



EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT GUIDANCE

FOR MINES IN VICTORIA

2023

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Introduction

The Australian mining industry's core value and commitment is the health, safety, and psychological wellbeing of its workforce, where everyone who goes to work returns home safe and healthy. The industry recognises that continuous effort is needed in areas of leadership, people, culture, behaviour, and systems.

Mining can be hazardous, and failures in safety systems can cause loss of life, significant injury, and impact on the environment. This means that emergency preparedness, based on credible scenario analysis, need to be incorporated and maintained in the mine's safety management system.

The Victorian Government and its Emergency Service agencies have a comprehensive set of arrangements designed to ensure appropriate preparedness and response capability in an emergency. In turn, the mining industry has a strong capability to respond to emergencies on site. It is therefore important to be clear about the roles and responsibilities of government agencies and mine operators during an emergency. Understanding the legal structures and operational capability of each party is necessary to achieve the best outcome possible.

This guidance has been developed to assist mine operators in understanding their legislative requirements for emergency management and the government emergency arrangements.



Emergency Management arrangements

The Emergency Management Act 1986 (EM Act 1986) and the Emergency Management Act 2013 (EM Act 2013) provide the legislative basis for emergency management in Victoria.

Emergency Management Victoria (EMV) is the government organisation that leads emergency management in Victoria. It does this by coordinating emergency preparedness, response, and recovery across the sector in collaboration with communities, government, and business.

State Emergency Management Plan

The Emergency Management Act 2013 (EM Act 2014) authorised the State Emergency Management Plan (SEMP), which contains information on response and recovery of emergency, and roles and responsibilities of agencies in relation to emergency management.

The SEMP identifies the primary government agency responsible for responding to a specified form of emergency. This agency is known as the 'Control Agency' and is usually the agency with the role or responsibility that is most closely aligned to the emergency (see Table 1). The Control Agency is responsible for establishing the arrangements for emergency response and will liaise with the other emergency agencies to organise the response activities, including issuing public information and warnings. The SEMP also identifies Support Agencies for response, see Table 2.

Form of emergency	Control Agency		
Explosion	Country Fire Authority (CFA) / Fire Rescue		
	Victoria (FRV)		
Fire	CFA / FRV / Department of Environment,		
	Land, Water and Planning (DELWP)		
Rescue – Lift, crane, scaffolding	CFA (exc. Cranes) / FRV		
Rescue – mine / quarry	Victorian Police (VicPol)		
Rescue - Trench or tunnel	FRV		
Rescue - Water	VicPol		
Hazardous material, dangerous	CFA / FRV		
goods			

Table 1: Control Agency in emergencies (emv.vic.gov.au)

Functional Area	Lead response support agency (RSA)
Ambulance services/first aid	Ambulance Victoria (AV)
Deceased person identification	VicPol
Earth resources (mines)	Department of Environment, Energy, and Climate Action (DEECA)
Emergency services telecommunications	Emergency Services Telecommunication Authority (ESTA)
Environmental impact (air, land, and water quality)	Environmental Protection Authority (EPA)
Responder agencies	CFA, FRV, DELWP, VICSES
WorkSafe	Victorian WorkCover Authority

Table 2: Support Agency in emergencies (emv.vic.gov.au)

Where an emergency type is not listed within the SEMP or where there is uncertainty identifying a Control Agency, the Emergency Management Commissioner or relevant Incident Emergency Response Coordinator will determine the Control Agency.

Another key document associated with the SEMP is the Victorian Emergency Operations Handbook (Handbook). It summarises the operational management structures and systems used by different government agencies for preparedness, readiness, response, and recovery to major emergencies in Victoria.

Incident Controller

The SEMP and Handbook identify different roles that could be involved in managing an emergency, including an Incident Controller (IC). The IC is appointed by the Control Agency as the first step in response to an incident. The IC leads and manages the incident response to an emergency and is usually the most senior agency person at the incident, and they will work to resolve the emergency using local resources.

For an emergency at a mine site, the IC would provide operational leadership during the incident. The IC may establish an Incident Emergency Management Team to support them in managing the effects and consequences of the emergency, including planning, intelligence, public information, operations, investigations, logistics and finance.

OHS Legislation

In Victoria, mine safety (including emergency response), is regulated by WorkSafe Victoria who enforce compliance with the Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004, and the Occupational Health and Safety Regulations 2017.

Part 5.3 (Mines) of the Occupational Health and Safety Regulations 2017 (the OHS Regulations) requires mine operators to prepare an emergency plan.

The following section contains key OHS legislation relating to emergency management, and practical guidance to assist with compliance.

Note this is not an exhaustive list, and should not be considered legal advice.

Regulation 433 - Emergency Plan

Emergency plan

(1) The operator of a prescribed mine must prepare an emergency plan for the mine in accordance with subregulation (2).

Note Act compliance—sections 21, 23 and 26 (see regulation 7).

(2) The emergency plan must—

(a) address all aspects of emergency response, including-

(i) ensuring that a system exists that enables all persons within the mine at any given time to be promptly located; and

(ii) the provision of adequate rescue equipment; and

(iii) ensuring that persons trained in the use of rescue equipment are available on site, or are on call, whenever any person is working at the mine; and

(b) be prepared in conjunction with—

(i) the emergency services that have responsibility for the area in which the mine is located; and

(ii) in relation to major mining hazards that could adversely affect the health or safety of persons in the area surrounding the mine, any municipal council in that area; and

(c) be documented in a form that it is readily comprehensible to persons who use it; and

(d) be able to be implemented immediately in response to an incident involving a significant risk of serious injury or death.

(3) The operator must immediately implement the emergency plan in responding to incidents involving a significant risk of serious injury or death.

Guidance on Regulation 433

An emergency plan is the primary means of responding to emergencies at the mine. The emergency plan will identify appropriate responses to all foreseeable emergencies to enable the mine to respond and re-establish control of hazards in each emergency.

The emergency plan also assists emergency services with understanding where employees are likely to be working, and what hazards may further impact the emergency. Therefore, the plan should include maps of the site detailing where any dangerous goods are stored, as well as different working areas (e.g., portal, magazine, office).

The emergency plan will include a general statement on the mine's emergency response capability, including site-specific rescue teams, and include a list of what emergency and rescue equipment is available and where it is stored.

NOTE: it is vital that all emergency equipment and facilities are tested regularly, either annually or more frequently as recommended by the manufacturer.

The emergency plan should also include other sources of equipment that may be needed in the event of an emergency. For example, from nearby mining operations or emergency services as agreed during the development of the emergency plan.

Regulation 433 - Emergency Plan - continued

Examples of equipment and facilities that may be part of a mine's emergency response capability include:

-First aid supplies

- -Fire pumps and extinguishers
- -Rescue equipment

-Equipment that can be assigned to an emergency task (e.g., a bulldozer or excavator used to build roads and trails can be used in an emergency to dam, water truck for firefighting) -Emergency transport vehicle

- -Marshalling points
- -Helicopter landing areas

-Nearby operations or external agencies that can source specific equipment, and

-External agencies that can provide specific services.

The emergency plan should outline the communication processes needed to ensure employees, emergency services and other businesses are contacted about the incident.

It should also describe how you locate everyone in the mine in a timely manner. Links for further guidance on what to include in an emergency plan is listed in Appendix A.

IMPORTANT! Everyone at the mine and emergency services needs to be able to read and understand the emergency plan. Remember to use simple language, and where possible include pictures and diagrams that can be easily understood. Consider translating the emergency plan into languages other than English as needed.

The Central Victoria Mine Rescue Group 'Mutual Aid Guidelines 2022' (see Appendix A) recommends that every operating mine site in Victoria has a leading Emergency Response Coordinator. The coordinator should understand the emergency response procedures and other relevant policies and procedures applicable to the incident site.

You must make every attempt to include your local emergency services and council in the development and review of the emergency plan. By establishing a partnership with the emergency services, the mine will better understand how emergency responses are managed in their local area, and, they may have valuable advice to help you coordinate an emergency response. This will also help first responders understand the mine site, operating environment, and emergency preparedness. The local council will benefit from further understanding (beyond any planning permit knowledge) of mining hazards that could impact on the local community, as well as intersection of public roads with mine site access roads.

Regulation 434 - Provide to emergency services

Emergency plan to be kept and sent to emergency services and municipal councils After preparing an emergency plan the operator of the prescribed mine must—

(a) keep a copy of the emergency plan at the prescribed mine for use by emergency services; and

(b) send a copy of the emergency plan to—

(i) the emergency services involved in the preparation of the plan under regulation 433(2)(b)(i) and inform them of the plan's location at the prescribed mine; and

(ii) the municipal councils involved in the preparation of the plan under regulation 433(2)(b)(ii).

Guidance on Regulation 434

Once you have completed or reviewed the emergency plan, you are required to have a copy that is accessible to emergency services when they attend your site. This is usually within a red box at the entrance of your mine.

You will also need to provide a copy of the plan to the emergency services and council who you consulted with during the development or review.

Regulation 435 - Testing the plan

Emergency plan must be tested

The operator of a prescribed mine must at least once a year-

(a) test the emergency plan in order to ensure its continued effectiveness; and

(b) take all necessary steps to arrange for the emergency services consulted under regulation 433(2)(b)(i) to participate in those tests.

Guidance on Regulation 435

The emergency plan must be tested every year to ensure it remains effective, and testing must involve the emergency services. Testing the mine emergency plan is very important. Exercises should be undertaken regularly, and different scenarios should be used for each exercise. Arranging for emergency service personnel to take part in these exercises will ensure that if a genuine emergency occurs, the planning will be applied in the way that it was intended. It also provides your local emergency services with familiarity of the mine's specific risks, access points, site evacuation areas and key personnel.



Emergency Exercises

During your exercises you should test different aspects of emergency response, including: -what to do during a communication failure (for example power loss)

-how self-rescuers are used under simulated emergency conditions (for example, dark, dusty, smoky environments where there is time pressure to operate the self-rescuers)

-a system to quickly locate all persons within the mine at any time

-how you provide adequate rescue equipment

-how you consider shift arrangements for employees and involve contractors if they have a role in the plan

-how you ensure people trained in the use of rescue equipment are either on-site or available on-call

-how effective the escape system is by testing all ladderways, escape ways, and

-opportunities for employees to practice their role in an emergency.

Joint Exercises

Joint exercises with emergency services provide an opportunity to build understanding of the mine emergency plans and broader emergency response arrangements. They also help to build an understanding of the resource capabilities of the responding agencies. But most importantly, participants develop an understanding of the common purpose, build relationships of trust and respect, highlight the diversity within a team, and the interdependencies which make a team work well.

Debriefing

Exercise debriefing should take place to analyse the effectiveness of the emergency plan. Any identified additional controls or changes to controls should be undertaken as soon as practicable after the exercise.

Victorian Mines Rescue Competition

The Victorian Mine Rescue Competition (VMRC) is an annual training exercise for mine emergency response teams hosted by MCA Victoria. VMRC supports mine rescue teams by providing joint exercises with emergency services agencies to provide training, increase understanding of the broader emergency response arrangements, build team relationships of trust and respect, and create a forum for emergency response teams to meet and learn from each other.



Mine Rescue Team

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It is important that mine operators have sufficient emergency response capability on site, as they will be the first responders in many emergencies (prior to emergency services attending the site). As with the emergency plan, the emergency response capability will be appropriate to the size and complexity of the mining site.

Some sites may be large enough to have an established mine rescue team to manage an emergency and control the response and intervention. The Central Victoria Mine Rescue Group developed 'Mutual Aid Guidelines' to provide a framework for the mine operator's emergency response team. The guidelines provide useful information on building an effective ERT, including key roles and responsibilities. For further information on emergency response or a copy of the Mutual Aid Guidelines, contact ISH24 (see Contacts below).



Contacts

When reporting an emergency call OOO.

- · Ambulance Victoria www.ambulance.vic.gov.au
- · Country Fire Authority www.cfa.vic.gov.au
- · Emergency Management Victoria www.emv.vic.gov.au
- · Fire Rescue Victoria www.frv.vic.gov.au
- · Victoria Police www.police.vic.gov.au
- · WorkSafe Victoria www.worksafe.vic.gov.au

There are 79 local councils in Victoria. You can find yours and the contact details on this website: www.knowyourcouncil.vic.gov.au/councils

ISH24 - Phone: 1300 001 201 Direct: 03 5441 1992

References



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Emergency Management Act 1986 Emergency Management Act 2013 Mutual Aid Guidelines 2022. Central Victorian Mine Rescue Group. ISH24 State Emergency Management Plan (SEMP). Emergency Management Victoria (emv.vic.gov.au) Occupational Health and Safety Regulations 2017.



Version	Author	Description of changes	Release date
1.0	WorkSafe, MCA, Victoria Police, CFA	New document	August 2008
2.0	MCA	Updated legislative changes, added resources, guidance on compliance and emergency plans.	November 2022
3.0	MCA	Updated Government name changes, added VMRC information.	June 2023

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Appendix 1 Further information

Australian Government Department of Industry, September 2016, Risk Management – Leading Practice Sustainable Development Program for the Mining Industry. www.industry.gov.au/sites/default/files/2019-04/lpsdp-risk-management-handbook-english.pdf

Bushfire and Readiness Plan template - CMPA. www.cmpavic.asn.au

Critical Incident Response Template - CMPA. www.cmpavic.asn.au

Emergency Management Victoria, November 2021, Victorian Emergency Operations Handbook Edition 4, https://www.emv.vic.gov.au/publications/victorian-emergency-operations-handbook/

Emergency Management Victoria, October 2021, Victorian State Emergency Management Plan, www.emv.vic.gov.au

Mutual Aid Guidelines 2022, Central Victorian Mine Rescue Group. ISH24

NSW Resources Regulator, Emergency planning. https://www.resourcesregulator.nsw.gov.au/safety/health-and-safety-management/emergencyplanning

Queensland Department of Natural Resources, Mines and Energy, 2010, Guidance Note QGN 15 Emergency preparedness for small mines and quarries, https://www.resources.qld.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0003/240357/qld-guidance-note-15.pdf

Safe Work Australia, Emergency Plan Template, accessed 25 August 2022, https://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/doc/emergency-plan-template

Safe Work Australia emergency_plans_fact_sheet.pdf (safeworkaustralia.gov.au)

VMRC https://minerals.org.au/about/mca-vic/victorian-mine-rescue-competition/

WA DMP Emergency management for Western Australian mines - code of practice (dmp.wa.gov.au)

WorkSafe Victoria, 30 July 2022, Emergency Planning for Mines, https://www.worksafe.vic.gov.au/emergency-planning-mines

Appendix 2 Glossary

Control Agency - an agency is nominated to control the response activities to a specified type of emergency

Emergency Management Commissioner - the head of Emergency Management Victoria and responsible for ensuring the response to emergencies in Victoria is systematic and coordinated **Emergency Response Coordinator** – an identified person employed at a mine site who has a holistic understanding of the emergency response procedures and other relevant policies and procedures applicable to the incident site.

Handbook – Victorian Emergency Operations Handbook

Incident Emergency Response Coordinator - will always be a member of the police, and usually the most senior Victoria Police member at the scene of the emergency or where control is being exercised at the incident level.

Incident Emergency Management Team – will support the Incident Controller to manage the effects and consequences of the emergency. Members vary according to the class and form of emergency.

Incident Controller – the officer who leads and manages the incident tier response to an emergency

Mining hazard - any activity, procedure, plant, process, substance, situation, or other circumstance relating to work performed at a mine that could pose a risk to health or safety [Reg 400]

Memorandum of Understanding – a written agreement between two parties that describes the commitment of both parties and the duration of that commitment. An MoU is not a legally binding document.

OHS – Occupational Health and Safety

OHS Regulations – refers to the Occupational Health and Safety Regulations 2017 in place in the state of Victoria

SEMP – State Emergency Management Plan

Support Agency – an agency which provides essential services, personnel, or material to support or assist a Control Agency or affected persons.