NSW SES Response to Recommendations

No.	Recommendation	Response
1.	That the NSW SES considers the placement of a BoM representative within the State Operations Centre for significant events.	NSW SES agrees with this recommendation. NSW SES is in discussions with the Bureau of Meteorology to have a suitable representative located in the NSW SES State Operations Centre (SOC). There are two possible solutions in engaging a BoM representative within the NSW SES State Headquarters. They are: 1. Senior Forecaster located in the NSW SES SOC during major emergency responses (immediate solution) 2. Senior Forecaster located in the NSW SES SOC for all or part of the year (longer term solution) This will be depended on the availability of both suitable staff and budget. NSW SES will explore (with NSW Treasury) the possibility of an increase (approx. $250,000) in its existing Labour Expense Cap to incorporate this additional resource.
2.	That the NSW SES, in concert with the Tweed Shire Council locates suitable premises for the NSW SES Murwillumbah Unit.	NSW SES agrees with this recommendation and acknowledges the deficiencies in the current Murwillumbah Unit facility. NSW SES has endeavoured, working with Tweed Shire Council, to move the NSW SES Murwillumbah Unit to suitable premises in light of the damage to the existing facility. Options being explored include the development of an Emergency Management precinct in the Murwillumbah area.

		Of particular concern, any future premises must not be on flood prone land or land that may become isolated during Flood Events. NSW SES is assisting Tweed Shire Council with managing these requirements.
3.	That the NSW SES review their current systems and procedures for Out of Area Deployments to streamline current practices. This would include a 'skills register' for staff and availability.	NSW SES agrees with this recommendation. NSW SES is developing and implementing an availability application ('Availability App') which will provide for an electronic linking of member availability with SAP qualification and currency data. The 'Availability App' will provide real time visibility of available volunteer capability.

The Availability App project forms part of the Operational Improvement program. The Availability App will be implemented through a phased approach, with trials currently underway. The first phase is scheduled for implementation in December 2017.

An interim solution streamlining the gathering of availability and deployment process has now been established. This has increased the timeliness of the previous process, including the identification of skill sets and deployment |
| 4. | That the NSW SES review their current documentation as it relates to Incident Action Plans, to ensure that a Policy is introduced to ensure reviewing of Incident Action Plans occurs at State Operations. | NSW SES agrees with this recommendation. The practice of critically reviewing Incident Action Plans by the State Planning and State Duty Operations Controller has been inserted into operational doctrine.

This practice will be incorporated into the exercise program for officers who routinely undertake those roles before 30 September 2017.

The practice will be reviewed for effectiveness in the After Action Review process. |
| 5. | That the NSW SES considers development of a Pre-emptive situation and appreciation model and issue of | NSW SES agrees with this recommendation. Whilst there are some challenges with managing this with volunteer units, the NSW SES has |

	daily operational readiness levels to ensure the NSW SES is at the highest level of preparedness necessary to deal with any emergency.	developed a model to ensure that the required state of operational readiness is communicated across the Service. This will be promulgated by 31 July 2017 and exercised on a regular basis.

A review of readiness levels will be conducted post the end of the 2017/18 summer storm season.

Where appropriate incident management and response personnel will continue to be deployed in advance of forecast events. |
| 6. | That the NSW SES continues to endorse the practice of operational mentoring for large scale events. This should be expanded, where possible, to Region level. | NSW SES agrees with this recommendation. Mentoring of Incident Controllers by senior officers is a key component in the professional development of their skills. NSW SES deploys both senior officers and experienced incident controllers to mentor and support Incident Controllers where available.

This practice will be expanded over the 2017/2018 Summer storm season to include other agency mentors.

Further guidance has been developed to inform the role of both the mentor and mentee and includes guidance on operational decision making and the Service's current response culture. This guidance and mentoring will be incorporated into exercising from 30 August 2017. |
| 7. | That the NSW SES
- Implements a formal handover document that clearly identifies who is the Incident Controller;
- ensures that the Incident Controller is clearly identified to all Incident Management Team members. | NSW SES agrees with this recommendation. A formal handover process has been implemented for changes in Incident Controller during significant events and for briefing when Incident Controllers go on and off shift.

NSW SES has implemented an Incident Controller appointment process. |

		There is a requirement for NSW SES Incident Controllers in IMTs to wear the relevant tabard or brassard identifying them as the Incident Controller. NSW SES will reinforce this requirement with Incident Controllers.
8.	That the NSW SES ensures that: • All Regions are fully utilising the Incident Management Toolbox • Placement of records/templates etc on the central system, not the local system where there is limited access, • Ensuring that individual flood knowledge is captured and documented centrally and electronically.	NSW SES agrees with this recommendation in principle. The storage of Incident Records, Templates must be maintained on a central database rather than local drives. The Incident Management Toolbox is being reviewed as to the effectiveness of this solution and will be adjusted as required based on end user and operational requirements. The detailing of end user and operational requirements will be undertaken by the end of September 2017 after which time a project plan will be developed. As an interim measure all Regions have been directed to make use of the existing Incident Management Toolbox. There are significant challenges in the transition of flood data and information from historical paper records into an easily searchable electronic format. NSW SES will transition this data as resourcing permits and is developing an intelligence system that provides Incident Controllers, Division and Sector commanders with information relevant to the event.
9.	That the NSW SES consider the implementation of a pre-deployable Incident Management Team capability model across the State.	NSW SES agrees with this recommendation. NSW SES maintains a list of Incident Management trained personnel who can be placed on call as the forecast requires. Combined with preplanning of Incident Management Teams, this will inform the early deployment of resources to impacted or potentially impacted areas.

10.	That NSW SES considers the implementation of a triage procedure for flood rescues, in consultation with other Emergency Services for a standardised risk based approach to flood rescue.	NSW SES agrees with this recommendation. NSW SES is developing an internal triage procedure for rescues for incorporation into the services Operational Management System 'beacon'. In the interim, a direction has been promulgated to ensure that requests for Flood Rescues are appropriately triaged. NSW SES is leading a review of the NSW State Flood Rescue Policy on behalf of the State Rescue Board (SRB). An assessment of a suitable triage approach for flood rescue will be incorporated into this review process for implementation across all agencies. The review is to be completed by 30 September 2017.
11.	That the NSW SES • considers an amendment to their current Flood Action Cards to include an additional column for the date/time and who performed the action (once suitable consultation with Regions/Units occurs) • ensures that all Local Flood Action Cards are in electronic format and centrally accessible	NSW SES supports this recommendation. NSW SES Flood Action Card templates will be reviewed to include additional elements including tasks undertaken and rate of rise. Operational decisions and actions are to be recorded in operational logs whether on the NSW SES operational management system – beacon or positional log books. NSW SES supports the recommendation that all Flood Actions and Intelligence are to be centrally accessible and recorded in an electronic format. NSW SES is transitioning this data electronically in 2017-18.
12.	That the Bureau of Meteorology uses a specified time for levee overtopping or flood peak in the release of the Flood Warnings as per the NSW Flood Plan.	NSW SES supports this recommendation and will refer to the Bureau of Meteorology.
13.	That the BoM include notification of faulty gauges on all subsequent Flood Warning Notices, rather than simply	NSW SES supports this recommendation and will refer to the Bureau of Meteorology.

	removing the gauge reading from the Flood Warning Notices.	
14.	That the NSW SES considers a review of the design of the Flood Bulletins to have levee overtopping information clearly identified at the top of the bulletin.	NSW SES agrees with this recommendation. A new simpler Flood Bulletin that has the most significant information prominently placed at the top of the bulletin will be available by 31 July 2017. NSW SES has commenced a project to develop a warnings framework (incl. templates) and update the current messaging to the communities of NSW. Whilst the whole project is due for completion 30 September 2018 progressive implementation of changes will occur through a phased approach. This includes changes to the Flood Bulletins by 31 July 2017.
15.	That the NSW SES reinforces with staff the importance of having the issued time on the Flood Bulletin, as opposed to the prepared time.	NSW SES agrees with this recommendation. Flood Bulletin template have been amended to reflect this.
16.	That the NSW SES reinforces with staff the importance of ensuring data on Flood Bulletins is accurate.	NSW SES agrees with this recommendation.
17.	That the NSW SES reviews the format of the current Flood Bulletins, through the Warnings Working Group.	NSW SES agrees with this recommendation. A new simpler Flood Bulletin will be available by 31 July 2017. NSW SES has commenced a project to develop a warnings framework (incl. templates) and update the current messaging to the communities of NSW. Whilst the whole project is due for completion 30 September 2018 progressive implementation of changes will occur through a phased approach. The first changes will be to the current Flood Bulletins by the end of July 2017.

		The work achieved within NSW SES project will align to the National Warning framework being developed through AFAC over the next 12 months.
18.	That the NSW SES reviews the effectiveness of their current operating system re the issuing of Bulletins through their Website Warnings Working Party.	NSW SES agrees with this recommendation. The NSW SES Warnings Project will incorporate a review of the effectiveness of their current operating system re the issuing of Bulletins into its work.
19.	That the NSW SES ensures that there are sufficient staff trained and proficient in the use of Emergency Alert.	NSW SES agrees with this recommendation. The Service has established an Operational Improvement Program which will, as one of its work streams, identify the capability requirement for the number of Emergency Alert Trained Officers and the required training. A training and exercise regime has also been established which will improve the proficiency and effectiveness of the existing cohort. Emergency Alert is part of a suite of tools utilised to warn communities about the impacts of severe weather. NSW SES utilises emergency alert to warn the community of severe weather impacts as timely as possible. NSW SES is a part of the process to implement a new version of the National Emergency Alert System from 2018 which will provide the Service with greater flexibility in the creation and delivery of warning messages.
20.	That the NSW SES formalises the new process for the issuing of Evacuation Orders into Policy.	NSW SES agrees with this recommendation. NSW SES has already formalised a new process for the issuing of Evacuation Orders and Warnings. This is being integrated into policy and training. With effect 10 July 2017, all Evacuation Orders are now required to go through this new process. The new process ensures that both Local Controllers and key Senior Officers including the NSW SES Commissioner are consulted as part of the authorising process ahead of an Incident Controller

		issuing such an order. This will not affect the timeliness of any evacuation notifications.
21.	That NSW SES notifies the SEMC Emergency Operations Centres Working Party of the issues associated with the Lismore City Emergency Operations Centre.	NSW SES agrees with this recommendation. NSW SES has written to the Office of Emergency Management regarding the issues identified with the Lismore City Emergency Operations Centre.
22.	That the NSW SES considers reinforcing the need amongst staff to ensure that when an EOC is established, that an appropriate liaison officer is provided.	NSW SES agrees with this recommendation. NSW SES commits to ensuring that this does not occur in future. NSW SES recommends that other agencies where appropriate collocate with NSW SES Operation Centres and EOCs during flood events. This will improve Command & Control and reduce staff duplication / burden.
23.	That the NSW SES continues to support the development of staff through AIIMS training.	NSW SES agrees with this recommendation. NSW SES continues to devote resources to the training of staff in all aspects and parts of Incident Management and the AIIMS process. NSW SES is committed to progressing its staff and volunteers through the Emergency Management Professionalisation Scheme under the AFAC banner. NSW SES has a dedicated project team to develop incident management doctrine and training. As the AFAC EMPS scheme has commenced with Level 3 Incident Controllers NSW SES has commenced registering Level 3 Incident Controllers. Incident Management development and training will focus on functional roles and external training of Incident Controllers. All NSW SES staff will have completed introduction to AIIMs 4 by October 2017. In addition all Regional Staff will have completed AIIMs 4 Principles and Functions by 31 December 2017.
24.	That the NSW SES raises the issue of Multi-Agency Incident Management Teams or co-location of Incident	NSW SES agrees with this recommendation. Due to the early impacts of the extreme weather event and the delay in the initial request for assistance,

	Management Teams and Emergency Operations Centres with the State Emergency Management Committee.	this did not occur in Lismore. Ordinarily NSW SES, where appropriate, uses incident management personnel from other agencies in its IMTs. NSW SES will continue this practice consistent with the principles of AIIMS and the approach to Emergency Management in NSW. NSW SES is working with other agencies to ensure that where appropriate NSW SES Operation Centres and EOCs are co-located during flood events. An exercise schedule has been developed incorporating Incident Management. In addition, NSW SES has been successful in attaining SEMC funding to undertake four multi-agency exercises over the next 12 months.
25.	That the NSW SES implements a calendar for annual exercising for all Region Incident Management Teams.	NSW SES agrees with this recommendation. NSW SES has undertaken a review of its Training Framework and will be progressing toward a more centralised model. This will ensure greater direction and oversite of core training including IMT training in Regions and Units. NSW SES has implemented routine training and exercising in its State Operations Centre. With weekly familiarisation and development activities building to drills and larger exercises on a monthly basis. The new State Operations Centre will be exercised within 2 weeks of the facility being occupied. Routine monthly exercising of region level incident management facilities and personnel will be incorporated as a requirement of all Region Controllers performance agreements from 31 July 2017.
26.	That the NSW SES continues to support the Community Liaison Officer training course.	NSW SES agrees with this recommendation. Since the events on the North Coast in March April 2017 NSW SES has conducted five Community Engagement Training activities with a further 11 programed through to the end of 2017.

		NSW SES has piloted the Community Liaison Officer (non-competency based) course which has been accepted positively by NSW SES members. Additional courses have been scheduled for the 17/18 financial year which will further enhance this capability. From September 2017, NSW SES will be implementing a new strategy for flexible volunteering with the Service. 'Volunteering Reimagined' will provide greater opportunities for people to engage as NSW SES volunteers in key roles such as Community Engagement.
27.	That the Lismore City Flood Emergency Sub Plan 2013 is revised to include a definition of Incident Controller.	NSW SES agrees with this recommendation. NSW SES has developed a project plan to review and update the local flood plans, flood intelligence and warning products. The project has commenced and will be concluded in December 2017.
28.	That the Lismore City Flood Emergency Sub Plan 2013 annexures and maps are updated as they currently reflect the Lismore City Local Flood Plan 2006.	NSW SES agrees with this recommendation in principle. NSW SES will update the plan to the most recent available flood mapping. This will depend on post event survey work and available flood studies undertaken by Lismore City Council. NSW SES has developed a project plan to review and update the local flood plans, flood intelligence and warning products. The project has commenced and will be concluded in December 2017. Office of Environment and Heritage has commenced a flood study which will inform the update to the flood plan.
29.	That the Tweed Shire Flood Emergency Sub Plan 2014 is revised to include a definition of Incident Controller.	NSW SES agrees with this recommendation. NSW SES has developed a project plan to review and update the local flood plans, flood intelligence and warning products. The project has commenced and will be concluded in December 2017.

30.	That the Tweed Shire Flood Emergency Sub Plan 2014, Volume 2, annexures and maps are updated as they currently reflect the Tweed Shire Local Flood Plan 2008.	NSW SES agrees with this recommendation in principle. NSW SES will update the plan to the most recent available flood mapping. This will depend on post event survey work and available flood studies undertaken by Tweed Shire Council. NSW SES has developed a project plan to review and update the local flood plans, flood intelligence and warning products. The project has commenced and will be concluded in December 2017.
31.	That the NSW SES liaise with the appropriate NSW Government Agencies to ensure stronger linkages are forged at a local level between emergency responders, local councils and community development professionals.	NSW SES agrees with this recommendation. This will be achieved through training and exercises. NSW SES has included the requirement for this to occur into Regional Controllers' performance agreements with effect 31 July 2017.

NSW SES will request, before the end of August 2017, that all Local Emergency Management Committees conduct a Flood/Storm Response exercise within the next 12 months.

NSW SES will establish by 30 September 2017 a Community Deaf Liaison Unit to assist with engagement in the Deaf Community. This will leverage of work already done with that community.

NSW SES has directed all Region Controllers to undertake an assessment of the communities in their area for those which would benefit from greater NSW SES engagement. This is one of the strategies being implemented ahead of the launch of Volunteering Reimagined. Once identified projects will be created to implement best fit engagement strategies for those communities. |
| 32. | That the NSW SES supports the additional funding for an additional community engagement staff member for the Richmond Tweed Region. | NSW SES does not support this recommendation. NSW SES is currently undertaking an Organisational Transformation process which will see it review the functions and location of all staff. Through that process the |

		Service will make determinations as to where resources are best located to achieve the optimal community outcomes. The implementation of strategies such as 'Volunteering Reimagined' will assist regions like Richmond Tweed Region with their Community Engagement capability and capacity in the future.
33.	That NSW SES ensures that media 'blackouts' do not occur during major events, rather the media is harnessed to ensure the timely delivery of messaging.	NSW SES agrees with this recommendation. NSW SES views the media as a key partner in providing information to communities during such events. It does not support a practice of media blackout during operational events. NSW SES understands that in this instance this was a direction provided by the Regional Incident Controller during a period of heightened activity between 1400 and 1700 on 30 March 2017. Whilst some broadcasts continued to occur this adversely impacted the quality and the quantity of information coming from the Incident Management Team to the Lismore Community. NSW SES has issued a direction that this not occur in future. NSW SES will continue to ensure that Incident Controllers are provided with appropriate media training and that Public Information Cells are a part of Incident Management Teams.
34.	That the NSW SES Warnings Working Group addresses the issues identified with the NSW SES website and ensure that the Website is tested under operational conditions to ensure it meets the NSW SES systems requirements.	NSW SES agrees with this recommendation. The fault which caused issues with the NSW SES website was addressed during the event. Ongoing testing will endeavour to ensure that the website can manage the volume of hits during operational events within budget constraints.
35.	That the NSW SES reinforce existing policy on fatigue management ensuring that members understand why it needs to be enforced as it is not only for their safety	NSW SES agrees with this recommendation. Operational planning arrangements did not facilitate sound fatigue management during this event. NSW SES will continue to reinforce the services existing fatigue management

	but for their mental wellbeing. That the NSW SES considers placement of a designated safety officer as part of the Incident Management Team.	policy and incorporate this into induction training. Improved operational planning tools should have a positive impact on fatigue management.
		Where practical NSW SES will place a designated safety officer in all level 3 Incident Management Teams and in the State Operations Centre. NSW SES has incorporate Safety Officer training as part of the Incident Management project and Operational Improvement program.
		The NSW SES 'Volunteering Reimagined' to be launched in September 2017 will provide NSW SES with greater flexibility in its volunteer cohort with increased numbers and greater specialist capability to meet operational and support demands.
36.	That the NSW SES becomes a recognised authority for land use planning purposes, having greater involvement in floodplain development with Local Councils and that their input is mandatory before any consent by council is given in flood planning areas.	NSW SES supports this recommendation. Current legislation does not provide the NSW SES with an authoritative voice in land use planning on flood plains. Rather the Service has relied on influence and its advisory capacity. The NSW SES will approach Government as a part of a proposed legislative review of the *State Emergency Service Act 1989* and seek increased authority with respect to land use planning in flood plains.