EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT GLOSSARY

For Multicultural Community Leaders

This is a glossary of key emergency management terms and organisations. It has been developed for multicultural community leaders and bilingual workers to better understand and navigate the emergency management sector, and support their communities to prepare for, and be safe during, emergencies. It has been produced by the Multicultural Emergency Management Partnership and Neighbourhood Collective Australia in partnership with Ethnic Communities' Council of Victoria.

Key terms

Australian Fire Danger Rating System: This is a daily forecast which rates how dangerous a bushfire would be if it broke out, and what you need to do to stay safe. This can be found on public signage on the side of roads and is often broadcast through traditional and social media.

Climate change: Long-term shifts in temperatures and weather patterns. Currently, warmer temperatures over time are changing weather patterns and disrupting the usual balance of nature, making emergencies such as bush fires and floods more frequent and harder to predict.

Cultural safety: Creating a space that is spiritually, emotionally and socially safe for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and people from cultural and racial minority groups. This means there is no racism and no challenge or denial of their identity or experiences. It requires workplaces and organisations to have a high level of cultural competency and have policies and practices in place to adequately meet people's cultural needs.

Disaster and Emergency: These terms are often used interchangeably. An event which endangers or threatens to endanger life, property or the environment, and which requires a significant and coordinated response. Emergencies include bushfires, storms, floods and earthquakes.

Emergency Broadcasters: Television and radio stations that give official emergency information during and emergency based on advice from emergency services. They can interrupt normal programs to give these messages. A list of Official Emergency Broadcasters in Victoria can be found here.

Emergency Relief Centre: A place you can go to in an emergency that provides information about the emergency and the support and referrals available to help people or communities cope with an emergency.

Municipal Emergency Management Committee: A committee that exists in every locally government area and coordinated emergency management planning activities locally.

Preparedness: The knowledge and capacities developed to effectively anticipate, respond to and recover from the impacts of likely, imminent or current emergencies.

Psychological First Aid: is a psychosocial support activity normally provided by a trained volunteer that helps people affected by an emergency, traumatic event or when they are having a mental health crisis. It aims to address emotional and practical needs and concerns, refer people to the right services and build people's capacity to recover.

Recovery: The coordinated process of supporting emergency-affected communities in restoring emotional, social, economic and physical well-being and the reconstruction of infrastructure.

Relief: The provision of immediate shelter, life support and human needs of people affected by, or responding to, an emergency. It includes the establishment, management and provision of services to emergency relief centres.

Resilience: Being able to withstand or to recover quickly from difficulties. The ability to successfully adapt to life's challenges.

Response: Actions taken directly before, during or immediately after an emergency in order to save lives, reduce health impacts, ensure public safety and meet the basic needs of people affected.

VicEmergency app and website: This app and website has centralised emergency information and warnings. It includes a real-time map displaying incidents such as floods, fires and storms.

Key emergency organisations:

- **Ambulance Victoria:** Emergency medical response and transport to hospital.

- **Australian Red Cross:** Help before, during and after emergencies and disasters.

- **Department of Health:** The Department of Health works to enhance and protect the health and wellbeing of all Victorians during emergencies that have major health consequences.

- **Country Fire Authority (CFA):** Volunteer fire safety for rural and regional Victoria.

- **Emergency Management Victoria:** Victoria's lead emergency management agency.

- **Emergency Recovery Victoria:** Connecting individuals, families, communities, businesses and regions to rebuild and recover after a disaster.

- **Fire Rescue Victoria:** Fire and rescue services for Melbourne and Victoria's major regional cities.

- **Life Saving Victoria:** Water safety, swimming, rescue, and resuscitation services.

- **Municipal Association of Victoria:** The peak body for Victorian local councils.

- **Multicultural Emergency Management Partnership (MEMP):** an independent group that provides strategic direction and leadership to enable safer, connected and resilient communities across Victoria.

- **Victorian Council of Churches Emergency Ministry:** Outreach, psychological first aid, personal support and emotional care during and after emergencies.

- **Victoria Police:** Public safety, emergencies, serious incidents, crime, road safety etc.

- **Victoria State Emergency Service (SES):** Volunteer responses to floods, storms, landslides, etc.

For more information or to get in touch go to:

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