



Fact Sheet

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<p>What is the Public Safety Mobile Broadband (PSMB)?</p>	<p>The PSMB will be a discrete mobile broadband capability, dedicated to emergency services, so they can communicate amongst themselves, with fast and secure voice, video and data communications.</p> <p>It will be a national capability that will enable communications between, for example, ground crews, aerial assets and incident control centres, and support the coordination of responses across organisational and geographic boundaries.</p> <p>It will provide emergency services, such as fire, ambulance and police, with access to data-rich, reliable and modern communications technologies that provide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Critical applications: maps, weather and, location information. – Situation media: video and images from vehicles, bodycams, drones and other sources. – Other data: duress signals, floorplans, weapons permits, and health records. <p>A key feature will be the interoperability of services between public safety agencies (PSAs), both within and between jurisdictions. This will improve communications and operational effectiveness across the different services and geographic boundaries.</p>
<p>Why does Australia need a national PSMB?</p>	<p>The PSMB will be the most significant uplift in communications capability for PSAs in decades. It is something that emergency services have been asking for, for a long time.</p> <p>Currently, PSAs rely on land mobile radio networks for their communication needs. These have limited data services, inadequate availability and insufficient coverage, and in many instances are not enabled for cross-border or cross-organisational communications.</p> <p>A national PSMB will support the timely coordination of responses across organisational and geographic boundaries, and enhance Australia's ability to manage emergencies, hazards and threats. This, in turn, will improve safety outcomes for PSA personnel and the Australian Public, and mitigate damage to property.</p> <p>A national PSMB capability will also result in a co-ordinated approach to managing high volume data, which are currently managed through local state and territory arrangements.</p> <p>Other benefits that may be realised through a national PSMB capability include increased coverage and resilience, prioritised PSA traffic, economies of scale and lower costs for all jurisdictions.</p>



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<p>PSMB Taskforce</p>	<p>The Australian Government committed \$10.1 million from the 2023-24 Federal Budget to establish and fund the operations of the PSMB Taskforce over the 2023-24 and 2024-25 financial years. This funding was in response to the <u><i>Public Safety Mobile Broadband Strategic Review</i></u> (the Review) which recommended that the Australian Government show national leadership on the PSMB.</p> <p>The Taskforce became operational in August 2023. It is led by the Australian Government through the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) and is supported by other Australian Government bodies, including the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts (DITRDCA), as well as state and territory government agencies.</p> <p>The Taskforce's remit is to take forward the recommendations of the <u>2022 PSMB Review</u> and drive the delivery of a national PSMB Capability.</p> <p>The Taskforce will create the framework to deliver the PSMB capability.</p>
<p>2022 PSMB Review</p>	<p>In 2022 an independent review was commissioned to inform the Australian Government on options on the most efficient and effective approach to implement a national PSMB capability.</p> <p>The Review was delivered to Government on 31 October 2022. It had 14 principal findings and made 12 recommendations.</p> <p>The Australian Government provided its response to the Review in May 2023, with the Government agreeing, or agreeing in principle, to all of the Review's recommendations.</p> <p>The Government's response included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investing \$10.1 million over the next two years (2023-24 and 2024-25) to establish a Taskforce to take forward the recommendations of the Review and drive the delivery of a national PSMB capability, and • Establishing an Inter-Government Agreement (IGA) and working in partnership with states and territories to ensure public safety agencies are equipped with modern technology and digital connectivity to improve operational preparedness, effectiveness and coordination during disaster events. <p>A copy of the <u>2022 PSMB Review</u> and the <u>Australian Government's Response to the Review</u> is available on NEMA's website at www.nema.gov.au.</p>



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<p>How is the Taskforce implementing the Review's recommendations?</p>	<p>The Taskforce is implementing the recommendations of the PSMB Review through three key lines of effort:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Inter-Governmental Agreement (IGA) Work Stream <p>The IGA will be a critical, foundation document for the PSMB. It will demonstrate support, agreement and commitment from state and territory governments and the Australian Government on the PSMB vision and how that vision will be achieved.</p> 2. National PSMB Entity (NPE) Work Stream <p>The proposed NPE will ultimately have responsibility for deploying, maintaining and operating a PSMB capability, so the Taskforce will need to look at the operating parameters for entity and how the proposed entity should be set up.</p> 3. Capability / Network Solution Work Stream <p>The final line of effort focuses on the PSMB capability and includes defining the requirements for the capability and what it will cost to deploy, maintain and operate the PSMB capability. This line of effort includes engagement with industry and an approach to market.</p> <p>The Taskforce has established cross-government working groups under each work stream. These working groups include representatives from all states and territories and the Australian Government and enable all jurisdictions to have a voice in the design of the PSMB.</p> <p>The Taskforce is building on the work of the National Proof of Concept that was led by the NSW Government on behalf of all jurisdictions and the 2022 PSMB Review. In addition, the work of the Taskforce will be informed by lessons learnt and best practice from International PSMB Programs.</p>
<p>How is the PSMB Taskforce engaging with industry?</p>	<p>An initial Industry briefing was held in December 2023. During the first months of 2024, the Taskforce will invite industry to provide information on their current and potential service and technical offerings. In the first half of 2024, the Taskforce expects to formally approach industry for detailed information via a request for information (RFI). Additional industry briefings will be held as part of this market approach).</p>



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PSMB – History in Brief

The concept for a nationally interoperable mobile communications network began in 2009, when the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) endorsed the National Framework to Improve Government Radio Communications Interoperability. This was largely in response to major bushfires in Victoria.

In 2015, the Productivity Commission delivered a ‘first principles’ analysis of the best way to deliver an interoperable PSMB capability in Australia.

In 2018, COAG agreed to implement a Strategic Roadmap that set out a plan to design, implement and operate a national PSMB.

In 2020, the *Royal Commission into National Natural Disaster Arrangements* recommended that “Australian, state and territory governments expedite the delivery of a Public Safety Mobile Broadband capability” (Recommendation 6.4).

A copy of the Royal Commission into National Natural Disaster Arrangements Report can be found at:

<https://naturaldisaster.royalcommission.gov.au/publications/royal-commission-national-natural-disaster-arrangements-report>