



Submission No 13

Watching Brief on the War on Terrorism

Organisation: **The State of Victoria**

Contact Person: **The Hon Steve Bracks
Premier of Victoria**

Address: **1 Treasury Place
Melbourne Vic 3000**

Submission: 13

SUBMISSION BY
THE STATE OF VICTORIA
TO THE
JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE
ON
FOREIGN AFFAIRS, DEFENCE AND
TRADE

HEARING ON AUSTRALIA'S
COUNTER-TERRORISM
CAPABILITIES

VICTORIAN STATE
PARLIAMENTARY OFFICES

15 AUGUST 2003



Introduction

As a major population centre of Australia, Victoria has continued to be at the forefront of national counter-terrorism arrangements. The State has well-developed emergency management arrangements, based on the 'all hazards, all agencies' approach that incorporates counter-terrorism planning and arrangements into wider emergency management arrangements. These arrangements have been tested in response to crises such as the Longford gas crisis, and refined in the lead-up to major events such as Y2K and the World Economic Forum in Melbourne in 2000.

Victoria is very serious about its responsibility to provide primary operational response to a terrorist situation in Victoria, through the provision of police, emergency services and health agencies, supported by the Commonwealth and other States as required. Our plans and capabilities are based on meeting this responsibility.

Since 11 September, the white powder hoaxes in late 2001 and the Bali bombing in October last year, the Victorian Government has taken significant steps to evaluate and enhance the State's counter-terrorism preparedness and capability, including providing \$100 million to fund new State counter-terrorism initiatives. The measures outlined in *Enhancing Victoria's Domestic Security*, announced in November 2002, have been supplemented by further initiatives funded in the 2003-2004 State Budget.

Victoria also remains committed to playing an important role in national counter-terrorism arrangements and has played a significant role in the post-11 September reform of national arrangements to strengthen Australia's readiness to respond to terrorist threats and improve coordination between State and national agencies.

The steps taken by the State and the enhancement of national arrangements and coordination have significantly enhanced Victoria's already advanced arrangements to protect the Victorian community in the event of a terrorist attack. A key element of our approach is, however, to recognise that continued vigilance and responsiveness to the evolving threat of terrorism is an essential component of our counter-terrorism and emergency management arrangements, frameworks and operational capability.

Pre 11 September Counter-Terrorism Arrangements

Victoria has participated in and contributed to the national counter-terrorism arrangements since the formation of the Standing Advisory Committee for Protection Against Violence (SAC-PAV) in the aftermath of the bombing of the Sydney Hilton Hotel on 13 February 1978.

Following the Ash Wednesday bush fires in February 1983, a series of reviews led to the development of Victoria's current emergency management arrangements, based on a common set of arrangements for all emergencies. Other emergencies that have influenced Victoria's planning include the bombing of the Turkish Consulate and the Russell Street Police complex in 1986 and the Port Arthur shootings in 1996.

On 25 September 1998, an explosion at Esso's gas processing plant at Longford caused a severe and prolonged interruption to Victoria's gas supply, requiring an intensive whole-of-government response. A review of Victoria's security of supply of essential services and emergency response arrangements conducted following the Longford incident concluded that the existing emergency management system had coped well, but recommended actions to address identified shortcomings. The review also resulted in the establishment of a senior whole-of-government mechanism – the Central Government Response Committee comprised of senior departmental officials – as a permanent fixture of the State's infrastructure for responding to major incidents.

These whole-of-government arrangements were further enhanced in 1999 when, following Longford and as part of Victoria's Y2K preparations, a ministerial level committee – the Major Incidents Committee of Cabinet (MICC) was established to coordinate incidents requiring whole-of-government involvement. These two committees (CGRC and MICC) ensure close cooperation between all relevant state agencies at the most senior officials level. Victoria's planning for Y2K used the whole-of-government approach in planning. Government departments undertook extensive contingency and business continuity planning, which has been retained and updated. The Y2K strategy addressed government and major utilities' business critical services to make certain they were compliant and ensured that the existing emergency management arrangements could deal with potential Y2K disruptions.

Victoria's emergency management arrangements were again tested and validated during the large scale anti-globalisation protests at the World Economic Forum Asia Pacific Economic Summit, held in Melbourne over 11-13 September 2000.

Post 11 September Counter-Terrorism Arrangements

The terrorist attacks in New York and Washington on 11 September 2001, and the bombing of Paddy's Bar and the Sari Club on 12 October 2002 clearly demonstrated that previous assumptions about the nature, the potential form and the immediacy of the threat to Australia were no longer valid. Since the tragic events of 11 September, Victoria has pursued a number of avenues to enhance the State's ability to prepare and respond to terrorism. These include:

- participating in the reform and enhancement of national counter-terrorism arrangements;
- a legislative program to implement these revised arrangements and to enhance the State's ability to prepare and respond to terrorism; and
- conducting a program of thorough self-evaluation and capability improvement, including major reviews of the security of supply of essential services and emergency management arrangements.

These steps have upgraded the State's capacity to prepare and respond by building on the existing structures and protocols based on the 'all hazards, all agencies' approach to managing any emergency, including a terrorist attack.

Reform of Commonwealth Arrangements

Victoria has played a key role in the post-11 September reform of national counter-terrorism arrangements, and is committed to fulfilling its role in these arrangements. Victoria was an important contributor to the plan submitted by State Premiers to the Commonwealth at the National Summit on Terrorism and Multijurisdictional Crime held on 5 April 2002, where the national and state leaders agreed on a new national framework to meet the emerging challenge of combating terrorism. Since then, Victoria has participated in the renamed National Counter-Terrorism Committee and sub-committees and the implementation of the agenda of national reform agreed at the Summit. This has included the *Intergovernmental Agreement on Australia's National Counter-Terrorism Arrangements between the Commonwealth and States and Territories* signed on 24 October 2002 and the National Counter-Terrorism Plan and Handbook.

Legislation

A key element of the Leader's Summit was that all jurisdictions would review their legislation and counter-terrorism arrangements to ensure they are sufficiently strong. Since the Summit, Victoria has pursued this requirement by passing a number of counter-terrorism related pieces of legislation.

These include:

- The *Terrorism (Community Protection) Act 2003*, introduced in February 2003 and passed in April 2003. It provides new powers to Victoria Police and new obligations to assist in preventing or responding to potential terrorist acts, including obligations on the owners and operators of critical infrastructure.
- The *Terrorism (Commonwealth Powers) Act 2003*, introduced in March 2003 and passed in May 2003 refers special powers to the Commonwealth to give effect to the Federal Government's legislative powers to strengthen Australia's position against terrorism.
- The *Crimes (Property Damage and Computer Offences) Act 2003*, introduced in March 2003 and passed in May 2003, includes new offences of sabotage and threatening sabotage and ensures that Victoria's laws can respond to all forms of terrorist acts.
- The *Australian Crime Commission (State Provisions) Act 2003*, introduced in May 2003 and passed in June 2003, which makes provision for the operation of the Australian Crime Commission in Victoria.
- Amendment to the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* to exempt documents relating to national security, defence or international relations.

Critical Infrastructure Protection

A terrorist attack on Australia's critical infrastructure could significantly threaten national security, our economy and lives. The protection of critical infrastructure is a key element of Australia's counter-terrorism preparations. Victoria has been contributing to efforts to ensure a coordinated and consistent national approach to critical infrastructure protection by contributing to activities undertaken at the national level such as the Trusted Information Sharing Network and the Critical Infrastructure Advisory Council.

As a state with a number of essential services owned and operated by the private sector, Victoria has adopted a similar approach to that outlined in the US Strategy for Homeland Security released in July 2002. In particular, the Strategy states that:

"A close partnership between the government and private sector is essential to ensuring that existing vulnerabilities to terrorism in our critical infrastructure are identified and eliminated as quickly as possible. The private sector should conduct risk assessments on their holdings and invest in systems to protect key assets. The internalisation of these costs is not only a matter of sound corporate governance and good corporate citizenship but also an essential safeguard of economic assets for shareholders, employees and the nation."

Victoria has identified the State's critical infrastructure, iconic buildings, and places and events of significance. Victoria Police has been working with the owners and operators of critical infrastructure, including energy installations and transport systems to ensure they are aware of their responsibilities to provide adequate security and undertake risk management planning. The *Terrorism (Community Protection) Act 2003*, provides that the operators of essential services must prepare risk management plans to identify and mitigate the risk of terrorist acts. Relevant Victorian departments and agencies, including Victoria Police, are now working with Industry in preparation for the declaration of essential services under the Act. This preparation includes a review of the security within the energy sector. Victoria has also ensured that our emergency management plans include liaising with and advising critical infrastructure owners and operators of relevant threat information.

Following the "Security Alert" on 19 November 2002, Victorian Secretaries of Departments were required to undertake a review of the infrastructure, events, and locations within their portfolios and implement a program of prevention strategies to minimise the opportunity for terrorist related incidents in relation to identified critical infrastructure.

The new Counter-Terrorism Coordination Unit created within Victoria Police, supported by a high-level intelligence capability, will substantially enhance the State's ability to assist with the assessment of risk exposures and advise and liaise with owners and operators of critical infrastructure on measures to manage those risks. Victoria Police will supervise exercises intended to test Essential Services Risk Management Plans, including counter-terrorism requirements.

Exercise "New Dawn"

In late June 2002, a successful full-scale exercise on counter-terrorism, Exercise "New Dawn", was undertaken in Victoria in conjunction with the Commonwealth to practise plans and preparedness to counter potential terrorist threats or acts. "New Dawn" tested the emergency response system in Victoria, and was significant as it was the first exercise of its type to incorporate consequence management arrangements. Participants included the State Government, Victoria Police, the Emergency Services, the Commonwealth and agencies from other states. Lessons learned from "New Dawn" were incorporated into the package of State counter-terrorism initiatives announced in November 2002.

In addition, on 15 April 2003, Victoria also conducted "Exercise Octopus", a high level counter-terrorism discussion exercise to test Victorian arrangements for response to a terrorism incident during both the crisis and consequence stages.

Bali

Victoria Police played a key role in the Bali investigation by supporting and managing the disaster victim identification response, providing expert facial recognition advice that was integral to the investigation, and post-blast analysis expertise. The Victoria Police Forensic Science Centre also analysed a number of DNA samples to assist with identification of victims. The Department of Human Services also played a key role in the post-Bali emergency support arrangements, including hospital patient management and an important role in developing an innovative personal support program for the victims of the bombings. This integrated program utilises community information, health promotion, general counselling and specialised trauma interventions.

Victorian Counter-Terrorism Policy

Following the 11 September terrorist attacks on the United States, the Victorian Government undertook a major review of the security of supply of essential services, which re-examined the findings of the Longford review, and of emergency management and the State's ability to respond to a major attack. This review included visits to the sites in Washington and New York and a conscious effort to capture lessons learned from the US emergency services. As a consequence of the review, a number of initiatives to improve emergency management preparedness have been instigated. Victorian emergency management planning has maintained its focus on continuous improvement, planning has been enhanced and there is an increased focus on information sharing and coordination, in particular between the Department of Human Services and emergency management organisations.

Post-11 September Victoria Police also conducted a thorough examination of existing operating procedures and protocols with a particular focus on threat assessment and incident control to ensure an effective response capability. The Department of Human Services also undertook a number of internal reviews and initiatives to progress emergency management preparedness.

The findings of these reviews, as well as the State's cooperation and coordination with national efforts all contributed to the development of a package of measures to build on Victoria's existing counter-terrorism capability and fill identified gaps. *Enhancing Victoria's Domestic Security* was announced on 3 November 2002, and committed \$18.8 million to be spent immediately in the

2002-03 financial year to increase Victoria's counter-terrorism resources, and a total of \$38 million over the next four years.

Key initiatives of *Enhancing Victoria's Domestic Security* are:

- The establishment of a new Counter-Terrorism Coordination Unit in the Victoria Police, to coordinate counter-terrorism activities and assist in the assessment of potential risks to essential services;
- Allocation of \$3.8 million for surveillance and communications equipment to increase Victoria Police's intelligence and risk analysis capacity and to enhance their ability to detect the planning of terrorist activity and prevent an attack;
- Investment of \$1.2 million in state of the art detection and protection equipment for police to increase their capacity to respond to and resolve incidents involving chemical, biological or radiological materials;
- Enhancement of the Police Special Operations Group's capacity to respond to bomb threats, hostage and kidnap situations, at a cost of \$5 million over 4 years;
- An additional 94 metropolitan fire fighters over the next 4 years to strengthen the State's capacity to manage the consequences of extreme events, including terrorist incidents;
- Additional information technology to ensure that the operations of Victoria Police cannot be interrupted through a targeted terrorist attack, at a recurrent cost of \$1.6 million per annum;
- Purchase and maintenance of new forensic equipment at a cost of \$1 million over 4 years;
- Establish a dedicated, secure State Crisis Centre with encrypted communication networks between key control centres;
- Establish a new high level Security and Emergencies Unit in the Department of Premier and Cabinet to coordinate effort between Victorian Government agencies contributing to the State's counter-terrorism arrangements and liaise with other State and Commonwealth bodies; and
- Implement the National Counter-Terrorism Plan as set out in the then newly signed Intergovernmental Agreement on Australia's National Counter-Terrorism Arrangements.

In addition to \$38 million in spending announced at the launch of the policy, the Government allocated an additional \$60 million over five years in the 2003-04 State Budget to build on Victoria's capacity to deal with terrorism and chemical, biological and radiological incidents.

The Budget initiatives included:

- \$4.75 million to establish an Emergency Management Coordination Unit and a Chemical, Biological and Radiological Planning and Response Unit within the Department of Human Services;
- \$3.8 million for training and development in the health and human services sector;
- \$2.5 million for the upgrade of disaster management kits at hospitals, purchase of rapid response and communications ambulance vehicles, establishing a pharmaceutical stockpile an upgrade of decontamination facilities and enhanced disease surveillance and radiation monitoring equipment;
- \$11.8 million to upgrade the VicMap datasets and for developing a Geospatial Emergency Information Network, which will provide a centralised information hub to coordinate emergency information across agencies and the State;
- \$9 million to the State Coroner, Victoria Police and the Victorian Institute of Forensic Medicine for additional scientific equipment and specialist resources for disaster victim identification and post-incident investigations;
- \$24 million for the Metropolitan Fire and Emergency Services Board, Country Fire Authority and Victoria State Emergency Service to fund personal protective equipment for staff and volunteers and additional specialist search and rescue equipment training; and
- \$3.6 million for enhanced security at Parliament House and Government House, including new screening equipment to check visitors to Parliament House.

Following the reform of the national counter-terrorism committee structure, Victoria also adjusted the committee apparatus established to deal with emergencies. The MICC was renamed the Security and Emergencies Committee of Cabinet (SECC), and is designed to provide the whole-of-government response and communication – within Government, to the community and with the Commonwealth.

Conclusion

Although counter-terrorism planning and capabilities has assumed an unprecedented level of prominence in Australia over the last two years, a number of State-based events over the previous decades since the inception of the SAC-PAV have ensured that Victoria's emergency management arrangements have continuously evolved and improved. Since the 11 September and Bali terrorist attacks, however, Victoria has invested considerable energy and resources in reviewing and revalidating existing State planning and capabilities, adjusting them to the changing strategic environment and ensuring that they are focused on meeting the State's responsibility to provide primary operational response to a terrorist situation. Victoria has been a leading participant in the reform of national counter-terrorism arrangements and has made significant progress in implementing the State's components of this reform. Due to the nature of terrorism and the evolving nature of the threat to Australia, however, Victoria will continue to ensure that it is fully prepared and capable to contribute to national counter-terrorism arrangements and to protect the Victorian community.

Victoria's Counter-Terrorism Processes and Agencies

Under the National Counter Terrorism Plan, Victoria is required to:

- Maintain counter-terrorism policies, legislation and plans within its jurisdiction;
- Maintain counter-terrorism and consequence management capabilities
- Have primary operational responsibility to respond to a terrorist situation in Victoria;
- Determine prevention strategies and operational responses to threats;
- Actively consider the requirement for the declaration of a national terrorist situation; and
- In a national terrorist situation, contribute to the national strategy.

While working consistently to ensure that we have a sound counter-terrorism capability, Victoria has generally avoided establishing dedicated counter-terrorism structures, as per the 'all hazards, all agencies' approach. The State has integrated emergency management planning and operational arrangements that link at the strategic, operational and tactical levels to the national counter-terrorism arrangements under the National Counter-Terrorism Committee and the National Counter-Terrorism Plan.

As recognised by Victoria's planning, there are many government and non-government agencies involved in **emergency management planning, response and recovery**, depending on the nature and type of the threat or emergency. Each agency involved in a response plan is responsible for ensuring the availability of resources (whether owned or obtained under contractual or other arrangements) and maintenance of systems to discharge its role. Planning and review is an essential component of efficient and comprehensive emergency management, as is training and exercising and coordination between agencies. Victoria has an established structure of committees and sub-committees at the State, divisional and municipal level, to provide advice, plans and guidance as required.

Strategic Level Arrangements

The State's most senior security coordination body is the **Security and Emergencies Committee of Cabinet (SECC)**, which is responsible for the management and coordination of the whole-of-government response to major incidents and public communication in response to an incident. The SECC comprises a number of senior Ministers.

The SECC is supported by the **Central Government Response Committee (CGRC)**, which is chaired by the Secretary of the Department of Premier and Cabinet and comprises a Deputy Secretary level representative from each department, a Deputy Commissioner of Victoria Police, the Department of Human Services Recovery Coordinator and the Victorian Emergency Services Commissioner. The function of the CGRC is to provide advice to the SECC and the Government, coordinate the Government response and coordinate and support public communications by the Government. It does not manage the deployment of emergency services.

The SECC and CGRC are supported by a **Secretariat** from the Department of Premier and Cabinet, which is also responsible for managing the **State Crisis Centre**.

The **State Crisis Centre (SCC)** is established as part of both the State and National counter-terrorism plans. It is the focal point for the political and strategic oversight of an incident for the state and liaison with the Commonwealth. The SECC/CGRC Secretariat, specialist advisers, and media and communications experts staff the SCC. The SCC is activated by the Premier upon receipt of advice, if there is an incident relating to the State's responsibilities or interests requiring whole-of-government coordination.

Victoria Police

Victoria Police is central to Victoria's counter-terrorism response capacity. Within Victoria Police, the **Special Operations Group (SOG)** provides Victoria's tactical counter-terrorist first response capacity and deals with the safe disposal of explosive devices. In the event of a CBR device, the SOG works in cooperation with the relevant agencies responsible for chemical, biological or radiological response. The SOG responds to unplanned operational critical incidents such as sieges and hostage situations, armed offender tasks and bomb response incidents. The **Security Intelligence Group (SIG)** focuses on the prevention of terrorist threats or acts through the analysis and provision of timely and accurate intelligence, and is the primary conduit of threat advice from the Commonwealth and security liaison with other States and agencies.

In the event of an emergency response, Victoria Police is:

- the control agency for (among other things) threats to life and property, explosive devices, sieges, hostage situations and warlike acts.
- responsible for effective coordination of all resources or services in response to emergencies.

In emergency response, responsibility rests in the first instance at the municipal level. If the need for resources exceeds those available, support is sought first from the divisional and regional level and then at State level. Response management is based on three tasks – command, control and coordination. **Command** involves the direction of members and resources of an agency in the performance of their responsibilities, and operates vertically within an agency. **Control** relates to the overall direction of response activities in an emergency situation. Authority for control is established in legislation or an emergency response plan. It relates to situations and operates horizontally across situations. **Coordination** brings together the agencies and elements involved to ensure effective response. It relates primarily to resources and operates throughout the management of response or recovery activities.

In addition to its role as control or support agency in certain emergencies, Victoria Police has responsibility under the *Emergency Management Act 1986* for emergency response co-ordination. Emergency response coordinators at the municipal, divisional and state levels are responsible for ensuring the co-ordination of the activities of agencies having roles or responsibilities in response to emergencies, with the exception of emergencies involving defence force vessels or aircraft. State and Divisional Emergency Response Co-ordination Centres (SERCC and DERCC) and Municipal Emergency Co-ordination Centres (MECCs) are the locations where emergency response coordinators and liaison officers of control and support agencies receive, collate and disseminate intelligence, and co-ordinate the provision of resources.

The SERCC, located at the Victoria Police Centre, has the necessary staff and communication facilities to co-ordinate State resources, seek Commonwealth support and provide media reports. Liaison officers from the control and support agencies attend the SERCC as required. When activated, the SERCC is responsible for:

- Support to the Police Operations Centre;
- Information collection, analysis of, and dissemination of intelligence to emergency response agencies;
- Co-ordination of the provision of resources required by Divisional emergency response coordinators;
- Allocation of resources on a priority basis;
- Requesting Commonwealth physical resources;
- Briefing the Coordinator in Chief (Minister for Police and Emergency Services);
- Dissemination of information to the media and general public.

Since the inception of SAC-PAV, Victoria Police has continually reviewed its counter-terrorism capabilities, including the post-11 September review of existing operating procedures and

protocols. Following 11 September and Bali and the apparent targeting of Australia, it became critical to enhance existing capabilities. The funding provided during the last year enhances Victoria Police's ability for prevention, response, investigation and consequence management as well as funds adjustments to the changed environment, including an increased emphasis on protection, managing risk, and the threat of CBR attack.

Funding for Victoria Police from "*Enhancing Victoria's Domestic Security*" and the 2003-04 Budget includes:

- The establishment of a Counter-Terrorism Coordination Unit to gather intelligence and assist in the assessment of potential risks to essential services;
- New surveillance and communications equipment to increase Victoria Police's intelligence and risk analysis capacity and enhance their ability to detect the planning of terrorist activity and prevent an attack;
- State of the art detection and protection equipment to increase their capacity to respond to and resolve incidents involving chemical, biological or radiological materials;
- Enhancement of the police Special Operations Group's capacity to respond to bomb threats, hostage and kidnap situations; and
- Additional Information Technology to ensure that the operations of Victoria Police cannot be interrupted through a targeted terrorist attack.

Other enhancements to Victoria Police have included Commonwealth funding for additional national counter-terrorism exercises, the secondment of an officer from the Metropolitan Fire Brigade to Victoria Police to enhance CBR preparedness, and the secondment of a deputy director from the Analytical Centre of the Police Service of Northern Ireland to provide additional intelligence expertise.

Other Agencies and Offices

In addition to advising the SECC and CGRC, the **Emergency Services Commissioner (ESC)** supports and advises the Co-ordinator in Chief of Emergency Management (Minister for Police and Emergency Services). The Commissioner provides emergency management advice (including through participation in the CGRC) and establishes and monitors performance standards for the emergency services (except for Police who report through the Chief Commissioner of Police). The Commissioner makes recommendations and reports to the Minister on emergency management issues and encourages and facilitates cooperation between all agencies to achieve the most effective utilisation of all services. In the event of an emergency, the OESC provides the interface between the **control** agency and the Minister for Police and Emergency Services and the CGRC.

Prior to 11 September, the **Department of Premier and Cabinet's (DPC)** involvement in counter-terrorism was principally attending and supporting Victoria's involvement in the former Standing Advisory Committee on Commonwealth-State Protection Against Violence (SAC-PAV) meetings and exercises. Following 11 September and the consequential changes to both the Commonwealth and State counter-terrorism arrangements, DPC has assumed the role of the lead agency for Victoria's coordination with the Commonwealth, and the coordination of domestic counter-terrorism policy, including participation in the NCTC and NCTC Executive.

To facilitate this role, the Security and Emergencies Unit in the Government Branch of DPC was created in November 2002 as one of the initiatives in *Enhancing Victoria's Domestic Security*. The Unit is lead by an Assistant Director and has four staff members. It will coordinate Victoria's whole-of-government incident management at the strategic level, including counter-terrorism policy and planning, coordinate the implementation of Victoria's responsibilities from the IGA and NCTP and Victoria's participation in the NCTC and sub-committees, coordinate and provide secretariat support for the SECC and CGRC and liaise with Commonwealth and other State agencies.

In the event of a terrorist attack, Victoria's emergency management arrangements provide that DPC would provide strategic level coordination and manage the State Crisis Centre. A key project of the SEU is the establishment of a dedicated State Crisis Centre which will operate during any large emergency, including terrorism, or major event.

The Department of Human Services (DHS) has a pivotal role in the Victorian Government's capacity to respond effectively to emergency situations, including terrorist attacks. DHS has specific responsibilities in the consequence management of terrorist incidents within Victoria's emergency response and community recovery arrangements. These are:

- Mass casualty management through the role of the *Chief Medical Coordinator*, Area Medical Coordinators, ambulance services, medical and health services/hospitals identified in the **State Medical Emergency Response Plan**.
- Incident control responsibilities for biological (infectious disease) and radiation incidents, and food and water contamination and other environmental and public health events through the role of the *Chief Health Officer* within the **Public Health Emergency Response Plan** and Victoria's Health Act.
- Specialist community recovery services including psychological first aid, support to victims of trauma, community information and redevelopment programs, health surveillance and public health programs, economic and environmental programs, financial assistance – via regional and local government services and non-government organisations – through the role of the *State Recovery Coordinator* within the **State Emergency Recovery Plan**.

Victoria has well developed public health and hospital services systems that are linked to Commonwealth and State arrangements. The recently established Australian Health Disaster Management Policy Committee, (replacing and extending the Australian Disaster Medicine Group under the Australian Health Ministers' Advisory Committee (AHMAC)) provides a structured link between a number of national groups that are collectively addressing health issues related to counter-terrorism. Through these arrangements, Victoria participates in a working group developing a National Burns Plan for a mass casualty burns incident. Other links include the Communicable Diseases Network of Australia, the Public Health Laboratories Network and the National Chief Health Officers Forum. Victoria's hospital system has a state wide critical care bed bureau and national links to facilitate patient management arrangements in the event of mass casualties, such as the Bali bombing.

Victoria has been progressively improving the preparedness of the public health system since prior to the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games. Measures include improved planning for CBR incident response, the installation of decontamination facilities at hospital sites, extensive training for CBR, personal protective equipment, major incident medical management support and general emergency management arrangements throughout the health and human services sector. Intensive multi-agency planning is now coordinated by DHS for radiation incident management, in addition to the management of health aspects of chemical hazards.

DHS has established the Emergency Management Preparedness project to deliver the DHS-related initiatives from *Enhancing Victoria's Domestic Security* and the 2003-04 Budget, which allocated \$3.4 million in 2003-04 and a further \$8 million over the next 4 years to the health and human services sector to improve counter-terrorism and preparedness.

Key initiatives include:

- Recruiting core skilled staff to coordinate emergency services management and to upgrade technical planning and response capability in chemical, biological and radiation incidents.
- Developing enhanced emergency management plans, including capacity building and escalation planning.
- Implementing a comprehensive education, training and development strategy for the health and human services sector, focussing on specialist development programs as well as generic emergency management programs: Over 500 personnel were trained in 2002-03 and a further 1000 personnel are to be trained in 2003-04, with 500 per annum to be trained on an ongoing basis.
- The one-off purchase of specialist ambulance vehicles and equipment, supplies and technological systems, including: medical, radiation and disaster equipment, personal protective equipment, technological systems for syndromic surveillance at key hospitals, and pharmaceutical stockpiles to complement the national program.

The Department of Infrastructure (DOI) is responsible for Victoria's road and rail transport services and infrastructure, the ports and marine sectors, developing and implementing information and communication technology policy, providing strategic advice on energy policy and managing the delivery of large scale development and construction projects for the Victorian Government.

DOI was a key stakeholder in the post-11 September review of supply of essential services and is central to the subsequent program to enhance the contingency arrangements of these essential services.

Critical infrastructure within the Department of Infrastructure (DOI) portfolios have been identified, and assessed in terms of vulnerability and potential impacts. Preventative measures have, and are continuing to be implemented, that are appropriate to the level of identified threat. The assessments and preventative measures will continue to be reviewed and enhanced as further advice is received regarding the level of threat.

DOI is contributing to the National Transport Security strategy through the Commonwealth/States Transport Security Working Group, and contributing to the implementation of the ISPS Code for the maritime sector.

DOI is also currently completing a security risk assessment of the energy sector and a strategic risk assessment for the transport sector including road, maritime, and public transport. It has established a Security and Emergency Management Unit with the Energy and Security Division, with dedicated resources to coordinate security and emergency management across the department.

The Metropolitan Fire and Emergency Service Board (MFESB) provides fire suppression and fire prevention services, emergency prevention and response services in the metropolitan fire district. MFESB fire fighters provide rapid and effective emergency response to the Melbourne community including:

- Urban Search and Rescue
- Hazardous Material Response
- Chemical, biological and radiological emergencies

The MFESB also provides advice to the Government on major events and terrorist activities.

The Metropolitan Ambulance Service (MAS) and Rural Ambulance Victoria (RAV) provide pre-hospital emergency care and patient transport. In conjunction with area medical coordinators, they are respectively the lead agencies for the implementation of Victoria's State Medical Emergency Response Plan, in the event of a prolonged or multi-casualty event in metropolitan and regional Victoria. They are responsible for:

- The provision of specialised pre-hospital care to maintain and reduce injuries and coordination of medical treatment at the scene in conjunction with the State coordinating body, Medical DISPLAN.
- Transport of casualties to medical treatment facilities
- Transport of medical teams to the incident site.

The Victoria State Emergency Service (VicSES) is a volunteer-based emergency service, comprising more than 5,500 volunteers. It has a wide range of roles, including planning for and responding to floods, severe storms, earthquakes, road rescue and search and rescue. It also provides a support role to other emergency service agencies. It supports Victoria's counter-terrorism efforts in a number of ways, including contributing to planning and to USAR and provides transport for CBR samples

The Country Fire Authority (CFA): The Country Fire Authority is a volunteer-based fire fighting organisation servicing rural Victoria. The CFA is involved in emergency planning, preparation and recovery.

Victoria's Emergency Management Arrangements

History of Arrangements

Victoria's original emergency management plan, known then as the State Disaster Plan or DISPLAN, was prepared in the 1960's and revised in 1982. Following the Ash Wednesday bush fires in February 1983, a number of reviews of Victoria's emergency management arrangements were conducted. The findings of these reviews were incorporated into the development of Victoria's current emergency management arrangements, based on the *Emergency Management Act 1986*. In 1994, the Act was amended, recognising the Recovery Plan and replacing the word 'disaster' with the word 'emergency' in most usages. More recently, the term 'emergency response' has replaced the term DISPLAN in official usage.

The principal policy and planning documents for emergency management in Victoria are compiled in the *Emergency Management Manual Victoria*.

Legislation

The *Emergency Management Act 1986* is designed to ensure that Victoria's emergency management is structured to facilitate planning, preparedness, operational coordination and community participation in the **prevention** of, **response** to and **recovery** from emergency events. The arrangements reflect the 'all hazards, all agencies' principle, in that they are designed to deal with the more 'common' emergencies such as fire or flood as well as a wide range of other emergencies including those that could be precipitated by terrorist actions or attack. They also recognise that the management of emergencies is a shared responsibility involving many agencies and organisations.

The Act designates the Minister for Police and Emergency Services as the Coordinator-in-Chief of Emergency Management, who must ensure that adequate emergency management measures are taken by government agencies, and coordinate the government agencies undertaking such measures. The Coordinator in Chief arranges for the preparation and review of a State emergency **response** plan for a coordinated response to emergencies by all agencies with roles or responsibilities.

The function of arranging for the preparation and review of the response plan is delegated to the Chief Commissioner of Police, who is the Deputy Coordinator in Chief and the State Emergency Response Coordinator. The State Emergency Response Plan is the document that fulfils the functions of DISPLAN as required by the Act.

The Act also requires that the Coordinator in Chief (Minister for Police and Emergency Services) arrange for the preparation and review from time to time of a state emergency **recovery** plan for the coordinated planning and management of emergency recovery. This function has been delegated to the State Recovery Coordinator, a senior officer of the Department of Human Services.