

RESPONSE TO LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS.

NSW Police Force, Western Region Office

1. Could you please outline the structure of the emergency response and management framework that applies over the Far West region of NSW, particularly for the remote and rural towns outside of Broken Hill?

The response and management framework are decided by individual agencies both locally, regionally and State for remote and rural towns outside of Broken Hill. As most of the agencies in these towns are very few. NSW Police Force, NSW Rural Fire Service (the most common agency), NSW State Emergency Service, NSW Health are within these towns and then one or two other agencies dependent on location.

a. Who is responsible for determining the membership and meetings of the Local and Regional Emergency Management Committees in the Far West region?

The responsible party for determining membership of Local and Regional Emergency Management meeting's is legislated out of the State Emergency Management Act where the Functional Areas and ESO's have voting rights on the Committees. This was recently reviewed and sent out by the SEOCON. Depending on the infrastructure, community and hazards other members are invited to the meetings to be observers. The REMO has been asked to provide advice on who else should join which they have provided, but the Chair of the Committee as the final say.

The meetings for Local Emergency Management Committees are determined by the Chair of the meeting, usually the LEMO in conjunction with the REMO to ensure there are no clashes with any other meetings. The LEMO then confirms the meeting dates, time and location and advises all agencies involved.

For Regional Emergency Management Committees, the REMO determines the meeting dates in conjunction with the REOCON to ensure they are available to attend and do not clash with other REMC meetings across the Region.

2. Your submission noted that the 'development of a strategy to combat' the difficulty of reaching 'small, isolated communities' should be explored.

a. Who should lead the development of such a strategy?

The LEMC's should develop the strategy with support from the REMO. Local people are the ones who know their communities best. There should be far more emphasis on individual agencies attending and reporting as members of the LEMC. Some agencies do not always have representation but want to have their say when issues arise or things go wrong rather than being available to provide continual support to the community.

b. Would you agree that such a strategy would need to be tailored for each community and be able to recognise and utilise existing community networks and relationships?

Yes, as mentioned above the LEMC's should be responsible for these actions. If you bring in external consultants or people from outside of community, the strategy is then not owned by the locals and the local community becomes disenfranchised.

c. Should this strategy be reflected across all EMPLANS, from the State level down?

No, each LEMC is different and some LEMC's do not deal with small or isolated communities. This is the reason the EMPLAN should be managed at a local level to address local nuances.

3. At the hearing, we heard about the effectiveness of the Public Information Functional Area during the outages.

a. What actions under the Public Information Services Functional Area Supporting Plan were taken in relation to the outages emergency?

- PIFAC stood up by the SEOCON
- PIFAC supported EUSFA (Energy & Utilities Services Functional Area) as the Combat agency.
- PIFAC coordinated information from Essential Services Organisations (ESO's), Functional Areas, Supporting and Participating agencies. PIFAC collated this information and combined it with the Combat Agency information and reported to the whole of Government distribution list.
- PIFAC attended and reported in REMC and LEMC meetings.
- PIFAC had one on one conversations with the EUSFAC and TELCOFAC.
- PIFAC advertised the respite/recovery centres through the whole of Government channels.

b. Did this include activating a Public Information and Inquiry Centre?

- No.

c. What modes of communication were used to deliver the coordinated messaging during the emergency? How did the PIFAC decide what modes of communication would be used?

- Email to whole of Government.
- Social media via Police Facebook and the EUSFAC channels – DCCEEW socials and website.
- Coordinated communication facilitated across whole of government through shared messaging system to allow timely and accurate information dissemination and deconfliction.

4. Will an After Action Review Report be done for the outages emergency? If not, why?

The after-action review for this event is being conducted today 10am 1 April 2025 led By EUSFA. Finalised report to be compiled post this review.

The REMC after action review is being conducted on the Far West Power Outage at Broken Hill on the 16 April with all agencies involved. An after action report will be completed at its conclusion.