

Communiqué

Ministerial Council for Police and Emergency Management – Emergency Management
Sydney, 6 November 2008



MEMBERS OF THE MINISTERIAL COUNCIL ARE:

The Hon Robert McClelland (Australian Government Attorney-General, Chair)
Cr Paul Bell AM (President, Australian Local Government Association)
The Hon Neil Roberts (QLD)
The Hon Tony Kelly (NSW)

The Hon Bob Cameron (VIC)
The Hon Michael Wright (SA)
The Hon Rob Johnson (WA) (absent)
The Hon Jim Cox (TAS)
The Hon Paul Henderson (NT) (absent)
Mr Simon Corbell (ACT) (absent)
The Hon Rick Barker (NZ) (absent)

The cooperation and goodwill between Ministers responsible for emergency management continued in the second meeting for 2008 of the Ministerial Council for Police and Emergency Management (MCPEM-EM), held in Sydney.

Chaired by the Australian Attorney-General Robert McClelland, the Ministerial Council also comprises State and Territory government and New Zealand ministers, and the Australian Local Government Association.

The Council unanimously agreed that the future direction for Australian emergency management should be based on creating a more disaster resilient Australia through:

- further development of a National Catastrophic Disaster Plan;
- improving volunteer attraction and retention;
- development of climate change adaptation strategies for the emergency management sector;
- building a strategy for enhancing national partnerships with the private sector and NGOs; and
- development of national strategies for community engagement, education and enhancing self reliance and recovery.

Climate change was recognised as a very significant strategic issue for emergency management. The Council resolved to develop a MCPEM-EM climate change action plan.

The Council also endorsed the draft Australian Emergency Management Arrangements. These arrangements describe how Australia collectively approaches the management of emergencies including catastrophic disaster events and how the arrangements will assist in creating more informed and safer communities that are better able to withstand natural disasters.

The Council acknowledged the invaluable contribution of volunteers in emergency management. Options to attract, support and retain volunteers in emergency management are being developed, with an action plan to be released in 2009.

Recognising that disasters do not always confine themselves to jurisdictional boundaries, and that no single organisation or government in Australia can successfully address disaster risk alone, the Council agreed to further develop national partnerships between governments, the private sector and NGOs.

These partnerships would build on each other's strengths and innovations, assisting more effective and efficient community engagement in emergency management.