

# STATEMENT OF STRATEGIC INTENT 2018-2020



FOR A SAFER STATE







# CONTENTS

MESSAGE FROM THE COMMISSIONER	3
WA'S FIRE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES AT A GLANCE	5
WE'VE COME A LONG WAY: THE CONTEXT IN WHICH WE OPERATE	6
THE WAY FORWARD	10
PEOPLE AND CULTURE	11
FOSTERING CULTURE	12
WHAT WILL SUCCESS LOOK LIKE	15
DRIVING BEHAVIOUR CHANGE	16
OUR STRATEGIC VALUES	18
WHO WE ARE	19
OUR STRATEGIC PRIORITIES	20

# MESSAGE FROM THE COMMISSIONER



The Department of Fire and Emergency Services (DFES) exists to create a safer state, meaning both a safer place to live, work and play for the people of Western Australia,

and a safer, more resilient community. Our work takes a whole of government approach and as such it embraces the State's infrastructure, economy and environment. Our aim is to protect and make more resilient the people, key industries, small businesses and environment we all value so much. Our vision is at the core of everything we do: "Resilient Western Australian communities that work together to build capability and capacity to prevent, prepare for, respond to and recover from emergencies".

In recent years we have focused on building capability, capacity and cooperation within DFES and across the State's emergency management services, and we have maintained a strong commitment to our four Strategic Directions:

- ▶ A Future Focused Organisation
- ▶ A Leading Emergency Services Organisation
- ▶ An Integrated Organisation
- ▶ Valued and Capable People

It is my intention to add a fifth, complementary area of focus to these existing four Strategic Directions: **A United Organisation with a Supportive and Balanced Culture**. People are the key to building an effective emergency management service, and for that reason I am committed to ensuring this kind of culture is enhanced and sustained. This document gives an overview of this area of importance for DFES. Companion pieces are our Community Engagement Framework, Volunteer Sustainability Strategy, and a new communications strategy.

The wide-ranging challenges we face, including fire, flood, cyclone and storm, are not unique to Western Australia. Indeed, the World Economic Forum's list of Top Global Risks closely reflects the work of DFES. Across our country and the rest of the world, unprecedented weather and other events are leading to unparalleled emergencies, impacting on our communities and testing the capacity and capability of the most experienced emergency responders.

An aging population, changes to volunteering and changes to our regions also bring different challenges to DFES as an organisation that relies heavily on community participation and the skills and knowledge of volunteers across the State.

To be successful we must work in partnership with communities to build local resilience and reduce the likelihood and impact of emergencies. We must assist communities to understand, accept and respond to risks before they become disasters. We must increase our focus on mitigation and work more closely with other agencies to reduce risks and ensure communities are well prepared. Perhaps most importantly, we must ensure we have a diverse workforce that is equipped, trained and valued, including the volunteers who are critical to making sure their local community is a safe place.

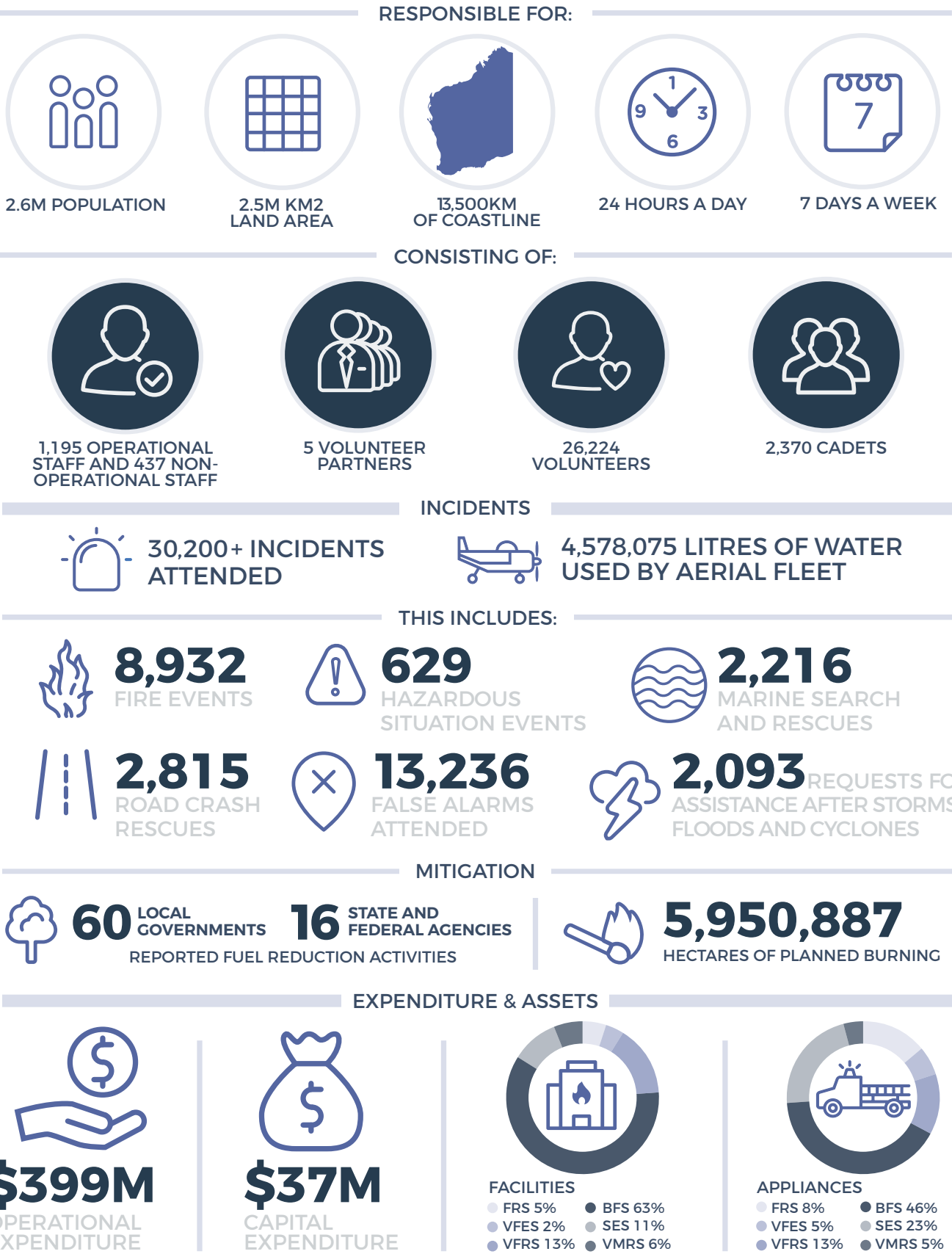
Our ultimate aim is a State where everyone – the public, government, volunteers, corporate and operational staff – is united in the resolve and efforts to become "A Safer State".

Darren Klemm AFSM  
**Commissioner**  
**Fire and Emergency Services**





# WA'S FIRE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES AT A GLANCE



*\*Figures based on 2017-18 financial year, except fuel reduction activities which are based on 2016-17 financial year.*  
*\*Expenditure figures have not yet been audited at the date of publishing.*



# WE'VE COME A LONG WAY: THE CONTEXT IN WHICH WE OPERATE

Since DFES was established in 2012 the organisation, in conjunction with volunteers, has had some significant achievements, including;

- › improving capability and capacity to respond to incidents and assisting communities to recover from incidents;
- › changing our structure to better support the community;
- › establishing a social media presence and an online alerts and warnings system that tells you what's happening in real time – [emergency.wa.gov.au](https://www.emergency.wa.gov.au);
- › improving community education and awareness programs;
- › developing a modern information and communications technology strategy;
- › establishing mechanisms for building volunteers' command capability; and
- › launching a state of the art simulation centre.

## Organisational challenges

These are challenging times for DFES and for the communities we serve. We are experiencing changes to weather, demographics, and social trends that make our operating environment more complex. The people of Western Australia are expecting more from us. It is important that we continue to be adaptable, flexible and connected, in order to deliver a fire and emergency service that is both responsive and proactive.

Climate change continues to affect our environment, providing large amounts of dry fuel in high bushfire-risk areas and increasing the severity of weather events.

A priority for DFES continues to be supporting local governments and community members in their efforts to ensure they are prepared. Our aim is to enable all communities to build their resilience, and in doing so reduce the impact of the wide range of hazards managed by DFES and our emergency management partners.

This will be supported across the State with increased effort in engagement and awareness programs.

The development of our Rural Fire Division is a priority. The government has highlighted the need for DFES to pay more attention to building greater breadth and depth of bushfire capability across our vast State. With this in mind we are creating a first-of-its-kind Bushfire Centre of Excellence, which will be focused on training, research, best practice and strategic advice.

Clear leadership is also required to enable mitigation that is coordinated across the State. This means ensuring that DFES supports all agencies, local government, industry and landholders to enable best practice bushfire prevention and preparedness actions to be implemented across WA. Stronger partnerships with local government and rural volunteers are required.

The need to stay abreast of advances in technology means that we identify solutions to improve our communications for both business efficiency and improved frontline response for our communities.

One of our greatest challenges as an organisation has been to achieve effective alignment and unity across all of our operating services and partners, within a huge, complex jurisdiction. A rich history of tradition has fostered a deep sense of loyalty to individual services, and this affinity to a particular service has supported feelings of belonging. This is important, but we also need to encourage a greater spirit of collaboration between our emergency services. By fostering mutual trust, synergy and unity we will go from strength to strength in sustaining a positive culture.

We appreciate that better connections and greater involvement from volunteers and stakeholders are needed in shaping our service delivery, and recognise that there are opportunities to improve.







***Importantly,** building an even stronger, more united and balanced culture ensures DFES is well positioned to address government and community priorities.*

#### Government context

The State Government's Service Priority Review points to the need for a more collaborative, community-focussed approach to service delivery and design, and a transformative style of leadership at every level. It sets out challenges to better use technology and to work closely with partners such as the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions, Western Australia Police, and local governments across the State.

We are transitioning into the GovNext (digital transformation) environment and implementing projects that utilise technology for safe and cost effective outcomes.

The future will see DFES substantially increase its investment in equipment and online services, better support regional volunteers, and work to improve the services we deliver to the community.

Importantly, building an even stronger, more united and balanced culture ensures DFES is well positioned to address government and community priorities.

#### Alignment

Our strategy must align with a broader set of objectives. These include the six State Core Objectives of the Emergency Risk Management approach endorsed by the State Emergency Management Committee.

- › **People:** protect lives and wellbeing of persons.
- › **Economy:** maintain and grow the State's productive capacity, employment and government revenue.
- › **Social setting:** ensure there is public order, under which people are housed and fed in a safe and sanitary manner and have access to social amenity including education and health services, and things of cultural importance are preserved.
- › **Government:** ensure there is, at all times, an effective and functioning system of government and societal respect for rule of law.
- › **Infrastructure:** maintain the functionality of infrastructure, particularly key transport infrastructure and utilities required for community health, economic production and effective management of emergencies.
- › **Environment:** protect the ecosystem and biodiversity of the State.



# THE WAY FORWARD

As DFES seeks to meet the challenges of the future we must bring greater focus to several key areas.

## Volunteers

- › Achieve greater alignment with our volunteers, and build volunteer confidence in DFES.
- › Strengthen our role as supporters and facilitators to meet volunteers’ needs.
- › Offer more support to volunteers in the regions.

## Culture and Community

- › Help bring staff, volunteers and partners closer together to promote unity and a sense of pride in what we do, support morale and foster a strong capacity for collaboration.
- › Build an organisational workforce that is more reflective of the community we serve, with a focus on attracting, retaining and developing women in operational roles.
- › Work in partnership with stakeholders and the community to increase service delivery in the regions.

- › Recognise and leverage the skills, knowledge and experience that resides in our communities and with our volunteers and staff.

## Mitigation

- › Engage with communities and landowners where there is high risk.
- › Increase organisational effort and focus towards preventing and reducing the likelihood and consequences of emergencies.
- › Shift community perceptions of risk reduction from passive (“somebody else will do this”) to active (“this is my responsibility”).

Our strategy is driven by the needs of our communities. Fostering an increasingly supportive and balanced culture will enable us to effectively address those needs.

The ultimate aim is to create a safer Western Australia and to ensure that responsibility for doing so is shared and supported throughout the community.



# PEOPLE AND CULTURE

*Building an effective culture means having shared values, shared purpose, shared responsibility and shared resilience. To achieve this, we will begin from a position of mutual understanding and respect.*

Sustaining a supportive and balanced culture means we will need to respectfully challenge each other with honesty and ensure that our behaviours are aligned to our values, goals and our strategic direction.

We will work together to get things done, holding each other accountable, focussing on mutual support, sharing knowledge and building our capabilities and helping to build those of our stakeholders.

People make all the difference, and a positive, supportive and united culture will keep us working together towards common goals. We want to sustain a culture that is inclusive and collaborative, where both volunteers and staff are engaged, valued and listened to.

Volunteers are the backbone of emergency services across our vast State, and we must never forget that.

We want to improve our relationships with the community, especially in regional Western Australia. DFES should be seen as an integral and respected part of the very communities that we strive to support and protect.

Working better together at all levels and across all services – from corporate and operational staff to volunteers and partners – will enable us to enhance the safety of Western Australian people.





# FOSTERING CULTURE

## OUR CULTURAL MODEL - DIAL



## WHAT IS A BALANCED AND SUPPORTIVE CULTURE?







# WHAT WILL SUCCESS LOOK LIKE?

Emergency management plays a critical role in the wellbeing of Western Australia and its people. DFES understands that its work contributes significantly to addressing the six State Core Objectives identified by the State Emergency Management Committee. These are people, economy, social setting, governance, infrastructure and environment.

We'll know we are well on the way towards sustained success when:

- our culture becomes increasingly united, collaborative and positive;
- the WA community is more actively engaged in preventing, preparing for, responding to and recovering from emergencies;
- our workforce is more diverse and reflective of gender equality; and
- we are performing well against the priorities set out by government.

## OUR PRIORITY: CREATE A SAFER WESTERN AUSTRALIA

### RESULT



REDUCED PREVENTABLE EMERGENCIES



FEWER CONSEQUENCES FROM EMERGENCIES



INCREASED COMMUNITY RESILIENCE

### IMPACT



People and properties are safer  
Partnerships with local communities and stakeholders



Reduced economic loss  
Reduced harm to people and the environment  
Fires stopped before they escalate  
People are back at home and able to recover quickly



People and properties are safer  
People understand, accept and take steps to reduce their risk  
Community and volunteers feel involved and supported  
Quicker business and community recovery

### PRODUCTS AND SERVICES



National Disaster Resilience Program  
Bushfire prone mapping  
Bushfire Risk Management Plans  
DFES Capability Framework



Partnership agreements  
Restricted access permits  
Advisory services to government and communities  
Emergency rescue helicopter service  
Recovery coordination and WANDRA funding



Increased local presence  
State-wide awareness campaign  
Fire Chat and Bushfire Ready Groups  
Emergency WA website  
Aboriginal engagement initiatives  
Delivery of State Emergency Management Committee strategic priorities

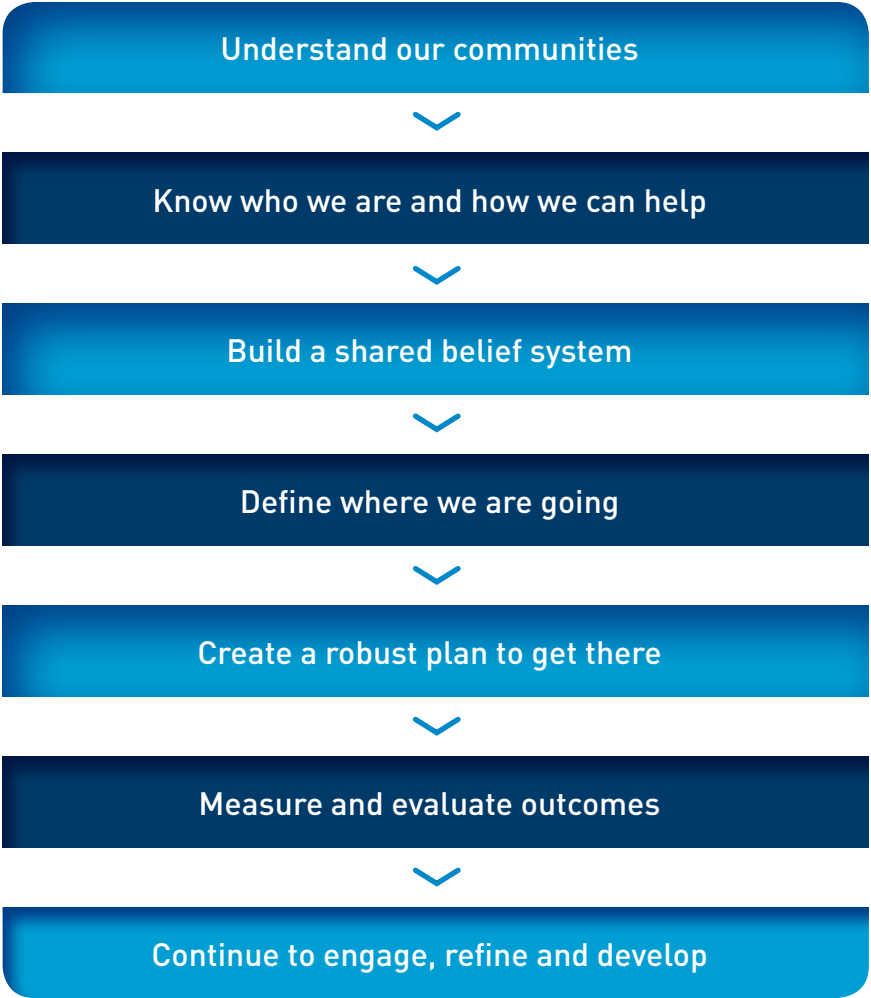


# DRIVING BEHAVIOUR CHANGE

DFES will have a better ability to deliver on its mission, vision and plan by:

- › increasing recognition and acceptance of personal risk exposure amongst community members;
- › developing a sense of shared responsibility within the WA community, to help communities get active;
- › building a united sense of purpose and a shared belief system among staff, volunteers, partners and community; and
- › reframing perceptions of DFES from 'administrator' to 'enabler' by strengthening our role in providing support and facilitation.

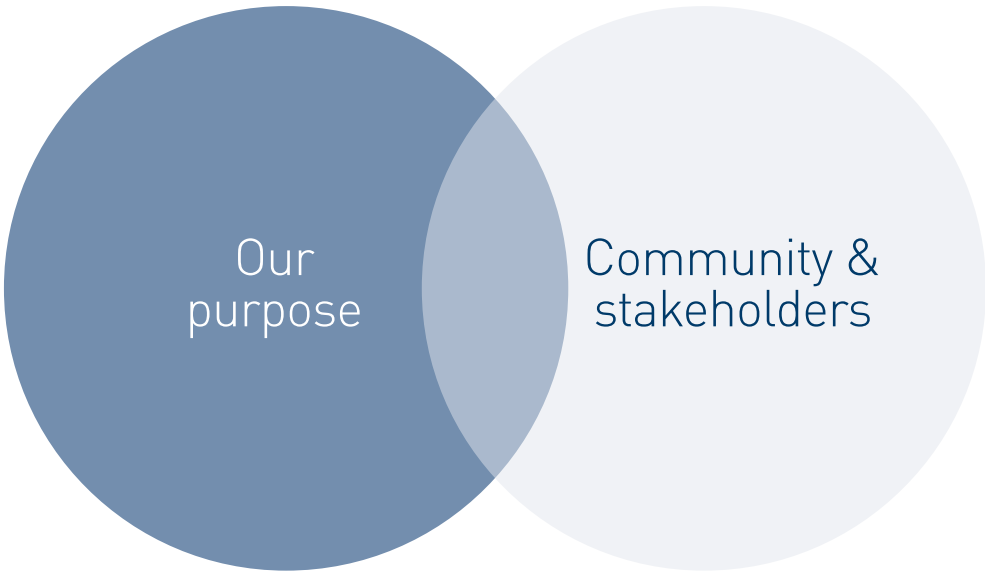
## OUR STRATEGIC ROADMAP





# OUR STRATEGIC VALUES

Everything DFES does will be built upon a system of shared purpose and shared values. This means aligning our purpose as an organisation with the needs of our communities.



DFES has a wide-ranging role, but our ultimate aim is to reduce the number and impact of incidents and emergencies affecting Western Australians, and enable a greater sense of community resilience and well-being.

Safety is at our core, and we understand that strength comes from working together and accepting shared responsibility.

Our strategy guides us towards our goal: For a Safer State.



# WHO WE ARE

## A Shared Purpose

To enable WA communities to live in a safer State.

## Driven By a Strong Belief

We believe that communities are safer when they work together.

## United by Our Core Values

- Put the community first.
- Work together as a committed team.
- Respect and value each other.
- Continuously improve our services.
- Act with integrity and honesty.
- Promote and support open and honest two-way communication.
- Strive to keep ourselves and others safe.

*Understanding who we are and where we want to go is fundamental to our **success** in delivering better outcomes for the community.*

# WHERE WE'RE GOING

## Our Vision

Resilient Western Australian communities that work together to build capability and capacity to prevent, prepare for, respond to and recover from emergencies.

## Our Mission

To improve community safety practices and provide timely, quality and effective emergency services, in partnership with local communities and emergency management partners.



OUR STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

GOVERNMENT GOAL Strong Communities: Safe communities and supported families					
Strategic Direction 1 A future focused organisation		Strategic Direction 2 A leading emergency services organisation		Strategic Direction 3 An integrated organisation	
Strategic Direction 4 Valued and capable people		Strategic Direction 5 A united organisation with a supportive and balanced culture			
Priorities	Actively engage with the community to improve resilience  Leadership in the mitigation of bushfire risks and other hazards  Increased focus on emerging risk to better plan for future emergency management	Enhanced collaboration with our emergency service partners  Deliver an enhanced rural fire capability	Improve ICT solutions for both career staff and volunteers through digital transformation	A capable workforce that is continually developed  Increased diversity and gender equality	Stronger relationships with volunteers
Initiatives	Training for prescribed burning and fuel load assessment  Enhance Bushfire Risk Management Program and Guidelines  Undertake predictive modelling for flood, earthquake, wind and other hazards  Enhanced community engagement framework  SEMC State Risk and Capability Projects to build the State's resilience	WA emergency services communication strategy to enable greater collaboration  Enhance DFES rural fire capability  Commence drafting of the consolidated Emergency Services Acts  Support SEMC in the delivery of their strategic plan and the State's Preparedness Report	Upgrade and replace Computer Aided Dispatch and Mobile Data Terminal systems to improve functionality, reliability and performance  Develop 24x7 service request and fault reporting system  Enhance resilience with adoption of GovNext (digital transformation) services  Investigate the feasibility of Apps to better communicate with our people	Enhanced career pathway for Community Emergency Service Officers  Implement regional DFES leadership meetings  Increase useability and accessibility of E-Academy  Carry out the review of firefighter recruitment  Implement the Male Champions of Change action plan recommendations  Roll out substantive equality and unconscious bias training	Cultural enhancement strategy  Volunteer governance and engagement frameworks that ensure volunteers are supported and involved in planning  Training program on managing and leading volunteers  Volunteer Charter  Welcome pack for new volunteers  Increased volunteer focus on the DFES website







## PEOPLE MAKE US WHO WE ARE



*“Building an effective culture means having shared values, shared purpose, shared responsibility and shared resilience.”*





