovery support for organisations, councils, communities, businesses and individuals</li> <li>(c) short, medium and long-term recovery planning and resourcing</li> <li>(d) immediate local recovery progress by reducing administrative funding impediments for local organisations while retaining appropriate accountability mechanisms for expenditure.</li> </ul>

<b>Recommendation 6</b>	<p>The Inspector-General for Emergency Management recommends that the entity referred to in Recommendation 13, or otherwise responsible government department, leads the development of a comprehensive, person-centred, trauma-informed recovery financial assistance system that establishes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) clear and transparent overview of grant and financial assistance eligibility requirements</li> <li>(b) flexibility in the timing of application processes</li> <li>(c) a streamlined application process for individuals, families, businesses and community recovery groups</li> <li>(d) proactive outreach from relevant government agencies to affected individuals, families, businesses and community recovery groups to facilitate and encourage receipt of financial assistance where eligible.</li> </ul>
<b>Recommendation 7</b>	<p>The Inspector-General for Emergency Management recommends that Emergency Management Victoria work with councils and government to refine an operational relief and recovery public communications strategy that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) ensures time-critical response and safety information is clear and concise</li> <li>(b) provides a centralised information point for time-critical relief and early recovery information.</li> </ul>
<b>Recommendation 8</b>	<p>The Inspector-General for Emergency Management recommends that Emergency Management Victoria and the entity referred to in Recommendation 13, or otherwise responsible government department, coordinate ongoing education campaigns to increase public awareness of community roles and responsibilities during periods of emergency relief and recovery.</p>
<b>Recommendation 9</b>	<p>The Inspector-General for Emergency Management recommends that Emergency Management Victoria strengthen the State Emergency Management Plan and supporting operational arrangements to ensure the roles and responsibilities of the State Emergency Relief Coordinator and the State Relief and Recovery Team are clear.</p> <p>These documents should enable:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) appropriate communication and tasking between the state, regional and incident/local tiers in relation to relief priorities</li> <li>(b) accountability and reporting arrangements for senior operational leaders including the Emergency Management Commissioner, State Response Controller and State Recovery Coordinator.</li> </ul>
<b>Recommendation 10</b>	<p>The Inspector General for Emergency Management recommends that Emergency Management Victoria lead the development of relief arrangements to achieve greater clarity of roles, reporting and accountability in relief across state, regional and incident tiers. These arrangements should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) incorporate local knowledge and leverage off local capabilities in the development of these arrangements</li> <li>(b) be used to develop training opportunities and materials to increase relief capability across the sector, with a particular focus on capability development of operational leaders</li> <li>(c) coordinate multi-agency exercises to practice and refine these relief arrangements.</li> </ul>

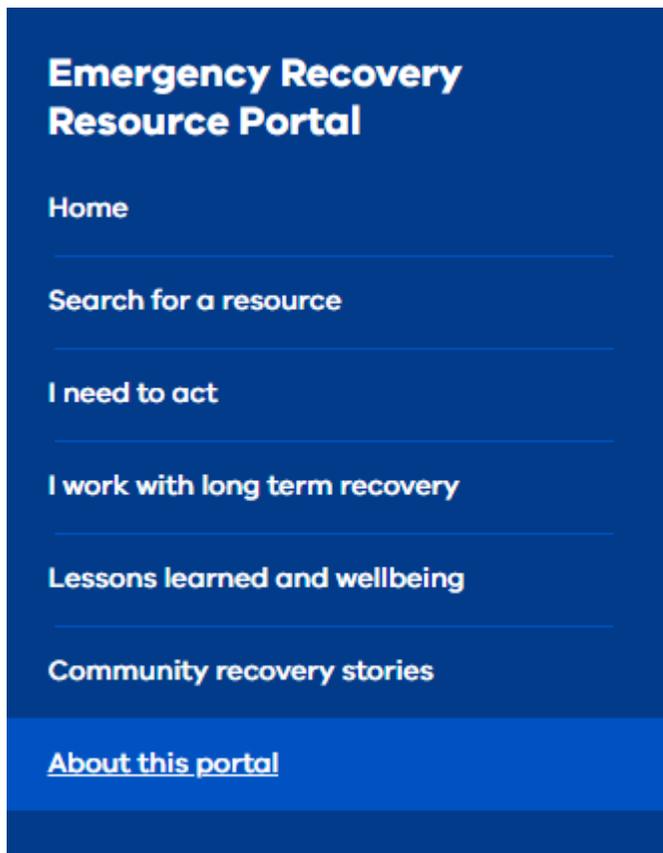
<b>Recommendation 11</b>	<p>The Inspector-General for Emergency Management recommends that the Department of Jobs, Precinct and Regions work with the Municipal Association of Victoria and councils to build contingencies into emergency relief centre planning to ensure places of shelter are better placed to support displaced people in circumstances of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) community isolation</li> <li>(b) prolonged emergencies</li> <li>(c) community-led activation of centres.</li> </ul>
<b>Recommendation 12</b>	<p>The Inspector-General for Emergency Management recommends that Emergency Management Victoria and the entity referred to in Recommendation 13, or otherwise responsible government department:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) coordinate the development of agreed systems, processes and partnerships that can be activated as soon as potential emergencies are anticipated to ensure greater coordination and management of donated goods</li> <li>(b) incorporate public communication strategies to mitigate the donation of goods as much as possible and socialise appropriate donating channels as defined in the arrangements.</li> </ul>
<b>Recommendation 13</b>	<p>The Inspector-General for Emergency Management recommends that the Victorian Government establish a permanent and comprehensive entity dedicated to recovery management with the authority, capability, capacity and resourcing to coordinate the planning and delivery of recovery functions for all emergencies.</p>
<b>Recommendation 14</b>	<p>The Inspector-General for Emergency Management recommends that the entity referred to in Recommendation 13, or otherwise responsible government department, works with relevant recovery organisations and communities to develop clear roles and responsibilities for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) the management and coordination of recovery across the continuum of all aspects of recovery (strategy, planning, operational and ongoing)</li> <li>(b) recovery service delivery to ensure that local service delivery organisations and community networks can be quickly activated to support individuals, families, businesses and communities.</li> </ul>
<b>Recommendation 15</b>	<p>The Inspector-General for Emergency Management recommends that the entity referred to in Recommendation 13, or otherwise responsible government department work with communities before, during and after emergencies to strengthen:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) a common understanding of community-led recovery</li> <li>(b) the role of communities in recovery planning</li> <li>(c) the support, training and resources required to enable community-led recovery.</li> </ul>

### 3. Recovery-related work in response to IGEM's 10 Year Review

In December 2019 IGEM completed a review of 10 years of reform in Victoria's emergency management sector.

In response to a recommendation of this review, in December 2021 the government launched the Emergency Recovery Resource Portal.

The portal contains key recovery documents for the disaster recovery workforce, as well as guidance for communities and agencies supporting recovery. Access the portal at [vic.gov.au/emergency-recovery-resource-portal](http://vic.gov.au/emergency-recovery-resource-portal)



The image shows the homepage of the Emergency Recovery Resource Portal. The page has a dark blue background with white text. At the top, it says "Emergency Recovery Resource Portal". Below that are several menu items: "Home", "Search for a resource", "I need to act", "I work with long term recovery", "Lessons learned and wellbeing", "Community recovery stories", and "About this portal".

#### Start post-disaster recovery planning at a local level



#### Disaster Recovery Toolkit for Local Government 03 – When Disaster Strikes: The First Days and Weeks

This document assumes that recovery readiness will have occurred and builds on this preparatory work by addressing the factors contributing to recovery



#### Community Recovery - Handbook 2

This handbook aims to provide a comprehensive guide to community recovery in Australia.

