

SOUTH AUSTRALIAN STATE EMERGENCY SERVICE

STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

2020 – 2023



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Strategic Directions 2020-2023

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MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF OFFICER



The South Australian State Emergency Service (SASES) exists to minimise the loss of life, injuries and property damage from emergencies and natural disasters. Our plans and strategies have been developed to address existing and emerging community needs and the strategic priorities of government.

The service faces a number of challenges, with changing risk profiles in extreme weather and responding to increasingly significant events which at times involves multiple hazards. Findings from the SA Government's independent review, and the SASES' internal review, into the extreme weather events experienced in South Australia in 2016 indicated a community need for reliable information; increased pressure on incident management teams and other resources; and the importance of timely access to flood intelligence and comprehensive flood response planning.

The extensive bushfires experienced across Australia during late 2019 and early 2020 were a graphic example of the increasing complexity of incident management during widespread and prolonged emergency events. SASES played an important support role in fire response activities for both the Cudlee Creek and Kangaroo Island bushfires and nationally, supporting incident management teams and assisting in deployment coordination for the eastern states.

In recent months SASES has been called upon to assist in incident management teams for SA Health, in response to COVID-19, and for PIRSA, in response to numerous fruit fly outbreaks across South Australia. SASES' role in supporting other agencies in emergency and disaster management have never been more clear.

At the same time, declining volunteerism across all sectors in society over recent years puts increased pressure on SASES to maintain an effective volunteer workforce. This will continue to be a priority - not only in recruitment, but also with strategies to ensure that volunteers are supported to strengthen retention rates.

This plan provides guidance on the service's priority strategies in light of its growing operational commitments. The service's focus and training efforts must continue to respond to both forecast and unforeseen challenges. In this regard, the service will maintain a primary focus on supporting its frontline people and the communities they serve.

The goals and objectives contained in this plan will drive and focus the efforts of staff and volunteers to meet the challenge of serving the people of South Australia, ensuring that SASES continues to grow its reputation as a reliable and trusted volunteer based organisation building safe and resilient communities.

Finally, it is important to be reminded that members of SASES exercise authority on behalf of the South Australian Government and manage significant financial, physical and human resources on its behalf. The community demands high standards of behaviour and ethical conduct. Our values guide and support our people; and strengthen public confidence in the service. They align with the South Australian Government's Public Sector Values and Behaviour Framework and are supported by the SASES Code of Conduct. They underpin everything we do:

- Service
- Professionalism
- Trust
- Respect
- Collaboration & Engagement
- Honest & Integrity
- Courage & Tenacity
- Sustainability

Further details on these values are contained in the SASES Annual Business Plans published and endorsed by the SAFECOM Board each year.

I am proud of the contribution this agency has made to safer communities. Despite all of the challenges, SASES staff and volunteers have demonstrated significant resilience and an ability to adapt to circumstances that were not foreseen or specifically planned for.

I encourage every member to embrace the agency's goals, objectives and strategic priorities outlined in this document.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Chris Beattie".

Chris Beattie
Chief Officer

SASES ROLE

Vision

A reliable and trusted volunteer based organisation building safe and resilient communities.

Mission

To minimise the loss of life, injuries and damage from emergencies and natural disasters.

Role

SASES has a number of legislative roles, including exercising responsibilities as Control Agency for flooding, extreme weather and structural collapse. SASES is also a Hazard Leader for extreme weather including storms and heatwaves.

Operational functions include responding to floods and storms; assisting police, health, and the two fire agencies in dealing with any emergency; as well as assisting in carrying out prevention, preparedness, response and recovery operations and undertaking rescues.

The rescue and support services SASES volunteer units provide include:

- storm damage and flood mitigation
- general rescue
- road crash rescue
- structural collapse and confined space search and rescue
- urban search and rescue (USAR)
- land search
- air observation
- animal rescue
- vertical rescue of all forms (cliffs, caves and structures)
- marine search and rescue (rivers, lakes and sea)
- swiftwater rescue
- incident management
- operations and logistics support
- base camp and staging area management.

In addition to volunteer response training and operations, SASES is also involved in community education and emergency management activities including planning, training and support to zone emergency management committees.

At the strategic-level the service is focused on building community resilience to natural disasters and continues to support the implementation of the National Disaster Resilience Strategy. This strategy recognises that an integrated, coordinated and cooperative effort is needed to enhance Australia's capacity to prepare for, withstand, and recover from disasters. While the national strategy focuses on priority areas to build disaster resilient communities, it also recognises that disaster resilience is a shared responsibility for individuals, households, businesses and communities, as well as for governments and emergency services.

SASES roles and associated outcomes/ goals can be summarised as follows:

ROLE	OUTCOME/ GOAL
Emergency management and Hazard Leader	Disaster resilient communities
Emergency service and Control Agency	Coordinated, well-managed emergency response
Volunteer based organisation	Sustainable, well-trained volunteer workforce
Responsible government agency	Ethical, well-managed agency

SASES APPROACH TO STRATEGIC PLANNING

SASES has undertaken a comprehensive environmental scan to determine its strategic priorities for the coming three years.

This process commenced in 2019 with a strategic planning workshop and concluded more recently with submissions from SASES management, staff, SASES volunteers and the SASES Volunteer's Association on the most significant risks, challenges, and opportunities for the agency.

An assessment of national policy and priorities included a review of directions from organisations such as AFAC, AIDR, BNHCRC and documents such as the new National Partnership Agreement for Disaster Risk Reduction, the National Disaster Risk Reduction Framework, and the Australian Disaster Preparedness Framework. SASES' also recognises that the current Royal Commission into National Natural Disaster Arrangements will likely result in recommendations and new strategic measures that the agency may need to respond to.

State policy and priorities were also reviewed including recent directions from Cabinet's Emergency Management Council, State Emergency Management Committee (SEMC), the Across Government Climate Change Action Group and a review of key documentation such as the State Emergency Management Plan and "*Stronger together – South Australia's Disaster Resilience Strategy*", together with more general directions such as DPC's recent Circular 043 "*Public Sector Responsiveness*".

Sector directions and priorities were identified from the SAFECOM Delivery Framework (draft), agreed recommendations from the *Analysis of South Australia's Emergency Services 2019*, and the forward strategic agenda focussing on the new Emergency Services Headquarters and State Control Centre, Automatic Vehicle Location, next generation volunteering, data and digital innovation and enhancing resilience through planning and the built environment.

Emerging risks identified included effects of climate change, cyber crime, ongoing COVID-19 impacts (social and economic), increasing compliance requirements, generational changes, demographic changes, aging population (incl workforce), volunteering challenges, and ageing assets and infrastructure.

The review process identified a number of emerging opportunities including leveraging Digital SA initiatives, greater use of artificial intelligence, increased automation, utilisation of remotely piloted aircraft (drones), development of a common operating picture, increased utilisation of ICT systems to improve internal and external service delivery, as well as greater emphasis on, and investment in planning and disaster prevention and preparedness.

Lessons learned came from internal operational reviews, including the SASES commissioned Lawson Report, the State commissioned Burns' review and commentary emerging from the National Royal Commission into the 2019 Bushfire season and the Keelty independent review into the 2019/20 SA bushfires.

Key external stakeholders include the Minister for Police, Emergency Services and Correctional Services, Department of Environment and Water (Hazard leader for Flood), SAPOL, SAAS, SA Health, Bureau of Meteorology, other emergency service agencies (CFS, MFS, SAFECOM), Local Government organisations, and communities. All of these organisations and individuals have an interest in SES activities and expectations about the services provided.

Internal stakeholder requirements have been derived from results from a range of recent surveys including the biennial SES "Pulse" survey, the "I Work for SA survey", and an ICAC Awareness survey.



SASES OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

The following table details the SASES goals, objectives and associated priority strategies that will be pursued over the next three years.

Goal: Disaster resilient communities	
<i>Objectives</i>	<i>Priority Strategies 2020 - 2023</i>
1. Risks identified, understood and managed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support Zone Emergency Management Committees to undertake long-term emergency management planning and risk assessments • Support Local Government emergency management planning
2. Communities educated and prepared	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement a Community Engagement and Resilience Program
3. Hazard plans in place	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain the hazard plan for extreme weather
Goal: Coordinated, well-managed emergency response	
<i>Objectives</i>	<i>Priority Strategies 2020 - 2023</i>
4. Emergency events/incidents responded to and managed effectively, efficiently and in a timely manner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build incident management capacity • Implement new ways of working to enhance emergency management coordination, collaboration and interoperability • Develop catchment flood response plans • Develop SASES response plans • Publish contemporary operational doctrine
5. Timely and effective public information and warnings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build public information capability, resources and systems
6. Required systems and resources provided for effective response	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further develop operational management systems • Enhance community interface for service requests
7. Emerging service possibilities pursued	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand SASES footprint to meet service gaps
Goal: Sustainable, well-trained volunteer workforce	
<i>Objectives</i>	<i>Priority Strategies 2020 - 2023</i>
8. Volunteer workforce supported and sustained	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement the Volunteer Workforce Generation Capability Development Action Plan • Provide training to improve skills in managing volunteers • Support VMR services • Improve recognition of volunteer efforts and achievements
9. Volunteers prepared with skills required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review/update training content, materials and delivery models • Implement programs to prevent loss of existing volunteer skills • Support delivery of the new training administration program

Goal: Ethical, well-managed agency*Objectives**Priority Strategies 2020 - 2023*

10. Effective governance systems in place

- Improve the agency's governance framework
- Implement the revised Risk Management Framework

11. Continuous improvement and innovative solutions pursued

- Sustain customer service
- Further improve lessons management processes
- Explore opportunities for digital improvement and innovation

12. Values-based work culture embedded

- Promote diversity and inclusion in SASES

13. Safe working environment maintained

- Enhance mental health and wellbeing
- Improve workforce health, safety and compliance

14. Physical and human resources are well-managed

- Implement the revised Capability Management Framework
- Review and update the Resource Allocation framework
- Enhance coordination of education and training strategies
- Develop contemporary organisational development strategies
- Enhance strategic asset and infrastructure planning
- Incorporate climate change considerations into agency plans
- Transition to the new Emergency Services Sector Control Centre

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Better information improves agency accountability and contributes to improved community safety outcomes by driving better service delivery within SASES.

The SASES is committed to continuous improvement of its performance reporting by improving the quality and scope of data collection and data definitions and investigating and resolving data comparability issues in performance indicators.

The agency's current reporting framework remains valid and includes data collection and analysis for:

- **Report on Government Services** - a national report which informs improvements to the effectiveness and efficiency of government services
- **Budget Paper No. 4 Agency Statements** - presents the State Government's current and estimated revenue, expenses and performance measures by agency
- **Organisational performance reporting** - provides monthly performance and activity data to the SASES Governance Reporting and Review Group
- **SAFECOM Board Monthly Report** –provides monthly details on a range of operational matters to the SAFECOM Board
- **Annual Report** –reports on business priorities and performance against budget.

OUTPUTS *Technical efficiency indicators* measure the efficiency with which annual business actions are delivered

OUTCOMES *Performance effectiveness indicators* measure the effectiveness of the three-year priority strategies to achieve SASES' objectives

