Australia's Emergency Warning Arrangements

Table of Contents

1 Introduction

Purpose

The purpose of this document, *Australia's Emergency Warnings Arrangements* (the Arrangements), is to provide a high level overview of the framework governing the delivery of emergency warnings to the Australian public.[1] The Arrangements outline the policies, principles, collective responsibilities, and warning methods that underpin emergency warnings sent from government authorities to Australian communities.

These Arrangements were endorsed by the Standing Council on Police and Emergency Management (SCPEM) on 4 July 2013. The Arrangements are complemented by another two documents, the *Best Practice Guide for Warning Originators* and the *Code of Practice for Warning Republishers*.[2]

Context

Emergency management in Australia is underpinned by an integrated approach that incorporates prevention, preparedness, response and recovery.

Preparedness activities include a variety of measures designed to ensure that, should an emergency occur, communities, resources and services are capable of responding to it and coping with its impacts.

An emergency warning is a message signalling an imminent hazard, which may include advice on protective measures.[3]

The purpose of an emergency warning is to inform the community of an impending or current threat and to prompt an appropriate response or action. The action that is required of the community is

---

[1] A **disaster** is defined as a serious disruption to community life which threatens or causes death or injury in that community and/or damage to property which is beyond the day-to-day capacity of the prescribed statutory authorities and which requires special mobilisation and organisation of resources other than those normally available to those authorities.
An **emergency** is defined as an event, actual or imminent, which endangers or threatens to endanger life, property of the environment, and which requires a significant and coordinated response.
(*Australian Emergency Manuals Series: Glossary,* pp 32, 38.)
For the purpose of these Arrangements, the term 'emergency' is used on the understanding that it also includes the meaning of the term 'disaster'.
[2] These three documents are augmented by a number of guidelines for specific warning mechanisms. For example, the *National Telephony Warning System Guidelines* provide advice about the operation of the national telephone-based emergency warning system, Emergency Alert.
[3] Emergency Management Australia, Attorney-General's Department, *Australian Emergency Manuals Series: Glossary*, 1998, p 115.
Another useful public warning definition is that 'public warnings are urgent communications issued from time to time by various entities in an attempt to reduce preventable injuries or deaths', (Art Bottrell, *incident.blog: A Standard of Practice for Public Warning*, 27 February 2009, viewed 30 August 2012 <www.incident.com/blog/?p=57>).

usually contained in the warning message, for example, 'seek further information', 'take shelter', or 'activate your emergency plan'. Warnings are most effective when delivered to an informed and prepared community, as they will be more successful in prompting an appropriate response to the impending risk.

Emergency warnings are a primary tool for disaster management and play a significant role in the protection and resilience of Australian communities. Emergency warnings have the potential to significantly reduce the impact of disasters on communities, properties and the environment when they are combined with the community's understanding of environmental risks and disaster preparedness.

The rapid progression of technology and increasing number of warning options, together with community expectations that timely and accurate emergency warnings can always be delivered, has increased the complexity of managing emergency warnings.

2 Roles and responsibilities

While the authorisation and issuance of official warnings are primarily the responsibility of state and territory government emergency management agencies, people and organisations from all sectors of Australian society have a role to play in the optimal use of, and action following receipt of, an emergency warning. Effective partnerships are crucial between all levels of government, emergency services organisations, the community, industry, businesses, and the media, to ensure that communities receive and act on authorised emergency warnings.

State, territory and local governments

Under Australia's constitutional arrangements, primary responsibility for the protection of life, property and the environment rests with the states and territories in their capacity as first responders.

In Australia, each state and territory has legislation that governs its emergency management arrangements. In some states, legislation places an obligation on government authorities to warn communities in certain circumstances (see Part 3: Strategic, policy and legal framework for the delivery of warnings). States and territories also have emergency plans that include a communications component for the dissemination of emergency warnings to communities.

State and territory emergency services organisations decide whether to issue an emergency warning, to whom a warning is issued, which warning technologies to adopt, and when to activate them in accordance with nationally required protocols .

An overview of warning mechanisms and each state and territory's warning originators and warning mechanisms can be found at Parts 4 and 5.

Emergencies are not always contained within state and territory borders. A number of states and territories have procedures in place to liaise with other jurisdictions in the event of an emergency to ensure affected communities receive adequate, timely and coordinated warnings from authorities.[4]

State and territory governments, in collaboration with local government, also have a responsibility to educate, prepare and warn people who are vulnerable, or who may have special needs in the event of an emergency.[5]

---

[4] For example: The State of Queensland, Emergency Management Queensland, Department of Community Safety, *Queensland Emergency Alert Guidelines*, viewed 11 April 2013, <http://www.disaster.qld.gov.au/Disaster%20Resources/PGF.html>

[5] People in these groups may include (but are not limited to) older persons, culturally and linguistically diverse people groups, and people who have a mental or physical disability, which may prevent them from autonomously responding to an emergency warning.

The above warning arrangements may, at times, be delegated to local governments, or to district disaster management groups. Warning arrangements between state and local governments vary in each jurisdiction.

Commonwealth Government

The Commonwealth Government provides national leadership around emergency warning activity, contributing to a whole-of-nation, resilience-based approach to preventing, preparing for, responding to, and recovering from disasters. This includes assisting states and territories to enhance their warning capabilities, for example, the national telephone-based emergency warning system, Emergency Alert, and developing resource material, such as *Emergency Warnings: Choosing your Words* (see Part 3).

Under the authority of the *Meteorology Act 1955*, the Bureau of Meteorology (the Bureau)[6] disseminates warnings, watches and advices on weather events such as severe thunderstorms, fire weather, coastal hazards, high winds, flood and tropical cyclone warnings and, in collaboration with Geoscience Australia[7], tsunami warnings. A significant number of warnings issued for natural hazards in Australia are issued by the Bureau.

The Bureau disseminates warnings via the broadcast media, and directly to the public via the internet. The Bureau directly informs emergency services organisations of risks through a range of digital channels, phone calls, emails and face-to face briefings. Warnings issued by the Bureau are the basis for many of the warning messages that state and territory emergency services organisations and the broadcast media disseminate to the public.

Warning arrangements for the Commonwealth territories of Christmas Island, Cocos (Keeling) Islands, Jervis Bay, Ashmore and Cartier Islands, Coral Sea Islands, the Australian Antarctic Territory, and the Territory of Heard Island and Macdonald Islands are managed through partnerships between the Commonwealth and state and territory governments.

Individuals and communities

Communities and individuals also have responsibilities; including preparing themselves for emergencies that might affect them and taking appropriate action in response to emergency warnings.

A key element in building the disaster resilience of Australian communities is that individuals, households and businesses should be prepared and have action plans for emergencies that might affect them. Preparation and planning at the individual, household and community levels supports

---

[6] The Bureau of Meteorology is Australia's national weather, climate and water agency, which provides warnings, forecasts, observational, meteorological, hydrological and oceanographic services and undertakes research into science and environment related issues in support of its operations and services.
The Bureau's warning services are underpinned by defined processes and standard operating procedures (SOPs), with the agreement of relevant partners and stakeholders across the emergency management sector. These SOPs are consistent with, and supportive of, the principles outlined in this document.
[7] Geoscience Australia is Australia's geoscientific agency for the use and management of resources, the management of the environment, the wellbeing of populations, and sustainable energy opportunities.

informed decision making. To assist in building the preparedness of Australians for emergencies, a range of Commonwealth[8] and state and territory government resources are available.

It is important that communities do not rely solely on receiving an alert or emergency warning as warnings may not be able to be issued in all circumstances. People should not ignore their own observations and visual cues that alert of an approaching hazard. Individuals should be prepared and have an action plan in case of an emergency.

Broadcast media

Broadcast media play an important role in emergencies, both in disseminating and collecting information about an incident.[9] While there is no legislative requirement for broadcasters to undertake the role of warning communities, there is a strong public expectation that broadcasters will disseminate warnings and incident notifications to communities.

Relationships between media broadcasters and emergency services organisations are of critical importance in communicating emergency information to the public. Under section 123 of the *Broadcasting Services Act 1992* (Cth),[10] broadcasters have developed codes of practice in consultation with the Australian Communications Media Authority (ACMA). Amongst other requirements, these codes of practice ensure that broadcasters have well-established procedures in place to enable, in consultation with emergency services organisations, the timely and tailored broadcast of warnings and information to the public during an emergency.[11]

Additionally, a number of broadcasters and industry peak bodies, such as the Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC), Special Broadcasting Service (SBS), Commercial Radio Australia (CRA), and Free TV Australia, have established Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) with tate and territory governments (which complement their broadcaster codes of practice) to ensure optimal outcomes in the dissemination of emergency warnings to the public. These MOUs set out agreed communication protocols between broadcasters and emergency services organisations and encourage open and collaborative relationships to improve broadcasting emergency information practices and procedures.

Business and other organisations

With the ever-increasing use of technology in emergency management, governments rely on the technical and scientific expertise of private organisations and industry peak bodies to communicate and disseminate emergency warnings—and to develop future warning technologies. For example, Emergency Alert relies on effective commercial arrangements between governments and

---

[8] For example: Emergency Management Australia, Commonwealth Government, *Preparing for the Unexpected*, viewed on 26 September 2012, <http://www.ema.gov.au/www/emaweb/rwpattach.nsf/VAP/(99292794923AE8E7CBABC6FB71541EE1)~Preparing+for+the+Unexpected.pdf/$file/Preparing+for+the+Unexpected.pdf>
[9] Australasian Fire and Emergency Service Authorities Council, *The Australasian Inter-service Incident Management System™: A Management System for any Emergency*, 3rd ed, 2011, p 56.
[10] *Broadcasting Services Act 1992*, s 123 (Cth).
[11] ACMA, *Broadcasting codes and schemes index*, viewed 26 September 2012, <http://www.acma.gov.au/WEB/STANDARD/pc=IND_REG_CODES_BCAST>

telecommunications carriers in order to disseminate telephone-based warnings to threatened communities.

Third party organisations that repost or rebroadcast warnings and information can also be highly valuable. All warning republishers should seek to adhere to the *Code of Practice for Warning Republishers*[12].

---

[12] *Code of Practice for Warning Republishers*

3 Strategic, policy and legal framework for the delivery of warnings

The delivery of warnings is firmly situated within broader national and state and territory emergency management arrangements.

National Strategy for Disaster Resilience

The _National Strategy for Disaster Resilience_ (the Strategy), adopted by the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) in early 2011, provides high-level guidance on disaster management to Commonwealth, state, territory and local governments, business and community leaders and the not-for-profit sector. The Strategy recognises that disaster resilience is a shared responsibility for individuals, households, businesses and communities, as well as for governments. The Strategy is the first step in a long-term, evolving process to deliver sustained behavioural change and enduring partnerships to build disaster resilient Australian communities.

The dissemination of emergency warnings to communities is recognised in the Strategy as an important element of disaster resilience[13]. Providing communities with warnings informs their decision-making. Key to this is the availability of transparent, accurate, accessible and trusted information sources in various forms. Equally important is educating people how to respond to emergency warnings. Disaster resilient communities have the confidence to seek information from multiple trusted sources about local hazards and risks, and the ability to respond and take appropriate action accordingly.

National Warning Principles

In October 2008, the then Ministerial Council for Police and Emergency Management - Emergency Management (MCPEM-EM)[14] endorsed the following twelve national emergency warning principles. The principles provide a framework that guides public warning activities. A number of states and territories have developed their own protocols that reference these Principles:

1. **Coordinated:** a warning system should avoid duplication of effort where possible and support a shared understanding of the situation among different agencies involved in managing the incident.

---

[13] Council of Australian Governments, _National Strategy for Disaster Resilience_, 2011, pp 10, 12.

[14] Now called the Standing Council on Police and Emergency Management.

2. **Authoritative and accountable:** warnings are to be disseminated on the decision of an authorised person. Authorities should be able to interrogate the system components for later analysis.

3. **Consistent / Standards based:** the information content is coordinated across all of the mechanisms used for warnings. Messages must be consistent across different sources if they are to be believed by the general population. Conflicting messages create uncertainty and will delay responsive action. Any relevant identified standards will underpin the agreed System Framework.

4. **Complete:** message content should include relevant pertinent details, including possibly a direction on the need to consult other sources, presented in a way that is easily and quickly understood by the population. This includes multiple languages in some cases, as well as the use of multi-media for those who are illiterate or people with a disability (eg. people who are Deaf or have a hearing impairment or those who are blind or have a vision impairment).

5. **Multi-modal:** warnings are to be disseminated using a variety of delivery mechanisms and in multiple information presentation formats that will, in some circumstances, complement each other to produce a complete picture, with planning and processes to allow for maximum reach to all members of the community and to provide for redundancies in the case of critical infrastructure failure (eg. power or telecommunications).

6. **All-hazards:** any emergency warning system developed will be capable of providing warnings, where practicable, for any type of emergency.

7. **Targeted:** messages should be targeted to those communities at risk in order to reduce the complacency that can result from people receiving warnings that do not apply to them – 'over warning'.

8. **Interoperable:** have coordinated delivery methods, capable of operation across jurisdictional borders for issuing warnings.

9. **Accessible and responsive:** capable of responding to and delivering warnings in an environment of demographic, social and technological change. Recognise the criticality of adopting universal design and access principles, particularly in the development and acquisition of technologies.

10. **Verifiable:** the community is able to verify and authenticate the warnings to reduce incidents of accidental activations and prevent malicious attempts to issue false alerts to a population.

11. **Underpinned by education and awareness raising activities:** the system, any delivery mechanisms that constitute it and the language used in the warning messages it delivers, should be underpinned by appropriate education and awareness raising activities.

12. **Compatible:** with the existing telecommunications networks and infrastructure without adversely impacting on the normal telephone and broadcast system. The system should avoid any adverse operational, technical or commercial implications for the provision of current communications services to consumers and on the integrity of communications networks.

In 2009, to underpin the implementation of Emergency Alert, state and territory officials agreed to a further two principles:

13. **Compliant with relevant legislation:** warnings should be compliant with relevant Commonwealth, state and territory legislation, associated regulations and policy.

14. **Integrated:** warnings should be integrated to ensure timely notification to multiple organisational stakeholders and communication channels.

Common Alerting Protocol

The Common Alerting Protocol (CAP) is an international standard that facilitates the construction and exchange of emergency alert and warning messages between various warning systems and networks.[15]

In 2012, the Australian Government standard for the Common Alerting Protocol - Australia Profile (CAP-AU-STD) was released for public use by the CAP-AU Stakeholder Group, representing Commonwealth, state and territory governments, and industry. It provides a common standardised national approach for:

- governments seeking to distribute warnings about all hazards,

- organisations seeking to be interoperable with emergency alerting agencies or internally with their employees, and

- industry who market technologies that facilitate the distribution of alert and warning messages to the Australian public, or manage incidents of interest to organisations.

Applying the CAP-AU-STD standard to Australian emergency warnings assists people from non-English speaking backgrounds and people with disabilities, including people who are Deaf or hearing impaired, and people who are blind or vision impaired, as it facilitates the delivery of warnings through a variety of widely-used technologies.

Emergency Warnings – Choosing Your Words

The Commonwealth Attorney-General's Department publication, *Emergency Warnings: Choosing Your Words* (2009), provides guidance on the effective wording of warnings.

The guide includes information on:

- guiding principles of communicating a public warning,

- how to structure a warning (ie. information that should be included),

---

[15] For further information on the international CAP standard, *Common Alerting Protocol (CAP) v1.2*, see: <https://www.oasis-open.org/standards> viewed 12 April 2013.

- language choice for the warning, and

- crafting warnings that are targeted to culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities.

Legislative arrangements

State and territory legislation

State-based emergency management legislation underpins the warning arrangements for each state and territory. The following list provides a brief summary of each state and territory's legislative arrangements for emergency management.[16]

New South Wales

New South Wales' emergency preparedness, response and recovery arrangements are detailed in the _New South Wales State Disaster Plan_ (DISPLAN). DISPLAN, and its subsidiary documents, are underpinned by the _State Emergency and Rescue Management Act 1989_.[17]

Victoria

The _Emergency Management Act 1986_ defines most of Victoria's emergency management structure, and outlines significant roles and responsibilities.[18]

The _Fire Services Commissioner Act 2010_ provides for the appointment, powers and functions of the Fire Services Commissioner and amends Victoria's Emergency Management Arrangements. Section 24 of the Act refers to the Fire Services Commissioner's responsibility to warn the community about fires.[19]

Queensland

The Queensland _Disaster Management Act 2003_ and the _Fire and Rescue Service Act 1990_ form the legislative basis for emergency management activities in Queensland. Queensland's disaster

---

[16] Lists of the government agencies responsible for issuing warnings are located in part 5, _Warning mechanisms_.

[17] _New South Wales State Disaster Plan_, 2009, viewed 3 September 2012, <http://www.emergency.nsw.gov.au/media/1164.pdf>; _State Emergency and Rescue Management Act 1989_ (NSW).

[18] _Emergency Management Act 1986_ (Vic); _Emergency Management in Victoria: Part 1: Emergency Management Manual Victoria_, 2009, viewed 3 September 2012, <http://www.oesc.vic.gov.au/resources/b9403e05-2e8e-42bb-afbd-5be3b621a471/part%2b1%2bemmv.pdf>

[19] _Fire Services Commissioner Act 2010_ (Vic).

management arrangements include the [Queensland Disaster Management Strategic Policy Framework](#) and the [State Disaster Management Plan](#).[20]

Western Australia

The Western Australia *[Emergency Management Act 2005](#)* provides for the prompt and coordinated organisation of emergency management in the state, and for related purposes.[21] The Act establishes emergency management structures and provides the authority and powers for emergency management.

South Australia

The *[Emergency Management Act 2004](#)* and the *State Emergency Management Plan* establish the framework for the management of emergencies in South Australia. These documents provide for the establishment of a number of state councils, committees and agencies, and outline responsibilities, authorities and the mechanisms to prevent, manage, and recover from disasters within South Australia.[22]

Tasmania

Emergency Management in Tasmania operates under *[Emergency Management Act 2006](#)* and the [Tasmanian Emergency Management Plan](#).[23]

Australian Capital Territory

The *[Emergencies Act 2004](#)* provides for emergency management arrangements in the Australian Capital Territory (ACT), including the *[ACT Emergency Plan](#)*, which describes the responsibilities, authorities and the mechanisms to prevent, and manage emergencies and their consequences in the ACT.[24]

---

[20] *Disaster Management Act 2003* (Qld); *Fire and Rescue Service Act 1990* (QLD); The State of Queensland (Emergency Management Queensland, Department of Community Safety), *Disaster Management Strategic Policy Framework*, 2010; The State of Queensland (State Disaster Management Group), *Queensland State Disaster Management Plan,* 2011.

[21] *Emergency Management Act 2005* (WA); *Emergency Management Regulations 2006* (WA).

[22] *Emergency Management Act 2004* (SA); Government of South Australia, *State Emergency Management Plan*, version 2.8, viewed 14 January 2013, <www.safecom.sa.gov.au/public/download.jsp?id=3799>

[23] *Emergency Management Act 2006* (Tas); Department of Police and Emergency Management, Tasmanian Government, *Tasmanian Emergency Management Plan*, Issue 7, July 2012, viewed 21 January 2013, <http://www.ses.tas.gov.au/Library/temp/SES_Temp_v7.pdf>

[24] *Emergencies Act 2004* (ACT); ACT Government, *Emergency Planning Arrangements*, viewed 3 September 2012, <http://esa.act.gov.au/emergency-management/emergency-arrangements/>

Northern Territory

The *Disasters Act* provides for the establishment of an emergency management organisation at territory, regional, and local level.[25]

Commonwealth legislation

The Bureau of Meteorology (the Bureau), Australia's national weather, climate and water agency, operates under the authority of the *Meteorology Act 1955* and the *Water Act 2007*, which provide the legal basis for its activities, including issuing warnings and watch notices to the community.[26] The Bureau also issues tsunami warnings in conjunction with Geoscience Australia.

The *Telecommunications Act 1997* provides for the disclosure of information from the Integrated Public Number Database (IPND) for emergency warning purposes.[27] In practice, telephone number and address information held in the IPND is used to populate the Location Based Number Store (LBNS), which is then accessed by state and territory emergency services organisations to deliver telephone-based emergency warnings.

---

[25] *Disasters Act* (NT).
[26] *Meteorology Act 1955*, s 6(c) (Cth); *Water Act,* s 120 (Cth).
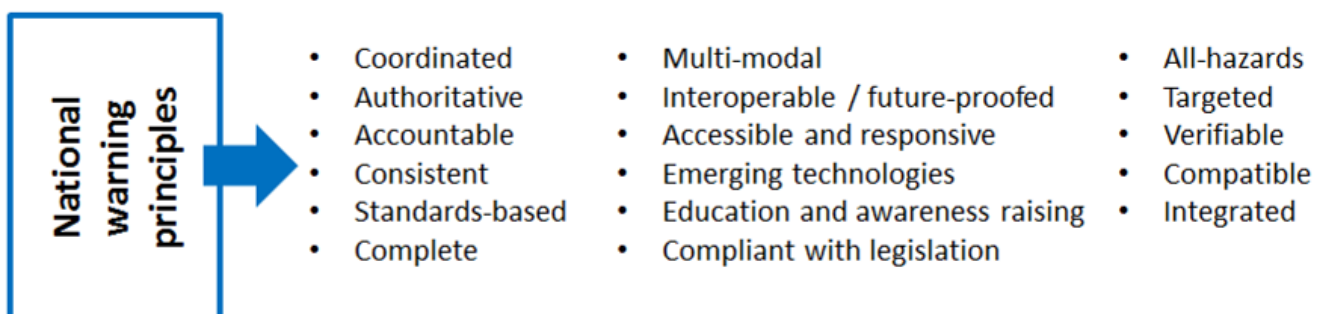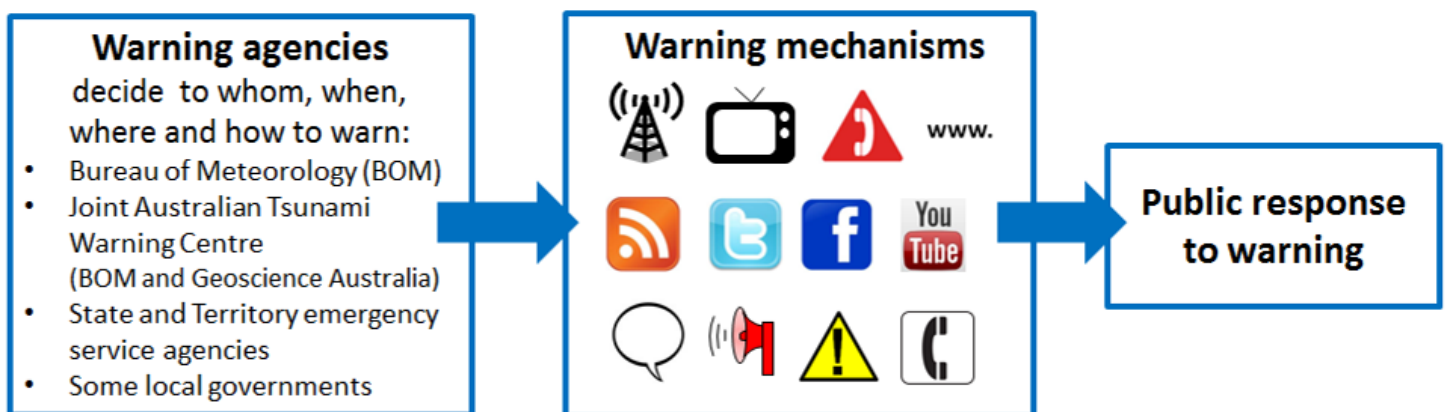[27] *Telecommunications Act 1997* (Cth).

4 Australian Emergency Warning Arrangements diagram*

AUSTRALIAN EMERGENCY WARNING ARRANGEMENTS

Underpinned by:
- Australian Emergency Management Arrangements
- National warning principles
- National Strategy for Disaster Resilience
- Legislation
- Policies, practices and standard operating procedures
- Common Alerting Protocol (CAP-AU-STD)

Warning agencies
decide to whom, when, where and how to warn:
- Bureau of Meteorology (BOM)
- Joint Australian Tsunami Warning Centre (BOM and Geoscience Australia)
- State and Territory emergency service agencies
- Some local governments

Warning mechanisms

www.

Public response to warning

National warning principles
- Coordinated
- Authoritative
- Accountable
- Consistent
- Standards-based
- Complete
- Multi-modal
- Interoperable / future-proofed
- Accessible and responsive
- Emerging technologies
- Education and awareness raising
- Compliant with legislation
- All-hazards
- Targeted
- Verifiable
- Compatible
- Integrated

*See *Part 5 – Warning Mechanisms* for an explanation of each warning mechanism.

5 Warning mechanisms

Commonwealth and state and territory warning authorities have a suite of delivery mechanisms to issue warnings to the community about actual or impending emergencies. These range from traditional methods such as television and radio broadcasts, community meetings and sirens, to more modern methods, such as mobile telephone SMS messages and social networking posts (eg. Facebook and Twitter).

All Australian governments support a multi-modal approach to issuing emergency warnings. A multimodal approach maximises the likelihood that as many people as possible will receive and comprehend a warning. This makes it more likely that people will be in a position to take appropriate action to protect against loss of life, or injury, and to mitigate against damage to property.

No warning mechanism is guaranteed to deliver warnings to all people in a given area at a given point in time. Thus, it is critical that no single mode of warning or communication is relied upon solely, in times of emergency—either by the public to receive warnings, or by warning agencies to disseminate them.

The Standard Emergency Warning Signal

The Standard Emergency Warning Signal (SEWS) is a distinctive audio signal used in Australia to alert the public to the broadcast of an urgent safety message relating to a major disaster or emergency. It is meant to attract listener's attention to an impending emergency message. For example, Emergency Alert warnings sent to landline telephones commence with the SEWS signal.

In addition to the audio signal, SEWS also has a visual identity which includes a logo and slogan for use by the media. The visual identity facilitates greater awareness of SEWS.

stop & listen
Standard Emergency Warning Signal

Emergency warning mechanisms used by emergency services organisations in Australia

The following table provides an explanation of the types of warning mechanisms available.

Broadcast radio		Broadcast radio, particularly local radio, can play a significant role in disseminating timely, tailored and relevant warnings and information to communities at risk of an emergency.
Television		Similar to radio, television can provide timely and useful information to the public in the event of an emergency. Television has the advantage of being able to provide captioning for people who are Deaf or hearing impaired, and some television media outlets also provide an Auslan interpretor during a disaster.
Emergency Alert		Emergency Alert is Australia's nationally consistent telephone-based emergency warning system. It is a 24/7 intrusive capability which issues warnings to telephones linked to the addresses (properties and houses) within a geographical area affected by an emergency. Emergency Alert warnings can now also be sent to some mobile telephones based on the last known location of the handset at the time of an emergency. Location-based warnings will be available on all mobile networks from November 2013. See www.emergencyalert.gov.au.
Official emergency services website	www.	Many official emergency services websites provide up-to-date emergency warnings and information for the public.
Emergency services information line and IVR		A number of emergency services organisations provide warnings and hazard information to the public via telephone information lines and interactive voice recordings (IVR).
RSS Feed		RSS feeds allow the public to receive live web feeds from official emergency services websites to keep up to date on emergency information.
Face-to-face		Face-to-face meetings between emergency services and individuals, including door-knocking, and community or street meetings, is used in some circumstances to issue localised emergency warnings from emergency services personnel to members of the public.
Twitter		Social media sites such as Twitter, Facebook and YouTube are now recognised by many emergency services organisations as important tools for communicating with people during emergencies, and can also be an important source for situational intelligence.
Facebook		
YouTube		
Hazard signs		Hazard signs, including electronic signs, are used to warn the public of dangerous conditions.
Community sirens		A community siren is a mechanical or electronic device used for generating either a loud signal or a voice message to warn a community that an emergency has been identified in the local area and that people should seek further information.

State and territory warning originators

The following agencies have a role in providing emergency warnings to the community.[28] Most agencies issue warnings via face-to-face meetings, door-knocking, radio, television, Emergency Alert and official websites. Increasingly, agencies are adopting social media, such as RSS, Facebook and Twitter to issue warnings to a wider audience.

Further information on the types of warnings issued by each agency can be found by contacting the agency directly.

New South Wales

 New South Wales Ministry for Police and Emergency Services

 New South Wales Police Force

 Fire and Rescue NSW

 New South Wales Rural Fire Service

 New South Wales Ambulance, and

 New South Wales State Emergency Service.

Victoria

 Victoria Police

 Victorian State Emergency Services

 Metropolitan Fire and Emergency Service Board

---

[28] The government agencies listed in this section are responsible for disseminating warnings for rapid onset emergencies. The following lists do not detail government agencies that are responsible for issuing warnings for events such as animal/plant disease outbreaks and pest infestations.

Country Fire Authority

Emergency Service Telecommunications Authority, and

Department of Sustainability and Environment

Queensland

Queensland Department of Community Safety

Emergency Management Queensland

Queensland Police

Queensland Fire and Rescue Service, and

Queensland State Emergency Service.

Western Australia

Western Australia Police

Department of Fire and Emergency Services

Public Transport Authority of Western Australia, and

Western Australia Department of Health

South Australia

 Alert SA

 South Australian Country Fire Service

 South Australian Metropolitan Fire Service, and

 South Australia Police

 State Emergency Service SA.

Tasmania

 Tasmania Police

 Tasmania Fire Service, and

 State Emergency Service Tasmania.

Australian Capital Territory

 ACT Emergency Services Agency

Northern Territory

 Northern Territory Police Fire and Emergency Services, and

 Bushfires NT.

Commonwealth warning originators

Bureau of Meteorology

Geoscience Australia (in conjunction with the Bureau of Meteorology), and

Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry.