



State Welfare Emergency Committee

Meeting 1 – Monday 20 April 2020

Communique

The State Welfare Emergency Committee (SWEC) held its first meeting of 2020, following the activation of the State Emergency Welfare Plan (the Welfare Plan) on 5 April 2020.

All members firmly committed to collectively respond to emerging welfare issues and support the social and emotional well-being of the Western Australian community during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Working in partnership for Western Australians

The SWEC agreed that its purpose is to provide advisory, consultative and reference support to the State Welfare Coordinator, the Director General of the Department of Communities. There was clear commitment from members, and the organisations they represent, that it will work collectively and in partnership to support Western Australia during this difficult time.

A State Welfare Incident Coordination Centre (SWICC) has been established within Communities to support the welfare response to issues arising from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Giving voice to all vulnerable cohorts is critical

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the wellbeing of Aboriginal communities, particularly those in regional and remote areas, was discussed. It was agreed that the SWEC will be co-chaired by a representative of Communities' Aboriginal Cultural Council.

SWEC members agreed to champion vulnerable and local communities and bring perspectives from other jurisdictions and stakeholders.



Preparing for a flexible, longer-term response

The SWEC's role is prescribed by Emergency Management framework and legislation. All indications are that the social and economic impacts of the pandemic will be long term. The SWEC acknowledged the need to be flexible as the group's role evolves – as the Government moves from emergency response through to welfare support, through to recovery.

Next steps

The SWEC agreed to finalise its foundational documents and distribute a draft of the State Emergency Accommodation Plan for consideration at the next Committee meeting on Monday 4 May 2020.