



BLUE MOUNTAINS SNOW PLAN

**A Local Sub Plan of the
The NSW State Storm Plan**

AUTHORISATION

This sub plan is issued under the authority of the State Emergency and Rescue Management Act 1989 and the State Emergency Service Act 1989. This sub plan has been recommended by the NSW SES Unit Commander (Blue Mountains Unit) and endorsed by the Blue Mountains Local Emergency Management Committee.

Recommended



John Hughes
Unit Commander – Blue Mountains
NSW State Emergency Service

Dated: 3 October 2022

Approved



Matthew Chambers
Chairperson
Local Emergency Management
Committee – Blue Mountains

Dated: 4 October 2022

REVISION

This plan will be revised:

- a) No later than every 5 years, or;
- b) After any significant snow falls within the Blue Mountains, or;
- c) As requested by the Unit Commander of the NSW SES Blue Mountains Unit and/or the Chairperson of the Blue Local Emergency Management Committee.

VERSION HISTORY

The following table lists all previously endorsed versions of this plan.

Plan	Endorsed
Blue Mountains Snow Plan	July 2006
Blue Mountains Snow Plan	July 2011
Blue Mountains Snow Plan	December 2017
Blue Mountains Snow Plan	August 2022

AMENDMENT LIST

Proposals for amendment to this sub plan are to be forwarded to:

Unit Commander – NSW SES
 Blue Mountains Unit
 PO Box 216
 Wentworth Falls NSW 2782

Amendments promulgated are to be certified below when entered.

Amendment Number	Description	Updated by	Endorsed Date
1	Update of Agency Names and clarification of response	John Hughes	1/7/2011
2	Update of Agency Names and reviewed procedures from recent snow operations	John Hughes	7/5/2015
3	2017 Amendments post exercise review by Blue Mountains LEMC August 2017: Include: 2.4 Agriculture and Animal Services Functional Area Include: 2.8 FRNSW primary role of response to fires and HAZMAT incidents Amendment: 5.2 Operations Centre locations changed in accordance with Local EMPLAN	John Hughes	5/12/2017

Amendment Number	Description	Updated by	Endorsed Date
4	<p>Updated reference to reflect the State Emergency Service Act 1989 as of 26th October 2018 to include change of NSW SES Local Headquarters and Local Controller to NSW SES Unit and NSW SES Unit Commander</p> <p>Change of NDRRA to DRFA funding</p> <p>Remove of telecommunications from EUSFA</p> <p>Ambulance Service of NSW (ASNSW) changed to NSW Ambulance</p> <p>FACS changed to Department of Communities and Justice</p> <p>Office of Environment and Heritage (OEH) changed to National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS)</p> <p>RMS and Sydney Trains changed to TfNSW</p> <p>Removal of Snow Intelligence System</p> <p>“End Of Response” reworded in line with the State Storm Plan</p>	John Hughes	15/8/2022

DISTRIBUTION LIST

This sub plan is distributed through the NSW SES Blue Mountains Unit in electronic format and is publicly available.

CONTENTS

AUTHORISATION	i
REVISION	i
VERSION HISTORY.....	ii
AMENDMENT LIST	ii
DISTRIBUTION LIST	iii
CONTENTS	iv
ABBREVIATIONS	vii
GLOSSARY.....	viii
PART 1 - OUTLINE AND SCOPE OF THIS PLAN	9
1.1 Purpose.....	9
1.2 Authority.....	9
1.3 Scope	9
1.4 Area Covered by the Plan	9
PART 2 - RESPONSIBILITIES	10
2.1 General	10
2.2 NSW State Emergency Service.....	10
2.3 Agriculture and animal services functional area	11
2.4 Blue Mountains City Council (BMCC).....	11
2.5 Education Facilities (including Catholic Education Office, Department of Education, Private Schools and Early Learning Centres).....	11
2.6 Energy and Utility Services Functional Area	12
2.7 Fire & Rescue NSW (FRNSW):.....	12
2.8 Health Services Functional Area	12
2.9 Local Emergency Management Officer (LEMO).....	12
2.10 Local Emergency Operations Controller (LEOCON):	13
2.11 National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS).....	13
2.12 NSW Ambulance	13
2.13 NSW Police Force (NSWPF).....	13
2.14 NSW Rural Fire Service (NSW RFS)	13
2.15 Transport for NSW (TfNSW).....	14
2.16 Welfare Services Functional Area	14
PART 3 - PREVENTION.....	15
3.1 General	15
3.2 Mitigation	15
PART 4 - PREPAREDNESS.....	16
4.1 Maintenance of This Plan	16
4.2 Training.....	16
4.3 Resources.....	16
4.4 Public Education	16
4.5 Agency Communications Systems	16
PART 5 - CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS.....	18

5.1	Command and Control.....	18
	Incident Control and	18
5.2	Operations Centres.....	18
5.3	Liaison.....	18
5.4	Public Request for Assistance	19
5.5	Information and Media.....	19
5.6	Emergency Alert	19
PART 6 - RESPONSE.....		20
6.1	Mobilisation.....	20
6.2	Preliminary Deployments	20
6.3	Traffic Management	20
6.4	Increased Road Traffic	21
6.5	Stranded Travellers.....	22
6.6	Places of Refuge.....	22
6.7	Evacuation and Evacuation Centres	23
6.8	Essential Services	23
6.9	Resupply	24
6.10	Assistance for Animals.....	24
6.11	End of Response Operations.....	24
PART 7 - RECOVERY.....		25
7.1	Recovery Operations	25
Appendix A: Snow Characteristics and Control Measures		26
Appendix B: Significant Snowfalls affecting the Blue Mountains		28

ABBREVIATIONS

AAR	After Action Review
BMCC	Blue Mountains City Council
BoM	The Australian Bureau of Meteorology
DCJ	Department of Communities and Justice
EA	Emergency Alert
EMPLAN	New South Wales State Emergency Management Plan
ESO	Emergency Service Organisations
FRNSW	Fire and Rescue NSW
IC	Incident Controller
ICC	Incident Control Centre
LGA	Local Government Area
LEMO	Local Emergency Management Officer
LEOC	Local Emergency Operations Centre
LEOCON	Local Emergency Operations Controller
LO	Liaison Officer
NPWS	National Parks and Wildlife Service
NSW SES	New South Wales State Emergency Service
NSWPF	New South Wales Police Force
NSW RFS	New South Wales Rural Fire Service
TfNSW	Transport for New South Wales
SEOCON	State Emergency Operations Controller
SITREP	Situation Report
TMC	Transport Management Centre (TfNSW)

GLOSSARY

After Action Review (AAR). A learning tool that is intended to evaluate an incident or event in order to improve performance by sustaining strengths and correcting weaknesses. The NSW SES Blue Mountains Unit is to conduct an AAR at the conclusion of any significant snow operation internally and a separate AAR with the LEMC with the assistance of the LEMO and LEOCON.

Combat Agency. Means the agency identified in the State EMPLAN as the agency primarily responsible for controlling the response to a particular emergency.

Emergency Alert. A national telephony-based alerting system available for use by emergency service agencies to send SMS and voice messages to landlines and/or mobile telephones in times of emergency.

Incident Controller. The role of the Incident Controller will be appointed by the NSW SES to establish, lead and manage an Incident Management Team (IMT) to manage the range of activities to establish control and respond to an incident (i.e. flood, storm, tsunami operation).

Liaison Officer. A person, nominated or appointed by an organisation or functional area, to represent that organisation or functional area at a control centre, emergency operations centre, coordination centre or site control point, a liaison officer maintains communications with and conveys directions/requests to their organisation or functional area, and provides advice on the status, capabilities, actions and requirements of their organisation or functional area

NSW SES Unit Commander. Appointed Unit Commander as per the SES Act 1989 (26th October 2018)

Significant Snowfall. Snow that affects any part of the Blue Mountains LGA causing significant disruption of transport services and major interruptions to utilities (gas, water, electricity, and telecommunications)

PART 1 - OUTLINE AND SCOPE OF THIS PLAN

1.1 PURPOSE

- 1.1.1 It has been recognised by the NSW SES and the LEMC of the City of Blue Mountains, that significant snowfalls within the Blue Mountains may have an adverse impact on the local community.
- 1.1.2 As a significant snowfall is not specifically covered under the State Storm Plan, this sub plan has been designed to complement the State Storm Plan, other supporting plans, legislation, policies and MOUs established between agencies in NSW.
- 1.1.3 This sub plan covers preparedness measures, the conduct of response operations and the coordination of immediate recovery measures in the event of significant falls of snow within the Blue Mountains Local Government area.

1.2 AUTHORITY

- 1.2.1 This sub plan is issued under the authority of the State Emergency and Rescue Management Act 1989 and the State Emergency Service Act 1989. This sub plan has been recommended by the NSW SES Unit Commander (Blue Mountains Unit) and endorsed by the Blue Mountains Local Emergency Management Committee.

1.3 SCOPE

- 1.3.1 This Plan sets out the prevention, preparation, response and initial recovery arrangements for significant snow activity and the responsibilities of agencies and organisations regarding these functions.
- 1.3.2 This Plan covers arrangements relating to significant snow related events accompanied by any of the phenomena specified above.
- 1.3.3 This plan is written and actioned in conjunction with the State Emergency Management Plan (EMPLAN) and the NSW State Storm Plan.

1.4 AREA COVERED BY THE PLAN

- 1.4.1 This sub plan covers the Local Government Area of the City of Blue Mountains.

PART 2 - RESPONSIBILITIES

2.1 GENERAL

2.1.1 General responsibilities of emergency services and supporting agencies (including functional areas) are set out in the NSW State Storm Plan. Some specific responsibilities are expanded upon in the following paragraphs that relate to response to significant snowfalls within the Blue Mountains.

2.2 NSW STATE EMERGENCY SERVICE

2.2.1 The NSW SES is responsible under the State Emergency Service Act for response operations in relation to any storm event. In addition to the State Storm Plan, the NSW SES Blue Mountains Unit will prepare and maintain this Local Sub Plan for the City of Blue Mountains and coordinate a public education program so those residents in snow prone areas can be made aware of the snow threat.

2.2.2 In the event of a significant snowfall, the NSW SES will:

- a. Control, coordinate and conduct storm damage operations as per SES Act and State Storm Plan;
- b. Coordinate the response of all assisting agencies to assist with storm response;
- c. With the assistance of the Welfare Services Function Area, coordinate the provision of emergency food and the transport of medical supplies to snow bound people and/or communities as required;
- d. Where possible, arrange for support (e.g., accommodation, meals & transport) for essential and emergency service organisation members and volunteers assisting them if required;
- e. Where possible, assist the NSWPF, TfNSW and BMCC with road closure and traffic control operations;
- f. Coordinate regular road patrols in areas that have been impacted by significant snow falls to locate any stranded motorist or pedestrians, check on their welfare, and arrange transport to a safe location if required;
- g. Exercise financial delegations relating to the use of appropriate funding (e.g. Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements/Emergency Orders);
- h. Maintain communications with the LEOCON, LEMO and members of the LEMC providing timely updates of the snow situation and the operational response;
- i. Coordinate and manage any public information for a snow event, including maintaining regular communication (using social media and general media releases etc) and direct engagement with the affected community at timely intervals as required.

2.3 AGRICULTURE AND ANIMAL SERVICES FUNCTIONAL AREA

2.3.1 In addition to the State Storm Plan, Agriculture and Animal Services Functional Area shall where possible;

- a. Provide assistance and shelter for animals that require shelter if located or stranded in snow conditions erg animals on a vehicle float stranded in snow;
- b. Provide support to stranded communities with animals and livestock as required.

2.4 BLUE MOUNTAINS CITY COUNCIL (BMCC)

2.4.1 In addition to the State Storm Plan, BMCC shall where possible;

- a. Deploy personnel and resources for snow response related activities as coordinated by NSW SES;
- b. Close and reopen council roads affected by snow;
- c. Make Council premises/facilities (public halls etc) available as places of refuge for stranded members of the community. In a recovery phase after a significant snow or storm event, theses premises should also be made available for the purpose of being an information centre to allow community engagement with assisting agencies.

2.5 EDUCATION FACILITIES (INCLUDING CATHOLIC EDUCATION OFFICE, DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, PRIVATE SCHOOLS AND EARLY LEARNING CENTRES)

2.5.1 As each education facility within the Blue Mountains may have a unique impact from snowfalls, it is recommended that each school prepare and maintain their own plan for managing the welfare of their students and staff. The variants to consider are:

- a. Time of snowfall (before, during or after school);
- b. Where students and staff of the school have to travel to or from;
- c. The school's transport plan;
- d. The ability to remain as a place of refuge for students and staff.

2.5.2 Where possible, the NSW SES will provide assistance by providing Education Facilities a warning of likelihood of snow in a timely manner.

2.5.3 Where Education Facilities require assistance with the welfare or evacuation of students during a snow event, they are to contact the NSW SES immediately.

2.5.4 If suitable, Education Facilities may provide space in schools for either place of refuge or evacuation centres where necessary.

2.6 ENERGY AND UTILITY SERVICES FUNCTIONAL AREA

- 2.6.1 In addition to the State Storm Plan, Energy and Utility Providers shall where possible;
- a. Provide advice to NSW SES and LEOCON of any need to disconnect energy supplies and of any timetable for reconnection;
 - b. Energy providers assist with the provision of generators for temporary power supply;
 - c. Energy suppliers to clear or make safe any hazard caused by power lines or electrical reticulation equipment;
 - d. Assess the necessity for and implement the disconnection of customer's energy installations where these may present a hazard.

2.7 FIRE & RESCUE NSW (FRNSW):

- 2.7.1 In addition to the State Storm Plan, FRNSW during significant snowfalls shall where possible;
- a. Maintain legislated response to all fires and HAZMAT incidents;
 - b. Provide personnel and vehicles for snow related response activities;
 - c. Liaise with the NSW Rural Fire Service to maintain adequate fire coverage to isolated communities affected by significant snowfalls;
 - d. Liaise with the NSWPF to maintain responsibilities for the provision of rescue services in isolated communities as per the SERM Act 1989;
 - e. Assist NSW SES with the delivery of evacuation warning and assist with the conduct of evacuations.

2.8 HEALTH SERVICES FUNCTIONAL AREA

- 2.8.1 In addition to the State Storm Plan, the Health Services Functional area will assist with a response to significant snowfalls in the Blue Mountains where possible;
- a. By providing a Liaison Officer to the NSW SES Local Operations Centre, or to the LEOC if activated, to assist with the provision of information relating to Health Services

2.9 LOCAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT OFFICER (LEMO)

- 2.9.1 Provide executive support to the LEOCON.
- 2.9.2 Assist the LEOCON and Incident Controller by maintaining liaison with supporting agencies from Alert Stage.

2.10 LOCAL EMERGENCY OPERATIONS CONTROLLER (LEOCON):

2.10.1 Monitor snow response operations within their respective area of operations.

2.10.2 Coordinate support to the Incident Controller as required.

2.11 NATIONAL PARKS AND WILDLIFE SERVICE (NPWS)

2.11.1 As a significant asset manager within the City of Blue Mountains, NPWS shall continue to manage their own assets during a storm or snow event. If required, NPWS may call SES for assistance during snowstorm operations.

2.11.2 NPWS should provide timely information to any known visitors within the Blue Mountains National Park about any pending snow forecasts by utilising established communications such as social media.

2.12 NSW AMBULANCE

2.12.1 In addition to the State Storm Plan, NSW Ambulance in response to significant snowfalls shall where possible;

- a. Assist with the evacuation of elderly and/or infirm people;
- b. Deploy ambulance/paramedical resources to snow affected areas if access is expected to be lost;
- c. Provide a Liaison Officer to the NSW SES Local Operations Centre, or to the LEOC if activated, to assist with the provision of information relating to Ambulance Operations.

2.13 NSW POLICE FORCE (NSWPF)

2.13.1 In addition to the State Storm Plan, the NSWPF during a significant snowfall event shall where possible:

- a. Manage traffic control operations in conjunction with NSW SES, BMCC and TfNSW;
- b. Assist with the checking of welfare vulnerable members of the community (travellers stranded on roads/rail, elderly etc);
- c. Assist with the conduct of evacuations;
- d. Secure evacuated areas;
- e. Coordinate the registration of evacuees;
- f. Assist with the delivery of evacuation warnings.

2.14 NSW RURAL FIRE SERVICE (NSW RFS)

2.14.1 In addition to the State Storm Plan, the NSW RFS will assist where possible;

- a. Inform the Incident Controller about snow conditions and response needs in their own communities;

- b. Assist the SES with the dissemination of snow information on behalf of the Incident Controller;
- c. Provide suitable vehicles for snow related response activities;
- d. Liaise with the FRNSW to ensure adequate fire coverage to isolated villages and towns when roads are closed by significant snowfalls;
- e. Assist with reconnaissance of snow affected areas;
- f. Assist with the staffing of road closures;
- g. Assist with the delivery of evacuation warnings and assist with the conduct of evacuations;
- h. Allow access to NSW RFS facilities/stations within affected areas to be places of refuge for stranded members of the public if suitable.

2.15 TRANSPORT FOR NSW (TFNSW)

- 2.15.1 Under the direction of the NSWPF or the Incident Controller, close and reopen roads affected by significant snowfalls;
- 2.15.2 Close and re-open railway lines as necessary and advise the Incident Controller of status of rail operations, in particular passenger services;
- 2.15.3 Establish and maintain a public information service on road and rail closures;
- 2.15.4 Assist with the provision of information to motorists through the use of variable message signs;
- 2.15.5 If requested, provide a Liaison Officer to the NSW SES Incident Control Centre, or the LEOC when activated, to assist with the management of road and railway information;
- 2.15.6 Commence procedures with suitable plant and equipment to reopen roads when safe to do so;
- 2.15.7 To advise the NSW SES if assistance is required for the evacuation of stranded passengers and crew of trains and buses.

2.16 WELFARE SERVICES FUNCTIONAL AREA

- 2.16.1 In addition to the State Storm Plan, the Welfare Services Functional Area will assist with a response to significant snowfalls in the Blue Mountains where possible:
 - a. To manage any evacuation centres that will be established in accordance with this plan;
 - b. To assist members of the community during the recovery phase of this plan.

PART 3 - PREVENTION

GENERAL

3.1.1 While it is not possible to prevent significant snowstorms from occurring, actions to minimise risk to life and reduce property damage can be undertaken.

MITIGATION

3.2.1 As the mitigation of snow events in the Blue Mountains is similar to storm events, refer to Part 3 of the NSW State Storm Plan for further details.

PART 4 - PREPAREDNESS

4.1 MAINTENANCE OF THIS PLAN

- 4.1.1 The NSW SES Unit Commander will maintain the currency of this plan by:
- a. Ensuring that all agencies, organisations and officers within this plan are aware of their roles and responsibilities.
 - b. Conducting exercises to test arrangements as approved by the LEOCON and members of the LEMC.
- 4.1.2 This plan is to be reviewed:
- a. no less than every five years, or;
 - b. after an event with significant snow fall, or;
 - c. on the request of the:
 - Unit Commander, Blue Mountains Unit, NSW SES or;
 - Chairperson of the Local Emergency Management Committee.

4.2 TRAINING

- 4.2.1 Throughout this plan there are references to functions that must be carried out by the members of the NSW SES. The NSW SES Unit Commander will ensure adequate training is provided to NSW SES members.
- 4.2.2 Each agency and stakeholder within this plan are responsible to prepare and train their own staff required to fulfil their own commitments to meet this plan.

4.3 RESOURCES

- 4.3.1 Each agency is responsible to maintain resources and infrastructure to respond to their roles within this plan.
- 4.3.2 At anytime an agency is unable to fulfil their role outlined within this plan, they are to advise the NSW SES Blue Mountains Commander as soon as possible.

4.4 PUBLIC EDUCATION

- 4.4.1 The NSW SES will coordinate a public education program to educate members of the general public regarding the risks posed during severe weather events including snowstorms and what actions should be taken to prepare and respond to them.

4.5 AGENCY COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEMS

- 4.5.1 All agencies are responsible for the establishment and maintenance of their own communication systems.

4.5.2 All agencies should check that their communication systems are functioning correctly by the end of April each year prior to the threat of snowfalls.

PART 5 - CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS

5.1 COMMAND AND CONTROL

- 5.1.1 The NSW SES is the legislated combat agency to protect persons from dangers to their safety and health, and to protect property from destruction or damage, arising from floods, storms and tsunamis, and to act as the combat agency for damage control for storms and to co-ordinate the evacuation and welfare of affected communities.
- 5.1.2 As such the NSW SES is responsible for the control of response operations during a storm which includes the coordination of other agencies and/organisations for storm related emergency management tasks. Significant snowfalls as detailed in the plan are considered as a storm activity.
- 5.1.3 The NSWPF, NSW SES, TfNSW and BMCC are the only agencies with the authority to close roads affected by snow and ice.
- 5.1.4 TfNSW will manage the operation of railway lines affected by snow and are responsible for advising the NSW SES and the general public of any closures or disruptions caused to the rail network due to snow impact.

5.2 INCIDENT CONTROL AND OPERATIONS CENTRES

- 5.2.1 The NSW SES maintains a SES Incident Control Centre (ICC) at 3-9 Valley Road Katoomba.
- 5.2.2 An Alternative NSW SES ICC is located at the NSW SES Facility, Sir Henrys Parade Faulconbridge.
- 5.2.3 The Blue Mountains Local Emergency Operations Centre (LEOC) is located 3-9 Valley Road Katoomba.
- 5.2.4 An Alternative Blue Mountains LEOC is located at the Blue Mountains Theatre and Community Hub, 106-108 Macquarie Road Springwood. The location of the LEOC shall be decided by the LEOCON based on weather conditions and access for agencies across the Blue Mountains at the time of the event.

5.3 LIAISON

- 5.3.1 At the request of the Incident Controller, each agency with responsibilities identified in this plan will provide a Liaison Officer to the SES ICC.
- 5.3.2 Liaison officers are to:
 - a. Have the authority to deploy the resources of their parent organisations at the request of the Incident Controller;
 - b. Advise the Incident Controller on resource availability for their service, and;
 - c. Be able to maintain two-way communication with their organisation.

5.4 PUBLIC REQUEST FOR ASSISTANCE

5.4.1 Members of the public requesting assistance for snow/storm related incidents are to call:

- a. **000** for life threatening emergencies;
- b. **132500** for all other requests for storm related assistance.

To maintain control and coordination of response to snow/storm related incidents, agencies receiving calls from the public are requested to relay those calls or the information of those calls to the NSW SES by pre-established communication systems. All requests for assistance will be recorded and managed by the NSW SES.

5.5 INFORMATION AND MEDIA

5.5.1 As per the NSW State Storm Plan, the NSW SES is responsible for the management of media and will maintain public information in the form of media release and situational updates via public-accessible electronic/social media sites at regular intervals.

5.5.2 During a snow event, the Incident Controller will issue regular Situational Awareness briefings and timed Situation Reports to the NSW SES Metropolitan Zone Headquarters and the LEOCON. Information included in this SITREP and not limited to be;

- a. Known details of conditions and roads closed as supplied by the TMC and BMCC;
- b. Known details of weather forecasts and warning as issued by the BoM;
- c. Advice on safety matters and means of protecting property;
- d. Status on “Requests For Assistance” (reported incidents) from the community to the NSW SES.

5.6 EMERGENCY ALERT

5.6.1 Where appropriate and in line with the State Storm Plan, the Emergency Alert (EA) may be used to send SMS and/or voice alerts to land lines and mobile phones within a specified geographic area. The short warning times which apply to some categories of storms and severe weather systems will preclude the use of EA, however where possible, it could be used to alert for the need to evacuate from dangerous weather conditions.

5.6.2 The Incident Controller is required to consult with the NSW SES Metropolitan Zone Commander and the LEOCON to consider if the EA would be appropriate to be used in this plan.

5.6.3 Emergency Alert is operated through the NSW SES State Operations Centre.

PART 6 - RESPONSE

6.1 MOBILISATION

- 6.1.1 The following is a pro-active response process through a staged mobilisation of emergency service resources based on the State Storm Plan and local requirements:
- a. **Alert Stage:** When the NSW SES Blue Mountains Unit receives a warning of a storm or information that snow is likely to impact the City Of Blue Mountains, or the surrounding LGAs of Oberon and Lithgow, appropriate organisations and personnel will be alerted. At this stage, the NSW SES shall appoint an Incident Controller.
 - b. **Standby Stage:** When the Incident Controller considers that an operation is imminent with the evidence that snow has commenced to fall within the City of Blue Mountains, all appropriate resources will be placed on standby if necessary and NSW SES Metropolitan Zone Headquarters advised.
 - c. **Call Out Stage:** When the Incident Controller considers that an operation needs to be mounted, appropriate resources will be called out, and/or outside assistance sought. The trigger for Call Out will be snow has commenced to settle on roads within the City of Blue Mountains.
 - d. **Stand Down Stage:** When the Incident Controller determines support is no longer required.

6.2 PRELIMINARY DEPLOYMENTS

- 6.2.1 When significant snow falls are expected to affect access to and from towns and communities for a protracted period, the NSW SES will commence the coordination of deployment of resources into the affected areas as required.
- 6.2.2 When areas are likely to become isolated, each agency and stakeholder shall be responsible to maintain their own operational capability. Agencies and stakeholders are to advise the Incident Controller as soon as possible if they are unable to maintain the required capability.
- 6.2.3 The Incident Controller will arrange for reconnaissance utilising SES, Police, NSW RFS and other emergency services for assistance. Reconnaissance is to report the extent of impassable roads, nature and type of damage to properties, any casualties and status of essential energy and utility services

6.3 TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT

- 6.3.1 The Incident Controller and the NSWPF and have the authority to close and re-open roads but will normally only do so if public safety requires such action.
- 6.3.2 The NSW SES recommends that roads should be closed when the carriageway alignment cannot be clearly defined when covered by snow or is covered with black ice and that vehicles are unable to maintain traction.

- 6.3.3 When resources permit, NSW SES and NSW RFS crews will assist Police, BMCC and TfNSW personnel with the closure of roads.
- 6.3.4 Several local and major roads within the Blue Mountains LGA area maybe affected and could be closed by significant falls of snow. Major and connecting roads include Great Western Highway, Bells Line of Road, Darling Causeway, and Mt Wilson/Mt Irvine Roads.
- 6.3.5 As each snow operation affects different parts of the LGA, below is a recommended guideline:

	Location of Road Affected by Snow	Recommended Control Measures
1	Great Western Highway: Wentworth Falls (Bodington Hill and West)	Westbound Road closure: Great Western Highway Lawson Genevieve Road Bullaburra
2	Great Western Highway: North/West of Katoomba affecting from Medlow Bath > Mt Victoria	Westbound Road closures: Great Western Highway Katoomba at Civic Place Great Western Highway Katoomba at Bathurst Road westbound on ramp
3	Bells Line of Road Bell > Mt Tomah	Northbound Road Closure: Station Street Mt Victoria near Cobb Lane. *There may be a requirement for Lithgow and Hawkesbury LGA to provide road closures from their respective directions.

East bound road closures maybe required at Little Hartley and Lithgow. Assistance maybe required from resources west of the Blue Mountains.

- 6.3.6 An attempt to reopen roads should be done as soon as safe and practical. This would be generally after snow has stopped and appropriate vehicles (e.g., tractors, graders, trucks and 4WDs) are able to make a track for vehicles to safely travel on. BMCC/TfNSW may be able to supply appropriate plant to assist with the road to be cleared.

6.4 INCREASED ROAD TRAFFIC

- 6.4.1 Significant snowfalls within proximity of Sydney may increase the number of sight-seeing public wishing to enter the area to witness the conditions. Traffic controllers at road closures must be made aware that only persons with bonafide reasons should only proceed through snow and only when safe to do so considering the following:

- a. Residents with valid identification;
 - b. Vehicles fitted with snow chains;
 - c. Four Wheel Drive and All Wheel Drive vehicles;
- 6.4.2 Examples of bonafide reasons for transit in snow condition include (and not limited to):
- a. Transit to or from place of employment including emergency service workers/volunteers;
 - b. Transit to leave the snow affected area for safety.

6.5 STRANDED TRAVELLERS

- 6.5.1 Snowfalls may strand some travellers within the snow affected areas.
- 6.5.2 The NSW SES will coordinate suitable tasking of appropriate emergency service personnel with vehicles to patrol roads at regular intervals;
- 6.5.3 It is recommended that a minimum of two response vehicles to be tasked for patrol:
- a. Lead Vehicle: Stop and check on the welfare of each vehicle and any pedestrians within the snow affected area to ascertain if they require any assistance.
 - b. Second Vehicle: To transport any affected persons to:
 - A nominated Place of Refuge;
 - An established evacuation centre;
 - A safe location within reasonable distance, e.g. the victim's home address if within the snow affected area.
- 6.5.4 Major roads are to be patrolled as a priority include:
- a. Great Western Highway
 - b. Darling Causeway
 - c. Bells Line of Road/Chifley Road
 - d. Mt Wilson Road/The Avenue/Mt Irvine Road
- 6.5.5 At the completion of the first patrol, a follow up patrol should be planned within a reasonable time frame dependant on weather and road conditions and available resources;
- 6.5.6 Local roads should be patrolled by available resources when available;
- 6.5.7 The Incident Controller will liaise with NSW SES Western Zone to confirm any requirements to patrol roads within the Greater City Of Lithgow LGA.

6.6 PLACES OF REFUGE

- 6.6.1 A Place of Refuge is not an Evacuation Centre but a location that maybe used as temporary shelter from the prevailing weather condition until:

- a. The weather conditions improve to allow people to safely continue to their destination, or;
 - b. Suitable transport is arranged to transport victims to a nominated Evacuation Centre.
- 6.6.2 A Place of Refuge is a location nominated by either the Incident Controller or the LEOCON with the consent of the owner or their authorised representative dependant on:
- a. Access and egress to the location affected by weather;
 - b. Availability of the facility as determined by the owner or authorised representative of the owner/landlord.
- 6.6.3 Examples of a place of Refuge may include a suitable fire station, an education or government facility or a council owned property such as a public hall.
- 6.6.4 The establishment of a Place of Refuge should commence during Standby Stage

6.7 EVACUATION AND EVACUATION CENTRES

- 6.7.1 Evacuation of residents is to be seen as a last resort and a risk assessment must be made by the Incident Controller with the LEOCON with the assistance of the Welfare Functional Area Coordinator;
- 6.7.2 In the event that evacuations during a snowstorm are required, the Incident Controller will coordinate evacuations with the LEOCON and members of the LEMC, in particular Health and Welfare Services.
- 6.7.3 Evacuees are to be taken to a nominated evacuation centre to be then processed by DCJ.
- 6.7.4 Evacuation centres will be established by the Welfare Services Functional Area as requested by the Incident Controller or LEOCON dependent on:
- a. the number of people stranded or adversely affected by snow requiring emergency accommodation, and;
 - b. the expected duration of the event.

6.8 ESSENTIAL SERVICES

- 6.8.1 To maintain adequate support, essential service providers should keep the Incident Controller and LEOCON abreast of their status and ongoing ability to provide those services including their current contact details or have a Liaison Officer attend the NSW SES ICC and/or the LEOC.
- 6.8.2 The NSW SES will ensure that the providers of essential services (electricity, gas, water, sewerage, medical and public health) in the area affected are kept advised of the snow situation and prognosis.
- 6.8.3 The NSW SES will assist where possible with the coordination of transport and/or personnel to assist in the delivery of essential services to the affected community. This may include the transport of essential workers to and from their work location if they are directly impacted by significant snowfalls.

6.9 RESUPPLY

- 6.9.1 The NSW SES is responsible for the coordination and resupply of isolated communities and properties.
- 6.9.2 Where practicable, the NSW SES will arrange for the delivery from normal suppliers of essential foodstuffs, fuels or urgent medical supplies required by isolated towns, villages, or properties, this includes generators for the provision of emergency power. This may be done using suitable vehicles or aircraft.

6.10 ASSISTANCE FOR ANIMALS

- 6.10.1 Matters relating to the welfare of livestock, companion animals and wildlife (including feeding and rescue) are to be referred to Animal and Agriculture Services Functional Area. This includes requests for emergency supply and/or delivery of fodder to stranded livestock, or for livestock rescue.

6.11 END OF RESPONSE OPERATIONS

- 6.11.1 Response operations will conclude when all the following conditions have been met:
- a. The physical impact of the storm has ceased;
 - b. All requests for assistance related to the snowstorm have been completed;
 - c. The need for warning and evacuation no longer exists;
 - d. There is no further prospect of rescuing people affected by the snow storm;
 - e. Resupply is no longer required (resupply operations may occur concurrently with the recovery phase); and
 - f. Response to fire and hazardous material incidents have concluded (not including subsequent clean-up of contaminated sites).
- 6.11.2 The NSW SES Blue Mountains Unit will commence an After Action Review process internally and externally with stakeholders to evaluate the event in order to improve performance by sustaining strengths and correcting weaknesses.

PART 7 - RECOVERY

7.1 RECOVERY OPERATIONS

- 7.1.1 This plan describes the initiation of recovery, but not the arrangements for recovery itself.
- 7.1.2 Recovery operations will be initiated and conducted as described in the NSW State Emergency Management Plan (EMPLAN) Part 9 and as further detailed in the NSW Recovery Plan.
- 7.1.3 NSW SES will provide impact information as early as possible (ideally within 24 hours) following a major storm to the SEOCN or delegated Emergency Operations Controller to inform an initial recovery impact assessment.
- 7.1.4 NSW SES will provide appropriate representation to the Recovery Committee, if established, for the duration of the response phase of an event and as agreed during the recovery phase.
- 7.1.5 The role of NSW SES on the Recovery Committee may include providing information about any continuing response, guidance on mitigation strategies and general advice and assistance to the committee as a subject matter specialist.
- 7.1.6 There will often be a need for emergency services to assist in the recovery phase of a storm operation. This can involve physical clean-up or maintenance of temporary covering.

Appendix A: Snow Characteristics and Control Measures

Level	Characteristics	Road Status	Control Measures
1	Snow Forecast for Central Tablelands below 1000m, or snow falling but not settling and no immediate impact on community	Open/Clear	<p>“Alert Stage” SES monitoring and plans in place to open SES ICC;</p> <p>SES to provide local weather status and forecast to other agencies;</p> <p>SES to manage public media information;</p>
2	Snow settling on side of road	Open with caution. Monitor for ice. Chains recommended to be carried on vehicles.	<p>“Standby Stage” SES updates other agencies with weather status;</p> <p>Based on location of snowfall, advise RFS to prepare for the need of “Place of Refuge” to be activated at nominated Rural Fire Brigade Stations;</p> <p>SES activates SES ICC Road patrols commence utilising SES, RFS and NSWPF;</p>
3	Snow settling on major and/or connecting roads	Road conditions to be monitored.	<p>“Call Out Stage” SES has field teams available in 4WD.</p> <p>Agencies advised of status and SES and to confirm LO status to attend SES ICC and/or LEOC as required;</p> <p>“Place of Refuge” to be activated based on risk assessment.</p>
4	Snow settled on roads causing vehicles to be slip and recommend partial road closure.	Road is covered with snow greater 50mm	Based on risk assessment by Police, SES, TfNSW and/or BMCC, appropriate vehicles (vehicles with chains, All-Wheel-Drive, Four-Wheel-Drive and

			<p>heavy vehicles) may continue.</p> <p>Prepare to close road for two-wheel-drive and inappropriate vehicles.</p> <p>ESOs and Local residents only permitted to transit with proof of address only.</p>
5	<p>Snow 100-300mm deep. Road expected closed 4 hours plus.</p>	Road closed.	<p>LEOCON to consider opening LEOC at a minimum as a support service for SES.</p>
6	<p>Snow deeper than 300mm. Trains stranded. Infrastructure disruption (water, electricity, gas).</p>	Road closed.	<p>Recommend Full LEOC operational.</p>

Appendix B: Significant Snowfalls affecting the Blue Mountains

Significant snowfalls generally fall in areas above 900metres AHD in the Blue Mountains. West of the main range, snow is known to settle at 700metres AHD within the City of Lithgow and Oberon Shire.

The nominal snowline for this plan is classified as generally affecting:

- Bodington Hill Wentworth Falls and all towns/communities west of Wentworth Falls on the main Blue Mountains ridge to the City of Lithgow.
- Mt Tomah, Mt Irvine and Mt Wilson and all communities west of Mt Tomah along the Bells Ridge to Lithgow.

In 1900 extremely heavy snow fell over central New South Wales and elevations as low as 800 metres in Central Western NSW received nearly a metre of snow.

In 1965 Katoomba received more than 1 metre of snow.

- Electricity supplies in the Upper Mountains were significantly interrupted for long periods over a 5-day period.
- Sewer and water supplies had significant issues with the icing of sewer treatment facilities at Blackheath and Katoomba.

In October 2012, a significant snowfall west of Wentworth Falls:

- Closed the railway and main roads for a period of six hours.
- This snow fall had ongoing storm effects as the weight of snow caused tree and roof damage mainly in Medlow Bath and Blackheath requiring the NSW SES to respond to Requests For Assistance for a period of 5 days after the snow had been cleared.

In October 2014, significant snow fell in the evening of the 14th October

- Closing the Great Western Highway from Katoomba to Lithgow.
- The snow was recorded as being 200mm thick in many parts.
- SES with assistance of NSW RFS and NSWPF checked on the welfare of 150 stranded motor vehicles
- Passenger train was stranded at Blackheath Railway Station with no power and required 17 passengers and crew to be conveyed to safety.
- Extensive electricity blackouts for most of the evening across the snow affected areas limited the ability to use Place Of Refuge such as Blackheath NSW RFS Station.
- Limited access for out of area assistance: The road to Bathurst was closed, limiting assistance to and from the Central West of NSW