



# EM-LEARN Framework

**Emergency Management - Lessons,  
Evaluation and Review Network**

**APPROVED FOR DISCUSSION  
NOVEMBER 2015**

Working in conjunction  
with Communities,  
Government, Agencies  
and Business.

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## What is the framework?

### The Current Situation

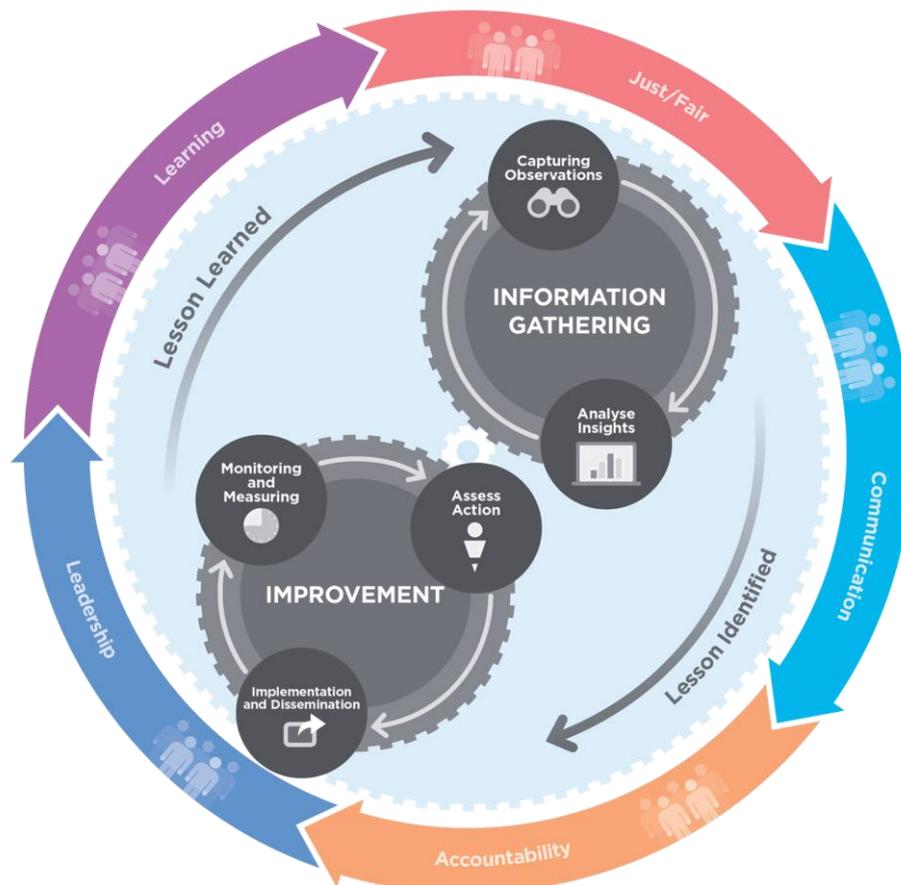
Currently within the Australian emergency management sector, there is a lot of work being completed on knowledge and lessons management. There is a wide range of approaches being utilised by emergency management organisations, departments and agencies (referred to as agencies, see definition on page 11) in relation to lessons management including supporting a culture of learning and improvement. There is an appetite for change to ensure an effective and consistent approach is taken to lesson identification, learning and sharing activities statewide, nationally and internationally. While there is a strong culture of identifying lessons, the sector is not as successful at ensuring lessons are learned (i.e. measuring behaviour change). If agencies continue to develop lessons management in isolation, knowledge will remain within the agency rather than being available for sector wide learning and improvement.

### The Framework

The EM-LEARN Framework (the framework) involves the implementation of the lessons management life cycle, see figure 1. Once the life cycle has been implemented and is functioning effectively, lessons management in the emergency management sector will be:

- Integrated,
- Evidence-based,
- Continuous,
- Consistent;
- Transparent, and
- Holistic

The long term vision is for lessons management to support processes and activities for all hazards, all phases, all agencies and all levels to support behaviour change, future service delivery planning and improving organisational performance. Throughout implementation of the framework, the life cycle will be evaluated and adjusted to meet the needs and requirements of the sector as a whole. This will ensure lesson capture, analysis and implementation is sustainable and members are empowered to learn and actively contribute to continuous improvement of the sector to support the vision of “safer and more resilient communities”.



**Figure 1:** Lessons Management Life Cycle

## Why did we develop the framework?



*“Human beings have an infinite ability to create knowledge. Add the convenient fact that unlike conventional assets, knowledge grows when it is shared, and you have the most powerful features which will change how we manage in the Knowledge Era”*

Karl Eric Sveiby

### What is lessons management?

Lessons management is “the management of a continuous learning cycle where capturing, analysing and implementing lessons, occurs without barriers, and results in measurable behaviour modification” (Jackson, 2014). It includes the establishment of a learning culture to support the capturing of observations and insights from monitoring, debriefing and review activities, which are then analysed for trends, risk and lessons. Lessons are then assessed for action, which is then implemented and monitored for change and improvement.

### What is the aim of the framework?

The EM-LEARN Framework aims to provide a shared understanding of what lessons management will mean for the Victorian Emergency Management sector, where it will take us and what we intend to do to get there.

### Whom does the framework apply to?

The EM-LEARN Framework applies to all agencies who contribute to emergency management. It aims to build a learning culture at all levels of emergency management that exhibits the characteristics of: just/fair, communication, accountability, leadership and learning focused.

### Why is lessons management important for the sector?

There is an opportunity to improve the way the sector learns from events, improves practices and changes behaviour. Lessons management can facilitate learning and improvement resulting in more efficient and effective practices, improving safety and capturing knowledge. It also provides a platform for knowledge sharing interstate and internationally. Emergency Management Victoria (EMV) is utilising research to lead the development of lessons management within the Victorian emergency management sector.

There are several drivers for the development of this framework. Victoria’s shared vision is “safer and more resilient communities”. The EM-LEARN framework will ensure the vision is being met through ensuring emergency management personnel are undertaking their role with the ability to access a wealth of knowledge and operate in an efficient, effective and continuously improving environment.

This framework supports the Victoria Emergency Management Principle, “We share knowledge, learn together and always strive to improve” which was established by the State Crisis and Resilience Council (SCRC) as part of their Vision for Victorian Emergency Management. This framework also meets the requirements of the Inspector-General for Emergency Management 2013-14 Fire Season Compliance Report Recommendation 10.

In 2013, Australian Emergency Management Handbook 8 – Lessons Management was released. This document provides guidelines and a national approach for the management of lessons across the national security environment. This framework supports this national approach and incorporates its key concepts.

### What is involved?

#### In Scope

Implementation of this first iteration of the framework is confined to establishing governance and accountability for lessons management across the sector; implementing a transparent lessons management process to support capturing, analysing, identifying and implementing lessons; and implementing an IT system for capturing observations and storing information relating to lessons management.

#### Out of Scope

Lessons management has the potential to influence all aspects of agencies including business planning, project management, corporate activities and policy development. Although the adaption of lessons management into wider agency processes is out of scope at this stage, it will eventually be adopted. Implementation of the framework into individual agencies, monitoring and assurance activities and the development and dissemination of learning products are also currently out of scope.

## Where does the framework fit?

*"That's what learning is, after all; not whether we lose the game, but how we lose, and how we've changed because of it and what we take away from it that we never had before, to apply to other games....Losing, in a curious way, is winning"*

Richard Bach, *The Bridge Across Forever*, 1984



The Victorian emergency management sector shares a common vision, goal and values established by the Emergency Management Commissioner to ensure there is strong guidance around how the sector will operate and why.

### Shared Vision

“Safer and more resilient communities”

### Shared Goal

“A sustainable and efficient emergency management system that reduces the likelihood, effect and consequences of emergencies”

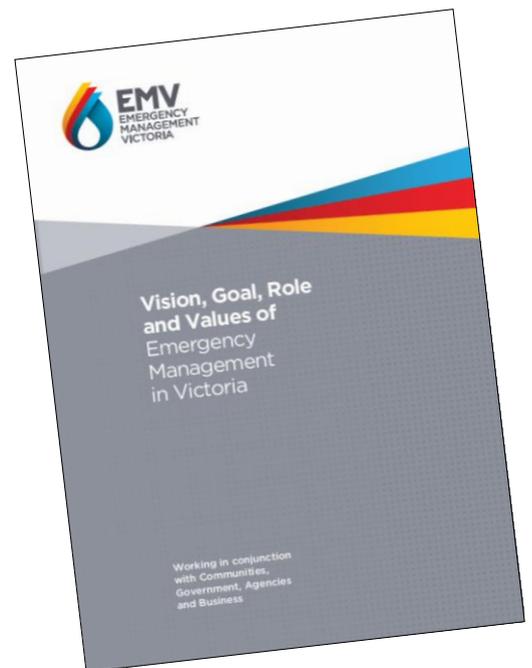
### Values

Leadership – showing personnel drive and inspiring others to achieve shared goals

Accountability – working to clear objectives in a transparent manner

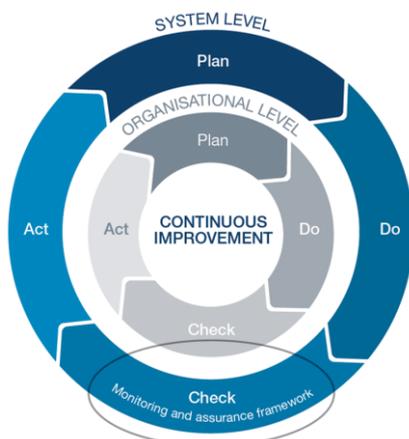
Integration – recognising the importance of building effective and cooperative relationships

Agility – responding quickly and effectively to dynamic situations and changing demands



It is integral to the success and sustainability of lessons management into the future that it supports the vision, goal and values of emergency management for Victoria. To reinforce the values, the EM-LEARN Framework supports, encourages and promotes a culture that exhibits the characteristics of: just/fair, leadership, accountability, communication and being learning focused. The shared goal will be reinforced through the cultural characteristics to support learning and improvement with transparency, clear governance and accountabilities in place. This will occur by ensuring that lessons are rapidly identified and shared before, during and after emergencies to allow for continuous improvement and an efficient and effective sector.

The Inspector-General for Emergency Management (IGEM) has released the *Monitoring and Assurance Framework for Emergency Management*. The framework provides a starting point for a coordinated approach to sector-wide/system level assurance. The framework aims to contribute to the shared sector vision of “safer and more resilient communities”, and its objectives are to:



- Support continuous improvement across the sector
- Drive a coordinated approach to assurance activities across the sector
- Promote a common assurance platform and approach for the sector
- Describe IGEM’s assurance approach and activities.

Agencies, together with EMV and IGEM, have a role in monitoring and assurance. The EM-LEARN Framework supports the *Monitoring and Assurance Framework for Emergency Management* through assisting the establishment of a culture and common process to enable continuous improvement across organisations within the sector.

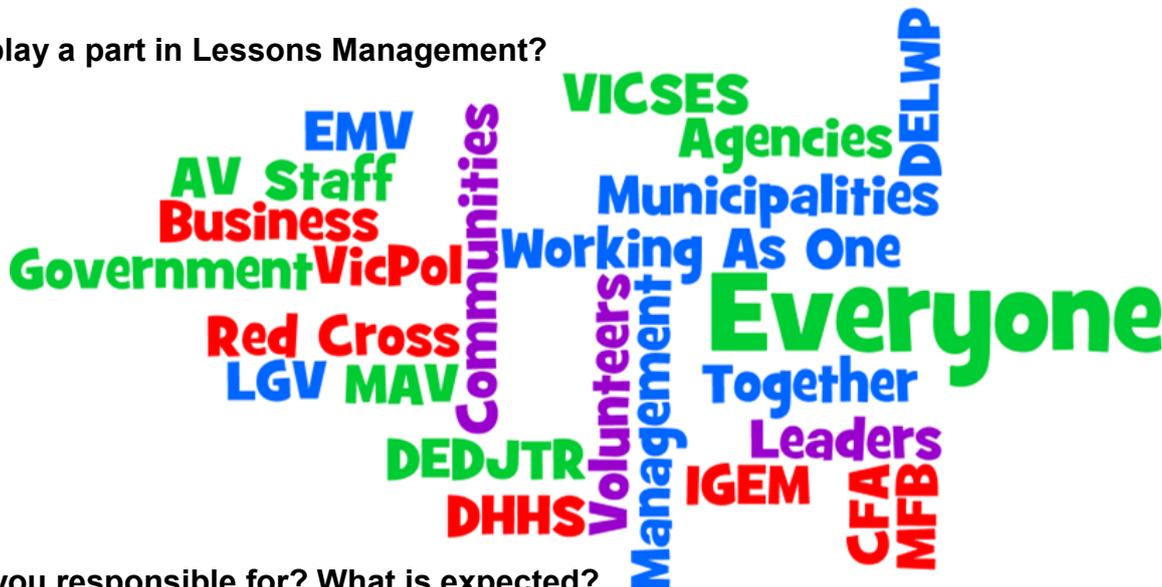
## What does it mean for me?



"Imagine an experienced practitioner transferring knowledge to a younger colleague or group of colleagues. Who is accountable for ensuring effective knowledge transfer? The answer is that the accountability is equally shared."

Nick Milton, Knoco Stories, 2015

## Who will play a part in Lessons Management?



## What are you responsible for? What is expected?

Level	Role	Responsibilities
<b>Individuals</b>  For example: crew member, Planning Officer, Coordinator, Director	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To identify and share observations*</li> <li>Utilise lessons to learn and improve</li> <li>Contribute to building a learning culture</li> </ul>	Share observations with team members, agency and state through the Lesson Sharing Platform. Contribute to monitoring, debriefing and review activities. Contribute to implementation of the team's learning and improvement activities.
<b>Teams</b>  For example: crew, State Control Team, project team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To identify and share observations and insights*</li> <li>Utilise lessons to learn and improve</li> <li>Contribute to building a learning culture</li> </ul>	Capture and share observations and insights with other teams, agencies and state through the Lesson Sharing Platform. Lead and contribute to monitoring, debriefing and review activities. Implement any necessary change and improvement actions as a result of lesson identification.
<b>Agencies</b>  For example: CFA, DHHS, DEDJTR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To identify and share insights and lessons*</li> <li>Utilise lessons to learn and improve</li> <li>Contribute to building a learning culture</li> </ul>	Facilitate the capturing and sharing of insights and lessons with other agencies and state through the Lesson Sharing Platform. Facilitate monitoring, debriefing and review activities. Implement and oversee any necessary change and improvement actions as a result of lesson identification.
<b>System</b>  For example: EMV, IGEM, State Review Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To identify and share lessons</li> <li>Utilise lessons to learn and improve</li> <li>Contribute to building a learning culture</li> </ul>	Identify and share insights and lessons from the Lesson Sharing Platform with other agencies and states. Oversee and coordinate monitoring, debriefing and review activities. Oversee the implementation of change and improvement actions and share lessons learned.

\* these terms are defined on page 11.

## What will be delivered?

*“The only irreplaceable capital an organisation possesses is the knowledge and ability of its people. The productivity of that capital depends on how effectively people share their competence with those who can use it.”*

**Nick Milton, Knoco Stories, 2015**



The success of the EM-LEARN Framework is reliant on its integration into systems, policies and processes – in short, the way we work every day. A Lessons Management Life Cycle, figure 1, is being implemented as the foundation of this framework.

### Lessons Management Life Cycle

The lessons management life cycle provides the cultural characteristics that must be supported, encouraged and promoted across the sector. It also identifies a lessons management process, which includes the following stages: capturing observations, analysing insights, lesson identified, assess action, implementation and dissemination, monitoring and measuring and lesson learned. Appendix one displays how information will flow through the lessons management life cycle to ensure observations become lessons identified and then lessons learned.

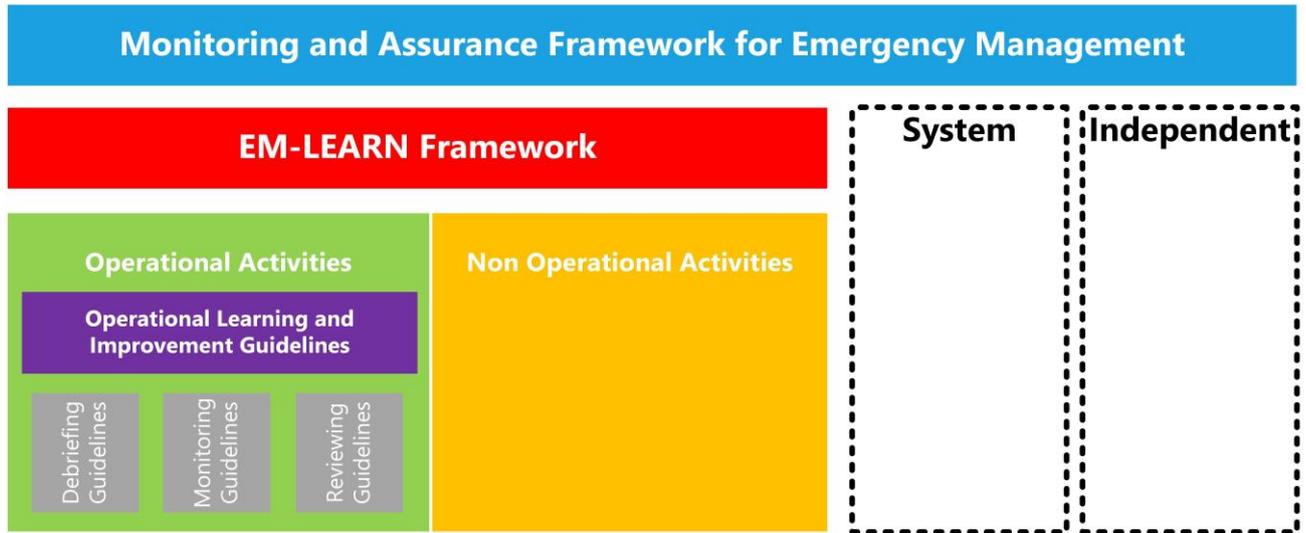
<b>Culture</b>	
<i>Just/fair</i>	A just/fair culture requires a balance between no-blame and accountability – the agency accepts the fact that people may make mistakes but those that participate in reckless behaviour are held accountable. This builds on the concept of ‘no-blame’, which can often be misinterpreted to mean there is no accountability for negligence or destructive acts.
<i>Leadership:</i>	Leadership needs to promote, enforce and prioritise lessons management throughout the agency. It will require accountability, ownership, but most importantly, behaviours modelled, discussed and promoted at senior management level.
<i>Accountability:</i>	Accountability needs to include the ability for actions to be allocated to individuals and/or teams and for these actions to have enough influence that they are given priority for action/completion. Roles and responsibilities of all personnel have to be identified and communicated.
<i>Communication:</i>	Transparent communication must occur throughout the whole process. Clear communication will also assist with managing expectations. By specifying exactly what members should expect to occur throughout the lessons management life cycle, particularly with regards to their contribution, members will not be left wondering or having unreasonable expectations.
<i>Learning focused:</i>	A learning focused agency involves being actively involved in continuous improvement, and ensuring that the lessons management life cycle is successfully utilised and completed.
<b>Process</b>	
<i>Capturing Observations:</i>	Learning and improvement activities such as reviewing, debriefing and monitoring produce observations which are collated together with individual’s observations. Capturing observations should be a clear, consistent, understandable and easily accessible process. Personnel need to understand the governance arrangements, responsibilities and accountabilities of capturing observations as part of the lessons management process.
<i>Analyse Insights:</i>	Observations are analysed to identify insights. An insight is a learning opportunity based on trends or an area for further analysis identified through a number of similarly themed observations or a single high risk observation. Analysis can be done using the most suited method for the situation such as root cause or theming. This stage is especially important because it identifies that not every observation will become an insight and every insight may not become a lesson identified.

<i>Lesson Identified:</i>	A lesson is identified when analysis of one or more insights or observations has determined a viable course of action that can either sustain a positive action or address an area for improvement. In most cases, an identified lesson/s will be communicated to sector.
<i>Assess Action:</i>	Once a lesson has identified possible courses of action, the next step is to establish what actions need to occur. Actions need to be developed with subject matter experts and based on an understanding of current work being carried out. There are two options at this point: no action is taken as there is not enough reward for implementing change, or an action is allocated to an individual, team/s or agency/ies. Actions need to be allocated, prioritised and implemented within a reasonable timeframe.
<i>Implementation and Dissemination:</i>	Implementing identified actions and disseminating the outcomes is the next component of the life cycle. This ultimately requires communication to ensure that members are informed of the outcomes of their contributions and can access any learning products. Those who are allocated an action will be required to provide status updates on progress.
<i>Monitoring and Measuring:</i>	It is only at this point in lessons management that a lesson identified can become a lessons learned. Monitoring and measuring activities need to be established when lessons are implemented. Monitoring and measuring activities may include reviewing, debriefing and monitoring activities or completed through independent/external processes.
<i>Lesson Learned:</i>	A lesson learned is a change in personal or organisational behaviour, as a result of learning from experience.

### **Lesson Sharing Platform**

A platform to support lessons management will be implemented along with the life cycle. This will support the education of personnel; provide a single point for lessons management information; and allow personnel at all levels to contribute to the capturing, analysing and implementing of lessons.

## Application of Lessons Management for Operational Activities



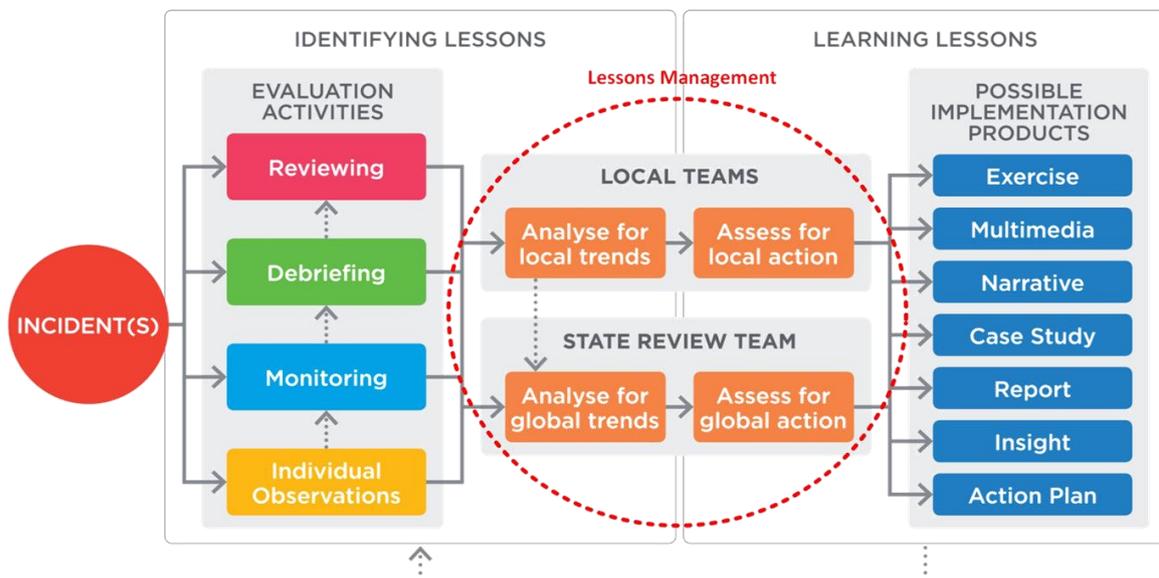
**Figure 2:** Lessons Management Structure

Initially, the framework is being implemented for operational activities, utilising structures and capability already developed. Figure 2 provides an overview of how the IGEM Monitoring and Assurance Framework, EMV Lessons Management Framework and operational and non-operational activities fit together.

The State Review Team (SRT) is the overarching leadership group that provides guidance and coordination of operational learning and improvement activities across the emergency management sector for all hazards, including reviews, debriefs, monitoring, performance improvement and lessons management. The SRT’s primary objective is to promote consistent sector wide continuous improvement in a coordinated and effective manner.

Figure 3 shows how lessons management is being implemented for operational activities and the process for identifying and learning lessons. Learning and improvement activities such as reviewing, debriefing and monitoring, produce observations, which are collated together with individual’s observations. The Observation Sharing Centre is the primary tool for capturing individual’s observations currently in the Victoria emergency management sector. The SRT collates information from all tiers of emergency management evaluation activities, and utilises the lessons management life cycle process to identify insights, lessons and trends at the state-wide level.

Where possible local teams and governance groups (e.g. crews, emergency management teams, regional control teams) should utilise the operational lessons management process to assist with analysing the data they collect. This will ensure that locally relevant insights and lessons are identified and actions are taken to contribute to continuous improvement.

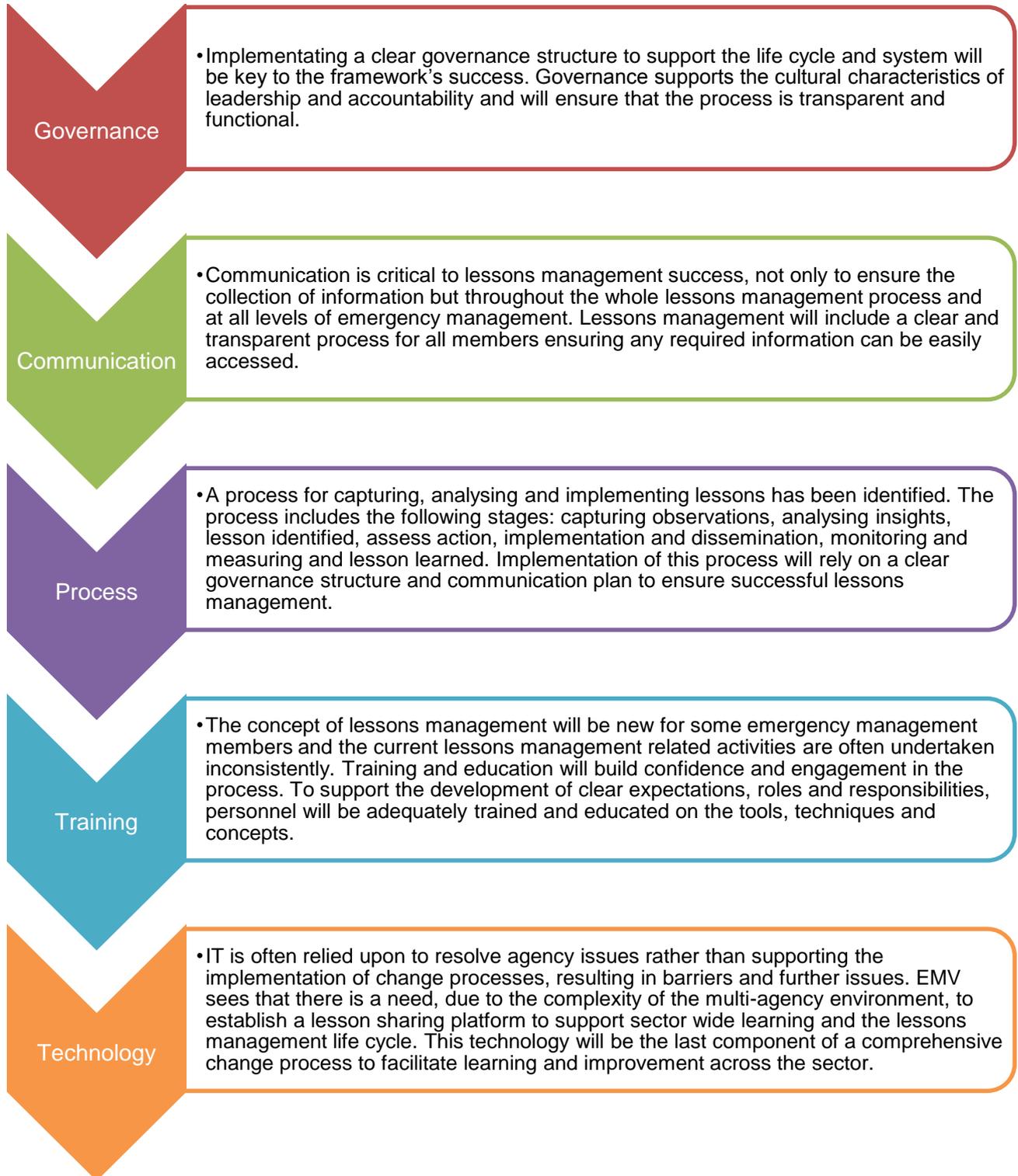


**Figure 3:** Operational Lessons Management Process

## How will the framework be implemented?

Accompanying this framework is an implementation plan to ensure the aim of this framework is achieved. The Implementation plan is focused on five areas for action.

### Five Areas for Action



## Definitions

Consistent terminology is a key to the success of lessons management as it ensures members understand what it involves and removes any confusion. Definitions of terminology that will be utilised in this framework are outlined below:

**Lessons management:** the management of a continuous learning cycle where capturing, analysing and implementing lessons, occurs without barriers, and results in measurable behaviour modification. (Jackson, 2014; adapted from Attorney-General's Department, 2013; NATO JALLC, 2011; Milton, 2014)

**Observation:** a record of a noteworthy fact or occurrence that someone has heard, seen, noticed or experienced as an opportunity for improvement or an example of good practice. (Adapted from Attorney-General's Department, 2013; NATO JALLC, 2011; Milton, 2014)



*For example: good practice or opportunity for improvement identified when your crew is responding to a structure fire - "the communications were good at this structure fire"*

**Insight:** a learning opportunity based on trends or an area for further analysis identified through a number of similarly themed observations or a single high risk observation. (Jackson, 2014; adapted from Attorney-General's Department, 2013; Milton, 2014)



*For example: an insight identified through a number of similarly themed observations during a flood response debrief was - "communications were generally good when the default communications was well understood and applied"*

**Lesson identified:** a viable course of action based on the analysis of one or more insights or observations that can either sustain a positive action or address an area for improvement. (Attorney-General's Department, 2013, p. 7)



*For example: lessons identified by the State Review Team through analysing observations and insights submitted into the Observation Sharing Centre - "to ensure communications plans are well understood and effectively applied across the state there is a need for further education and training"*

**Lesson learned:** a lesson learned is a change in personal or organisational behaviour, as a result of learning from experience. (Milton, 2010, p. 16)



*For example: a lesson identified relating to relief centre functionality requiring changes to doctrine and training and these actions have resulted in the functionality being improved - "communications planning education and training has resulted in a 50% improvement in communications at fires"*

**Debriefing:** The overarching and generic term used to describe facilitation of a process where personnel are able to communicate their experiences so insights may be gained and lessons can be identified. (Civil Defence & Emergency Management Ministry, New Zealand, 2011)

**Finding:** This is a conclusion reached after analysis to identify the root cause. It is a clear, succinct statement that needs to be agreed to or accepted before considering solutions or recommendations. A finding defines the issues, not the solution (Attorney-General's Department, 2013, p. 7).

**Recommendation:** A viable course of action that can either reinforce a positive finding or address an area for improvement. A recommendation needs to be considered by a relevant authority to determine if it is accepted or rejected. (Attorney-General's Department, 2013, p. 7)

**Suggested Treatments:** "Options for addressing the situation. These may include ways to address gaps in performance or ensure that high performance is maintained." (Attorney-General's Department, 2013, p. 23)

**Actions:** Tasks required to treat the lesson identified.

**Agencies:** Agencies include government and non-government organisations, government departments, local government and volunteer organisations with a role in emergency management (aligns with proposed definition in revised Emergency Management Manual Victoria – Part 3: State Emergency Response Plan (SERP))

**Just/fair:** A culture where personnel are not punished for actions, omissions or decisions taken by them which are commensurate with their experience and training, but where gross negligence, wilful violations and destructive acts are not tolerated (Attorney-General's Department, 2013, p. 84).

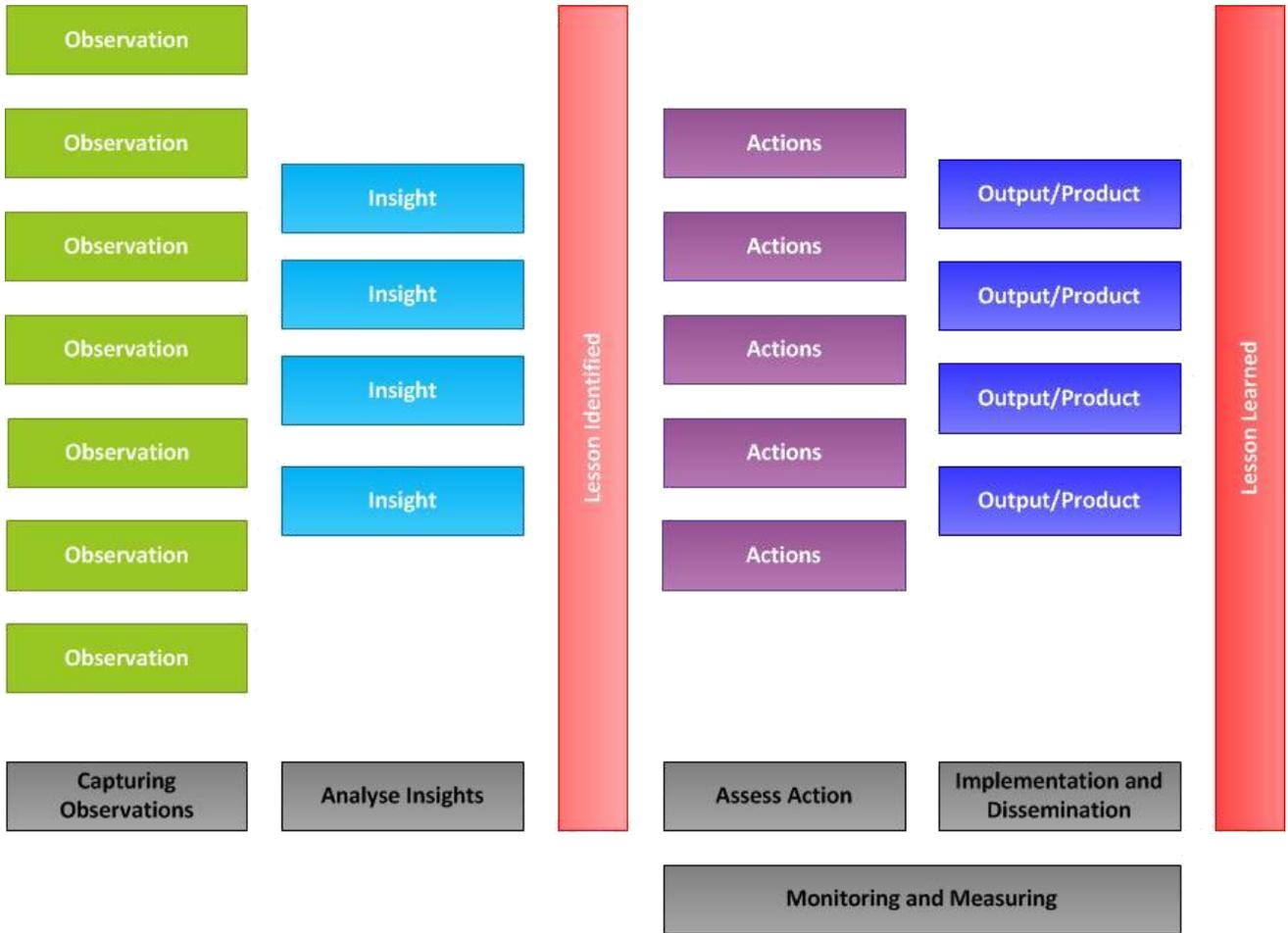
## Reference List

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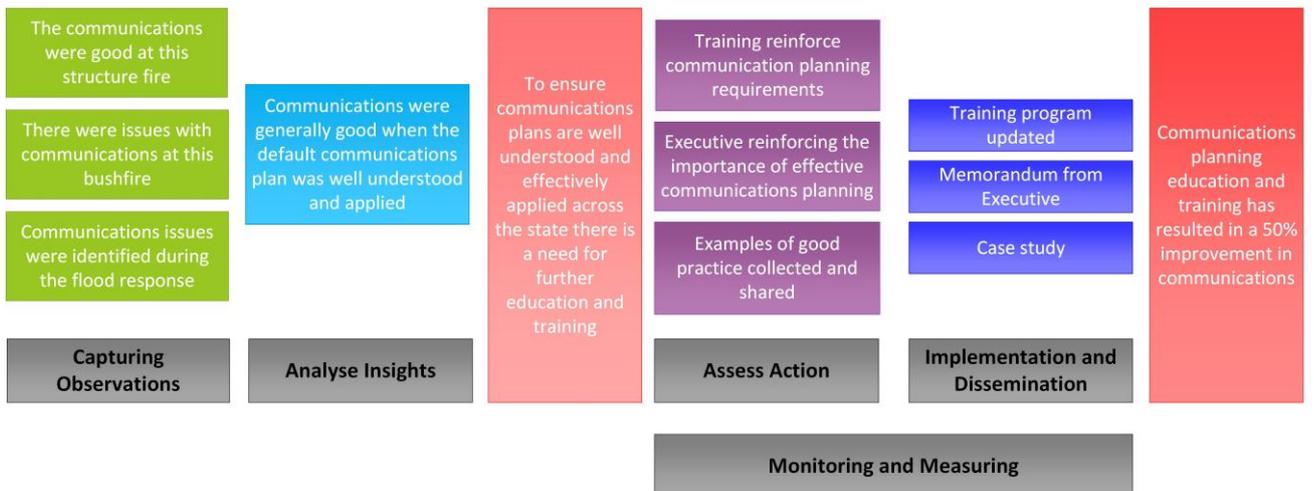
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# Appendices

## Appendix One: Information Flow



### Example:



## Document information

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### Document details

Criteria	Details
TRIM ID:	
Document title:	EM-LEARN Framework
Document owner:	Lisa Marie Jackson

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### Version control

Version	Date	Description	Author
V0.1	13/02/15	First draft	Lisa Marie Jackson
V1.0	6/11/15	Approved for Discussion – Tony Murphy Director Capability and Response	Lisa Marie Jackson

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### Document approval

This document requires approval from:

Name	Title	Signature/Date
Tony Murphy	Director, Capability and Response	

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### Reference material

Acronyms and terms	Description
EM-LEARN	Emergency Management Lessons, Evaluation and Review Network
EMV	Emergency Management Victoria
IGEM	Inspector-General for Emergency Management
SCRC	State Crisis and Resilience Council

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