EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT VICTORIA

Joint Standard Operating Procedure

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JOINT SOP	
Title	Planned Evacuation for Major Emergencies
Version	v9.0
Purpose	The purpose of this Joint Standard Operating Procedure (JSOP) is to standardise evacuation procedures for the decision, warning, withdrawal, shelter and return of persons impacted by major emergencies.
Scope	This JSOP relates to the responsibilities of applicable agencies, through the five stages of evacuation; decision, warning, withdrawal, shelter and return, and applies to Incident Controllers and agencies who are required to perform tasks in the event of an evacuation. This JSOP applies to major emergencies requiring evacuation of community members from an incident area. The principles of the JSOP may also be applied for evacuation during non-major emergencies. This JSOP is limited to emergencies that require the planned movement of people to a safer place. Emergencies that provide no alternative but to 'shelter in place' need to be considered outside or in addition to this JSOP. The role of Evacuation Manager is the responsibility of Victoria Police. Any reference to Evacuation Managers in this JSOP is to be read in conjunction with Victoria Police policy and procedures. This JSOP should be read in conjunction with the *Evacuation Guidelines*.
Applicable Agencies	The following agencies will apply this JSOP due to legislative responsibilities or agency role defined within the State Emergency Management Plan: • CFA • DEECA (FFMVic) • ERV • FRV • VICSES • AV **Note**: Victoria Police discharge their responsibilities for evacuation as per their agency policies and procedures, which align to the Evacuation Guidelines. Other agencies may apply this doctrine as applicable.

Content	The procedural contents of this JSOP are:
	1. Decision to Evacuate
	2. Warning
	3. Withdrawal
	4. Shelter
	5. Return
	The Schedules in this JSOP are:
	Schedule 1: Consideration of Evacuation during an Emergency
	Schedule 2: Evacuation Recommendation
	Schedule 3: Considerations for Return of Evacuees after an Evacuation
	Schedule 4: Recommendation – Safe to Return
	Schedule 5: Evacuation Responsibilities Flow Chart
Responsibilities	The following personnel have responsibilities within this procedure:
	• Incident Controller
	• Evacuation Manager
	• Evacuation Management Team
	Schedule 5: Evacuation Responsibilities Flow Chart provides further information.
Definitions	Common Emergency Management terms and definitions can be found in EM-COP under Library > Definitions.
	Within this document, the following definitions apply:
	Evacuation
	The planned relocation of persons from dangerous or potentially dangerous areas to safer areas and eventual return. The purpose of an evacuation is to use distance to separate the people from the danger created by the emergency.
	Evacuation Management Team
	A team led by the Evacuation Manager at a place where control is being exercised that is formed to plan and administer the withdrawal, shelter and return phases of an evacuation.
	The Evacuation Management Team is formed when time and resources permit and is composed of the Evacuation Manager, the Incident Controller or delegate and other stakeholders as required. This should include the Health Commander and may also include, but not limited to, representatives from DH and Council/s.
	Note: if abbreviated, this should be EvacMT so as not to be confused with Emergency Management Team.
	Register. Find. Reunite
	A service managed by the Australian Red Cross that registers, finds and reunites family and friends during and after an emergency.
	Shelter in Place
	The process by which members of the public are asked to take shelter indoors as a safer option to evacuation, providing a level of protection from the impact or consequences of an emergency.

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PROCEDURE

1. Decision to Evacuate

   1.1. The decision for Evacuation Recommendation can only be made by the Incident Controller.

      1.1.1. The decision to evacuate should be done where it is expected to offer a higher level of protection for members of the public than other options and can be achieved without endangering response agency personnel.

   1.2. Any consideration of a recommendation to evacuate should be made in accordance with the *Victorian State Emergency Management Plan (SEMP)*, any local emergency management and evacuation plans in place, this JSOP and the *Evacuation Guidelines*.

   1.3. In making the decision on recommending evacuating an area, the Incident Controller shall:

      1.3.1. Consider the points identified in *Schedule 1: Consideration of Evacuation during an Emergency*; and

      1.3.2. Record the final decision in their logbook, as a minimum, and where practicable the key considerations for or against a recommendation to evacuate on the proforma in *Schedule 1: Consideration of Evacuation during an Emergency* and *Schedule 2: Evacuation Recommendation*; and

      1.3.3. Where time permits, consult with Police Commander, Health Commander, council(s), Responsible Road Authorities and support agencies and ensure they're engaged at the earliest possible time.

   1.4. Where urgent evacuation is required, the IC will immediately disseminate the recommendation to evacuate, irrespective of whether they have contacted Victoria Police and completed *Schedule 2: Evacuation Recommendation*.

   1.5. Where the IC decides to recommend that people should evacuate, the IC is urgently required to communicate this decision to all of the following:

      1.5.1. Victoria Police representative via *Schedule 2: Evacuation Recommendation*

      1.5.2. Incident Management Team (IMT)

      1.5.3. Incident Emergency Management Team (IEMT) including any relevant councils

      1.5.4. Up the line of control and/or the agency chain of command

      1.5.5. Incident personnel via the responsible IMT functional leaders.

   1.6. Victoria Police members should use VP Form 682 and 682A (and where relevant, information that is contained within the Victoria Police Emergencies Handbook) to guide their actions in the evacuation stages. These documents are aligned to this JSOP and schedules. Refer to the *Evacuation Guidelines* for a copy of the VP forms.

   1.7. The IC may, depending on the circumstances, delegate the function of the management of an evacuation to a Deputy Incident Controller, or an Evacuation Manager.

      1.7.1. The appointment of a Deputy Incident Controller should be consistent with *JSOP 03.08 Appointment of Regional and Level 3 Incident Controllers*.

   1.8. The IC in consultation with an IMT and IEMT, where established, shall consider the impact and consequences of a decision to recommend or not recommend evacuation on the overall management of the emergency.

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2. Warning

   2.1. If the Incident Controller recommends evacuation of a given area, the IC is required to:

      2.1.1. Give priority to communicating the recommendation to evacuate to the public, in consultation with Victoria Police, where required;

      2.1.2. Issue the evacuation recommendation using appropriate tools and/or methods;

      2.1.3. Ensure that all recommendations to evacuate refer, where appropriate, to any other emergency warnings issued for the area recommended to be evacuated; and

      2.1.4. Ensure that all information releases regarding an evacuation recommendation include an estimated time, beyond which it may be too dangerous to evacuate.

   2.2. Where authorisation of the IC is not practicable and an extreme and imminent threat to life may exist, an evacuation message can be issued by any response agency personnel, with the IC being notified as soon as possible.

3. Withdrawal

   3.1. On receipt of a recommendation to evacuate by the IC, Victoria Police will ensure an Evacuation Manager is appointed. This role may already be nominated or in place in anticipation of an emergency that may require evacuation.

   3.2. Where time and resources permit, an Evacuation Management Team will be formed to support Victoria Police.

   3.3. The Evacuation Manager will:

      3.3.1. Ensure that they have ascertained all necessary information from the IC;

      3.3.2. Record all relevant information according to relevant IMT protocols with an appropriate Police Emergency and Event Command (PEEC) log entry also made.

      3.3.3. Ensure resources required to effect the evacuation are available;

      3.3.4. Sectorise and prioritise the affected area and consider assembly areas if required;

      3.3.5. Identify transport options;

      3.3.6. Develop and communicate a traffic management plan in accordance with *JSOP 03.10 Traffic Management at Major Emergencies.* Ensuring safe egress routes are clearly identified and consider welfare/ first aid options on route;

      3.3.7. Ascertain a list of vulnerable people/ facilities in the area and consider their relocation in consultation with the Health Commander, (refer to the Evacuation Guidelines for more information regarding vulnerable people and facilities);

      3.3.8. Determine if any significant number of transient (non-residential) persons are likely to be in the area, i.e., major events, tourists or school groups;

      3.3.9. Identify relief options and determine the most appropriate form of relief in consultation with the IC and the IEMT; and

      3.3.10. Activate a registration system for relocated people. Where practicable, *Register. Find. Reunite.* should be activated via the Municipal Emergency Response Coordinator, Regional Emergency Response Coordinator or Senior Police Liaison Officer, especially for large scale evacuations.

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3.4. During the withdrawal stage the Evacuation Manager should consult with the Health Commander in relation to:

3.4.1. Managing the withdrawal of identified vulnerable persons from health and aged care facilities;

3.4.2. Support the withdrawal of identified vulnerable people who have health related needs; and

3.4.3. Support the health needs of the community once evacuated.

3.5. The Evacuation Manager should communicate withdrawal decisions and maintain ongoing communications with the IC, Health Commander, IEMT, council(s), Police Commander and support agencies. This includes reporting progress and completion of withdrawal actions along with any critical matters that arose during the evacuation (failure to leave, injuries, collisions, confusion etc).

3.6. Once an evacuation has been enacted, regular updates should then be a standing agenda item for IMT and IEMT meetings until the conclusion of the evacuation. Copies of these updates should also be provided in the PEEC log.

4. Shelter

4.1. Emergency shelter options should be provided following an evacuation for as long as it is required until other accommodation arrangements are made.

4.2. Emergency shelter may include:

4.2.1. Assembly areas and/or safer locations; and/or

4.2.2. Emergency Relief Centres

4.3. The decision of shelter options should be made in consultation with the IC, Victoria Police and the relevant council. The Health Commander should be included wherever medical or care facilities are within the evacuation area.

4.4. General Considerations for shelter should include:

4.4.1. Ability to establish registration of evacuees by means of *Register. Find. Reunite.* (including updates to the status of evacuees as they establish alternative arrangements);

4.4.2. Provision of regular, timely and relevant public information;

4.4.3. Basic needs (water, food, sanitation and protection from elements);

4.4.4. Provision of telecommunications services to evacuees including Wi-Fi to ensure they can communicate with family and access support and incident information;

4.4.5. Contingency arrangements;

4.4.6. Animal welfare;

4.4.7. Health (physical and mental) and safety including security (by Police or private contractor);

4.4.8. Exit strategies i.e., the need to relocate to alternative location; and

4.4.9. Link to relief support such as personal hardship payments.

4.5. The Evacuation Manager will communicate shelter decisions and maintain ongoing communications with the IC, Health Commander, council(s), Police Commander and support agencies.

5. Return

5.1. In making the decision for or against allowing members of the public to return to an evacuated area, the IC, in consultation with the Evacuation Manager is

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required to complete *Schedule 4: Recommendation – Safe to Return*.

5.2. The IC or Evacuation Manager shall:

5.2.1. Consider the points identified in *Schedule 3: Considerations for Return of Evacuees after an Evacuation*; and

5.2.2. Record the final decision in their log book, as a minimum, and where practicable the key considerations for or against a recommendation of safe to return on the proforma in *Schedule 3: Considerations for Return of Evacuees after an Evacuation* and Schedule 4: Recommendation – Safe to Return.

5.2.3. Victoria Police members should use VP Form 682, 682A and other documents as outlined at *1.6* above to guide their actions in the evacuation stages. These documents are aligned to this JSOP and schedules. Entry to the relevant agency system (PEEC log) should also be made.

5.3. Where the IC or Evacuation Manager decides to allow people to return to the area, the IC or Evacuation Manager is required to immediately communicate this decision to:

5.3.1. Victoria Police representative present, (in accordance with *Schedule 4: Recommendation – Safe to Return*);

5.3.2. Incident Management Team (IMT);

5.3.3. Incident Emergency Management Team (IEMT);

5.3.4. Up the line of control and/or the agency chain of command;

5.3.5. Incident personnel via the responsible IMT functional leaders;

5.4. The Evacuation Manager is responsible for planning and managing the return of evacuated people with the assistance of other agencies where required.

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SAFETY

Protection and preservation of life is paramount. This includes:
- Safety of emergency response personnel
- Safety of community members including visitors/tourists

In the application of this JSOP the following safety considerations apply:
- Decision to evacuate needs to consider if the evacuation process can be achieved without endangering agency personnel or members of the public.

REFERENCE	
Related Documents	*Emergency Management Act 2013* *Victorian State Emergency Management Plan* *AIDR Evacuation Planning – Handbook 4 (2017) Evacuation Guidelines* *JSOP 03.08 Appointment of Regional and Level 3 Incident Controllers.* *JSOP 03.10 Traffic Management at Major Emergencies* *Evacuation Guidelines*
Environment	Nil
REVIEW	
Date Issue	23 October 2023
Date Effective	04 December 2023
Date to be Reviewed	October 2026
Date to Cease	N/A

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AUTHORITY

The Emergency Management Commissioner has issued this JSOP under section 50 of *the Emergency Management Act 2013.*

Victoria Police acknowledges their role under the *State Emergency Management Plan* to manage evacuation and acknowledges that this procedure aligns with their role and function.

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Approved	Signature	Date
Rick Nugent Emergency Management Commissioner	Signed Copy on File at the State Control Centre	23 October 2023
Justin Dunlop Director Emergency Management, AV	Signed Copy on File at the State Control Centre	23 October 2023
Endorsed	**Signature**	**Date**
Jason Heffernan Chief Officer, CFA	Signed Copy on File at the State Control Centre	23 October 2023
Chris Hardman Chief Fire Officer, DEECA (FFMVic)	Signed Copy on File at the State Control Centre	23 October 2023
Gavin Freeman Commissioner, FRV	Signed Copy on File at the State Control Centre	23 October 2023
Tim Wiebusch Chief Officer Operations VICSES	Signed Copy on File at the State Control Centre	23 October 2023

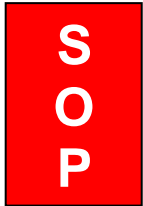# Schedule 1: Consideration of Evacuation during an Emergency

Consideration of Evacuation during an Emergency		
Recommend evacuation of _____(specify area)	Yes	No

Incident Controller's considerations

The Incident Controller should actively assess the following issues, when considering whether to recommend that members of the public evacuate a given area:

	Issue	Incident Controller's Comments
Impact	What community is likely to be impacted by the emergency? (Whole, part, or single sites? Attach map if appropriate)	
	Consideration of closest safe location (for locations close to the border, consideration to any know cross border issues).	
	What is the current and expected threat to the community, what are the trigger points and what is The likely time to impact?	
	How confident are you that you have the resources you need or are likely to need to successfully suppress/mitigate the risks of undertaking the evacuation?	
	Is there time for an evacuation to be planned and implemented?	
	What is the predicted duration of the incident? This includes the actual emergency and all stages of the evacuation.	
	Does the time to impact on the community require immediate evacuation or is there time to adequately prepare the community to evacuate in a less urgent manner?	
Community preparedness	How well prepared is the community you are considering for a recommendation for evacuation? Is there a standing plan (MEMP, facility plan, prepared evacuation plan) to assist with evacuation?	
	Are there any identified vulnerable facilities or individuals that need to be considered?	
	Has consideration been given to likely presence of a significant number of transient persons? (e.g., major events, tourists, school groups)	
	Has consideration been given to self-evacuees? (people who have already left the area) Do communications plans and registration of evacuee need to consider for these people?	
	Has consideration been given to people who will choose not to evacuate or are left behind?	
	Are there any events and/or activities that have brought travellers into the area? Are there Emergency Management Plans or similar in place for the event, to assist with evacuation?	
Resourcing	Does the control agency have adequate resources to help Victoria Police in managing the evacuation?	
	Does the control agency and support agencies have adequate resources to protect evacuees during and after the evacuation?	
	Does the IMT and/or Incident Controller have the resources to liaise with Victoria Police on evacuation?	
	Is there an adequate location(s) for the community to evacuate to? Has the council been consulted on the most suitable Emergency Relief Centre location?	
	Is there a safe route for evacuation?	
	Have you consulted with the members of the IEMT and the Evacuation Manager or Emergency Response Coordinator and Health Commander?	

Incident Controller's name: _____

Signature: _____

Date/Time: _____

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Schedule 2: Evacuation Recommendation

Evacuation Recommendation	
Incident Name:	
Date / Time:	
Incident Controller:	
Advice to Victoria Police:	It is recommended that all members of the public located in the following area: (attach map if needed) ………………………………………..……………………… ……………………………………………………….. due to the threat posed by the ……………………incident be advised to: ☐ – Prepare to Evacuate from ……..hrs .... date And/or ☐ – Evacuate Immediately from ………..hrs..........date and seek shelter at: …………………………………………………………..
Preferred route of travel to the place of shelter:	Evacuees should travel via: …………………………………………………………..
Community Advice: The following methods have been used to advise the community to Prepare to Evacuate and/or Evacuate Immediately:	Public Information Warning Platform ☐ Emergency Alert ☐ Other ……………………………………. Other ……………………………………. Other …………………………………….
This advice is current to:	………………… **hrs.................................date.** **Evacuation after this time is considered life threatening due to the potential impact of the emergency in the area nominated above.**
Signed:	…………………………………………/………. Incident Controller (Date/Time)
Received:	…………………………………………/………. Victoria Police/ Evacuation Manager (Date/Time)

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Schedule 3: Considerations for Return of Evacuees after an Evacuation

Considerations for Return of Evacuees after an Evacuation		
Recommend safe to return _____ (specify area)	**Yes**	**No**

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Incident Controller's considerations

The Incident Controller should actively assess the following issues, when considering whether to recommend that members of the public can return to a given area:

	Issue	Incident Controller's Comments
Impacted Area	How safe is the area (e.g. presence of hazardous conditions, possibility of the threat re-occurring, structural safety.)?	
	Does there need to be consideration of crime scene preservation in the area?	
	Where deaths have occurred, or suspected to have occurred in the evacuated area, consideration need to be given to potential restrictions to access by the Coroner or Chief Commissioner of Police.	
	What services and utilities are available to the area e.g. electricity, gas, water, sewerage, telecommunications?	
	Does a staged approach to return need to be considered?	
Community preparedness	Are there risks to the mental state and physical health of the evacuees if they return and for people who chose not to evacuate or were left behind?	
	Are there any identified vulnerable facilities or individuals that need to be considered?	
	Will goods and services be available for return of evacuees?	
	Are there risks to the economy and livelihood of the community if evacuees are unable to return?	
	What are the alternative options to immediate return for the community?	
	Has consideration been given to potential self-evacuees? (i.e. people who left the area prior to the recommendation to evacuate). Ensure that communications plans and notification to evacuees consider these people.	
	Are community recovery processes in place to assist the community?	
Resourcing	Are there adequate health and welfare resources and support mechanisms to support the public to return?	
	Have members of the IMT, IEMT and the Evacuation Manager or Emergency Response Coordinator and Health Commander been consulted as part of the process?	
	Have key recovery agencies (e.g. ERV) currently managing evacuees (e.g. emergency relief centres and recovery coordination centres) been notified / consulted on potential return decision?	
	Do the control agency and/or Victoria Police and support agencies have adequate resources to assist with the return of evacuees?	

Incident Controller's name: _____ Signature: _____ Date/Time: _____

Schedule 4: Recommendation – Safe to Return

Recommendation - Safe to Return	
Incident Name:	
Date / Time:	
Incident Controller:	

Advice to Victoria Police:

It is recommended that all members of the public evacuated from the following area: (attach map if needed)

………………………………………………………………

can safely return to this area.

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The following roads are now safe to travel on by: (Attach additional form/ Map if needed)

Please Refer to following access level:
- **No Entry** - Emergency Services Only Access
- **Restricted Access B -** Essential Services Assessment
- **Restricted Access C** - Residents, Media, Recovery Services, B Access
- **Restricted Access D** – C Access, Others Authorised (e.g. employees)
- **Open**

Road Name	Road Location *(suburb/ area)*	Direction *(e.g. North Bound)*	Access Level *(No Entry, B, C, D or Open)*	Confirmed by	Agency

The following essential services have been maintained or restored to an acceptable level for safe return of evacuees:

Gas & Electricity ☐
Confirmed by:_____
(Contact Name, title & Company)

Access to potable water ☐
Confirmed by:_____
(Contact Name, title & Company)

Telecommunications ☐
Confirmed by:_____
(Contact Name, title & Company)

Other ☐
Confirmed by:_____
(Contact Name, title & Company)

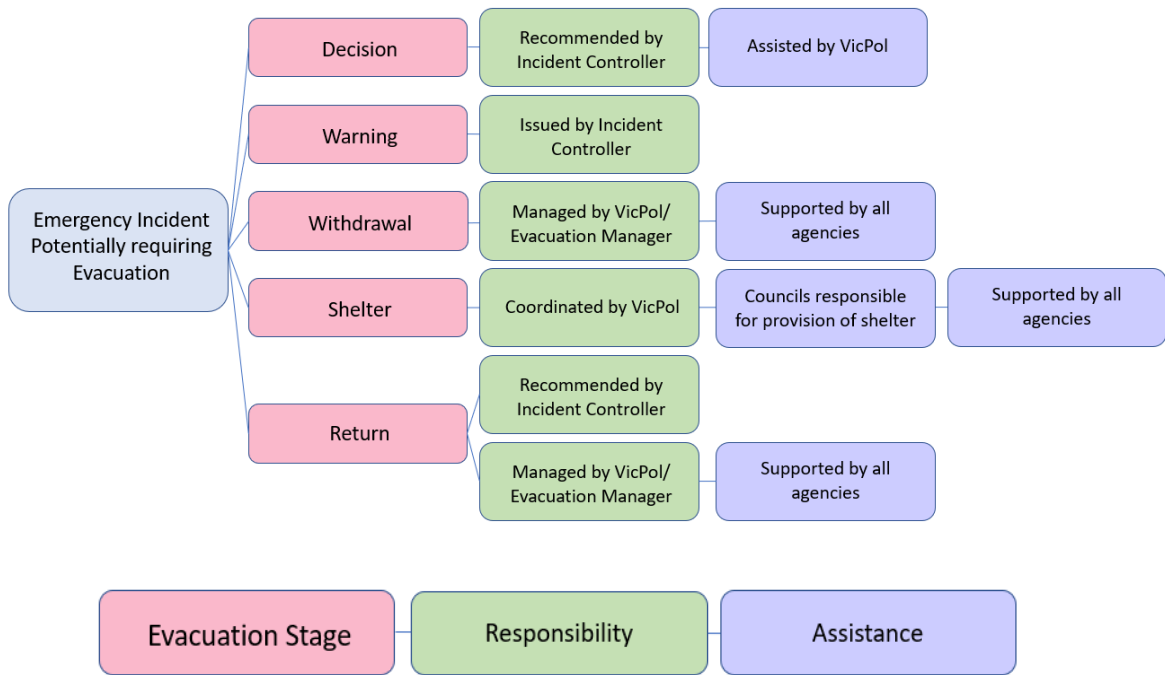|	
The following road closures and disruptions to essential services (e.g. power, water, transport and telecommunications) remain in place and should be highlighted in return plans and community advice:	**Road Closures:** …………………………………………………………… …………………………………………………………… Estimated Restoration: ……………………………………/………… *(Date/Time)* Confirmed by:_____ *(Contact Name, title & Company)* **Disrupted Services:** …………………………………………………………… …………………………………………………………… Estimated Restoration: ……………………………………/………… *(Date/Time)* Confirmed by:_____ *(Contact Name and title)*
The following areas have been declared a crime scene by Victoria Police:	Declared Crime Scene Area ……………………………………..
Community Advice: The following methods have been used to advise the community of the Recommendation safe to return: *(Ensure that communication methods consider evacuees remote from the area).*	Public Information Warning System ☐ Other
This advice is current to:	………/………… *(Date/Time)*
Signed:	…………………………………………...../………. Incident Controller (Date/Time)
Received:	…………………………………………../………. Victoria Police/ Evacuation Manager (Date/Time)

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Schedule 5: Evacuation Responsibilities Flow Chart

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Emergency Incident          Decision ──── Recommended by ──── Assisted by VicPol
Potentially requiring                      Incident Controller
Evacuation
                            Warning ───── Issued by Incident
                                           Controller

                            Withdrawal ── Managed by VicPol/ ── Supported by all
                                           Evacuation Manager      agencies

                            Shelter ───── Coordinated by VicPol ── Councils responsible ── Supported by all
                                                                    for provision of shelter    agencies

                            Return ────── Recommended by
                                           Incident Controller

                                          Managed by VicPol/ ── Supported by all
                                           Evacuation Manager      agencies
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Evacuation Stage	Responsibility	Assistance