# Appendix 2C – Master Schedule of Events

Heatwave Functional Exercise

The guide supports the Facilitator Guide (appendix 2A) and Facilitator Slides (appendix 2B).

## Scenario Planning Guide – Heatwave Functional Exercise

|  | Storyline |
| --- | --- |
| **General idea**  0900 5 January | Since August, NSW has been experiencing a prolonged period of drought and unusually high daytime temperatures. Monthly rainfall has been seriously deficient since October, with soil moisture levels nearing record lows. Daytime maximum temperatures have consistently exceeded long-term averages, with two low-intensity heatwaves already recorded across the region in November and December.  Local public and emergency services have been under sustained pressure. The nearest hospital has experienced frequent surges in patient admissions related to elevated temperatures, while clinics and medical centres report significantly increased cases of heat-related illness. NSW Ambulance services are under strain, responding to a high volume of heat-related cases, especially among elderly and frail residents. Ambulance resources statewide are also stretched with similar call volumes, and the NSW Rural Fire Service is reporting a marked increase in bushfire activity across the state.  On 1 January, the Bureau of Meteorology issued a four-day extreme heatwave warning from 4 January to 7 January. Forecasts indicate daily maximum temperatures could reach up to 45°C, with minimal overnight relief, as temperatures are unlikely to fall below 25°C. Low-intensity heatwave conditions may continue into 8 January.  In response, on 2 January, Local and Regional Emergency Management Committees, in collaboration with NSW Ambulance, NSW Health, local emergency services and event organisers, made the decision to cancel the region’s annual agricultural festival, scheduled for today, to mitigate health risks to attendees and prevent further strain on critical services. However, some community members and visitors have chosen not to cancel their trips, having pre-booked and paid for accommodation in the area.  It is now 0900 on 5 January, day two of the extreme heatwave. The Local and Regional Emergency Operations Controllers (LEOCON / REOCON), acting on input from the combat agency and Local and Regional Emergency Management Committees (LEMC / REMC) activated Emergency Operations Centres (EOCs) on 3 January in preparation for the event, with plans to keep them operational until 9 January. Over the past three days, statewide communications and public information have consistently warned the public of heat risks, advising residents to stay indoors, stay cool, and limit non-essential travel. So far, the community response has been positive, and the EOC, alongside local and emergency services, has not encountered any significant challenges. |
| **Special idea 1** - 0915 hrs | Bureau of Meteorology issues an updated weather warning, indicating an escalation in fire risk. Winds are now forecasted to reach 30-35 kph starting from 1000 hrs, with gusts up to 45 kph, elevating the fire danger rating to "Extreme." This unexpected increase in wind speed significantly raises the risk of fire spread across the region. |
| **Inject 1** - 0921 hrs | A local radio station has begun falsely reporting that the hospital is at full capacity and turning away patients, advising residents to avoid seeking care there. This misinformation begins causing concern and confusion within the community. |
| **Inject 2** - 0927 hrs | A minor bushfire has ignited along the main road into town, blocking both lanes in both directions for an estimated 1.5 hours. Traffic is beginning to back up, with reports of stranded vehicles and people stuck in their cars in the heat. |
| **Inject 3** - 0943 hrs | A designated cooling and evacuation centre is reporting a critical water shortage, with bottled water supplies completely depleted and tank water running low. The centre is struggling to meet the hydration needs of those seeking refuge from the heat. Drinking water resupply by tanker is delayed, as tankers are currently out of town on urgent delivery missions. |
| **Special idea 2** – 0952 hrs | A fire is reported at a substation on the outskirts of town, near bushland. Fire crews arrive promptly and contain the blaze to the substation and a small area of grass. However, the substation is rendered inoperable due to fire damage, resulting in a power outage affecting approximately 20% of the town. Repair crews estimate that power restoration will take 12 to 18 hours. |
| **Inject 4** - 1029 hrs | Sheep and cattle stranded at the local showground, following the festival cancellation, are experiencing severe heat stress. With water resources fully exhausted, including tank water, the situation has become critical. Two sheep have already died from heat stress in the past 12 hours. Urgent action is needed to address the welfare of the remaining animals. |
| **Inject 5** - 1041 hrs | The local hospital reports it is nearing 95% capacity, with heat-related cases rising quickly. A larger-than-anticipated number of patients are presenting with heat-related conditions following the power outage. Many out-of-town visitors appear unprepared for the extreme heat and are becoming unwell. At the current rate, the hospital expects to reach maximum capacity within the next two hours. |
| **Inject 6** - 1101 hrs | NSW Ambulance has received a 000 call from a local nursing home reporting a power outage, as a result of the blackout, and failure of their backup generator. As a result, 80 elderly and frail residents are now without air conditioning or cooling, and the facility is running low on ice, ice packs, and other cooling supplies. On-site nursing staff are becoming overwhelmed as residents begin showing signs of heat stress, and they fear that some may deteriorate rapidly in the high temperatures. |
| **Inject 7** – 1115 hrs | The NSW Ambulance IMT has started receiving reports of increasing enquiries and concerns from local schools that are operating vacation care programs and are experiencing intermittent or total power outages. The outages are affecting air conditioning and cooling systems, making it difficult for schools to keep students cool and sheltered. Several emergency call-outs have already been made to schools for dehydration and heat-related illnesses, with concerns this may escalate as the day progresses. The IMT escalates the issue to the EOC for assistance. |
| **Special idea 3** – 1121 hrs | Utility services and engineers working on repairs identify that the combination of the substation fire and the extreme heatwave demand has compromised additional nearby regional power infrastructure. Further inspections reveal that multiple substations may require assessment and potential repairs, with a risk of rolling blackouts anticipated across the area over the next 24 hours. |
| **Inject 8** - 1207 hrs | Emergency services receive a report of a bus crash several kilometres outside of town, with initial reports suggesting multiple people trapped and a potential vehicle fire. Upon arrival, responders find it is a minor incident involving a small bus that ran off the road and struck a tree. There is no fire; dust had been mistaken for smoke. The bus was transporting eight occupants with physical disabilities who were seeking refuge from the heat. Due to the collision, the bus is inoperable, leaving the occupants stranded roadside in the heat without air conditioning. |
| **Inject 9** - 1229 hrs | Strong winds stir up large amounts of dust in the air. The EOC receives a poor air quality alert, warning that air quality in the region will remain low for the next 12-18 hours due to the dust. |
| **Inject 10** - 1258 hrs | The EOC receives reports from the local cooling centre that it has reached capacity. The centre has quickly become overwhelmed as residents affected by the power outage seek refuge from the heat. Some residents have resorted to sheltering outside under umbrellas, while more people continue to arrive. |
| **Special idea 4** – 1313 hrs | Local council, emergency welfare teams, and emergency services report increasing community needs for essential resources, including water, food, and shelter, due to prolonged power outages. A coordinated recovery effort is required to manage supply distribution, prioritise assistance, and assess ongoing health risks for vulnerable populations. |
| **Inject 11** - 1335 hrs | NSW Ambulance have requested LEMCs to open at least two places of refuge within their area as soon as possible. Consideration should be given to population and geography, and additional refuges should be considered if necessary. A major local school, normally used as a place of refuge is currently being used for a school holiday camp and is fully occupied. |
| **Inject 12** - 1345 hrs | A local news crew arrives at the EOC to investigate rumours that the town is about to be evacuated due to the power outage. The reporter insists on speaking to someone in charge and is seeking guidance on where to advise residents to evacuate. |

## Master Schedule of Events

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
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| **EXERCISE [INSERT NAME]** | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Serial** | **Day** | **Date** | **Time** | **Location** | **Event** | **Live or Notional** | **Desired Outcomes** | **Control Documents** | **Resources** | **Responsible** | **Completed?** |
| **ADMINISTRATION & LOGISTICS** | | | | | | | | | | | |
| [Complete each column with details tailored to your specific exercise and context] | | | | | | | | | | | |
|  |  |  |  |  | Pre-Exercise Briefing - EXCON Roles | Live | All EXCON roles briefed |  | SMEAC | EXCON |  |
|  |  |  |  |  | Exercise Briefing - Participants | Live | All participants briefed |  | SMEAC | EXCON |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **EXERCISE PHASE** | | | | | | | | | | | |
| [Complete each column with details tailored to your specific exercise and context] | | | | | | | | | | | |
|  | 1 |  | [0900] |  | Commencement of Exercise - EOC shift commences – Handover briefing delivered by outgoing EOC shift supervisor | Live | Exercise Start |  |  | EXCON |  |
|  | 1 |  | [0915] | EOC | Special Idea 1: Updated weather warning | Notional |  | BOM Weather Warning |  | Activation |  |
|  | 1 |  | [0921] | EOC | Inject 1 | Notional |  |  |  | Activation |  |
|  | 1 |  | [0927] | EOC | Inject 2 | Notional |  |  |  | Activation |  |
|  | 1 |  | [0943] | EOC | Inject 3 | Notional |  |  |  | Activation |  |
|  | 1 |  | [0952] | EOC | Special Idea 2: Substation fire | Notional |  |  |  | Activation |  |
|  | 1 |  | [1029] | EOC | Inject 4 | Notional |  |  |  | Activation |  |
|  | 1 |  | [1041] | EOC | Inject 5 | Notional |  |  |  | Activation |  |
|  | 1 |  | [1101] | EOC | Inject 6 | Notional |  |  |  | Activation |  |
|  | 1 |  | [1115] | EOC | Inject 7 | Notional |  |  |  | Activation |  |
|  | 1 |  | [1121] | EOC | Special Idea 3: Power network strain | Notional |  |  |  | Activation |  |
|  | 1 |  | [1207] | EOC | Inject 8 | Notional |  |  |  | Activation |  |
|  | 1 |  | [1229] | EOC | Inject 9 | Notional |  |  |  | Activation |  |
|  | 1 |  | [1258] | EOC | Inject 10 | Notional |  |  |  | Activation |  |
|  | 1 |  | [1313] | EOC | Special Idea 4: Increased community needs | Notional |  |  |  | Activation |  |
|  | 1 |  | [1335] | EOC | Inject 11 | Notional |  |  |  | Activation |  |
|  | 1 |  | [1345] | EOC | Inject 12 | Notional |  |  |  | Activation |  |
| **ADMINISTRATION & LOGISTICS** | | | | | | | | | | | |
| [Complete each column with details tailored to your specific exercise and context] | | | | | | | | | | | |
|  | 1 |  |  |  | After Action Reviews | Live | AAR Debrief Form |  | AAR Debrief Forms | Evaluation Coordinator |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |