



VICTORIA STATE EMERGENCY SERVICE

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MEMORANDUM

TO: Stephen Lodge
Department of Human Services

CC: Paul Gabriel, OESC

FROM: VICSES Director

SUBJECT: Review of the Health Act 1958 -
Response From Victoria State Emergency Service

The Victoria State Emergency Service (VICSES) works extensively with local government in emergency management planning and with all government and non-government agencies involved in emergencies. The response to the discussion paper Review of the Health Act 1958 is limited to this perspective.

Issues for comment:

Issue 10

The Act should recognise the role municipal councils have in the prevention and preparedness functions of emergency management. This specifically relates to developing and implementing strategies to protect public health.

Issues 12-16

The Act should clearly articulate the need for the Municipal Public Health Plan to articulate with the Municipal Emergency Management Plan in relation to threats to public health prevention and management.

Issue 17

One of the roles of the Medical Officer of Health (MOH) in municipalities is oversight of immunisation. If councils are no longer required to appoint a MOH consideration should be given to arrangements to ensure municipalities are able to assist DHS in a situation where mass immunisation of communities may be required.

Issue 29

The Act should support and enhance the practice of risk management. Municipalities are currently required to engage in a community emergency risk management as part of the emergency management process.

Issue 58

Emergency powers should be general for "public health emergencies", not just limited to infectious diseases.

Issue 59

The proclamation of an emergency should be extended to four weeks, with renewal periods not exceeding two weeks to a maximum of six months.

Issue 60

Yes, there should be a fast-track mechanism for notifying a disease associated with a public health emergency.

Issue 61

Yes the Secretary should be given the powers to compel examination, testing, vaccination, treatment, isolation and quarantine.

Issue 63

Compliance with the demands from the Secretary during an emergency or outbreak of an infectious disease should be exempted from confidentiality.

If you require any further information please contact Paul Jerome, Manager, Community Safety, in the first instance on (03) 9684 6612.



Rhys Maggs
Director
Victoria State Emergency Service