

FINDINGS

Victorian urban planning DRR controls can be enhanced by a cross-hazard approach consistent with risk management guidelines.

Victorian Urban Planning for DRR

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This utilisation project assessed the comprehensiveness of Victorian urban planning for disaster risk reduction by applying diagnostic tools developed through the research project *Integrated Urban Planning for Natural Hazard Mitigation*. With a focus on the Planning and Environment Act 1987 and the Victoria Planning Provisions, key policy and processes were analysed and recommendations for enhanced integration put forward.

Introduction

Planning systems have evolved over time and are now highly complex, seeking to achieve a diversity of sometimes conflicting goals. The ability to integrate and act on comprehensive actions is challenging but highly necessary.

Despite considerable advances in addressing specific hazards through planning controls in Victoria, the challenges ahead are dynamic and many. While seeking broad economic, social and environmental objectives, urban planning systems are also required to manage a wide array of other concerns such as aesthetic, heritage, transport, parking, access, recreational, and land management matters. Anthropogenic climate change adds another layer of complexity and calls for the consideration of multi-hazard approaches that can address the consequences of more frequent, intense and interacting hazards.

Methods

Qualitative policy analysis and risk assessment approaches were used, and secondary quantitative methods were employed as appropriate. The research compared actual processes, treatments and systems used to manage natural hazards against ideal approaches and outcomes. This was carried out as a series of critical inquiries applied to the range of natural hazard risk situations where urban planning and other risk management approaches are being utilised or are planned. This allowed for a critical review of urban planning and related systems that identified shortcomings and opportunities for change.

Findings

The research highlighted that Victorian land use planning is highly comprehensive in many of its mechanisms dealing with specific natural hazards such as bushfire and flood, particularly in relation to new settlements, but limited in improving existing settlements' risks.

Hazards such as heatwave were identified as largely absent from consideration, offering significant opportunities for reducing risk, which also include the possibility to prioritise and integrate treatments across hazards and to better balance the coverage of Prevention, Preparedness, Response and Recovery.

Opportunities to standardise terminology and to embed risk assessment to inform decision-making were also highlighted.

Implications

The implications of the research findings are that improvements can be made to enhance the resilience of existing and future settlements in Victoria. These changes can harness the opportunity for urban planning to mitigate existing natural hazard risks and to avoid projected and emerging risks in the future.

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Tables and figures

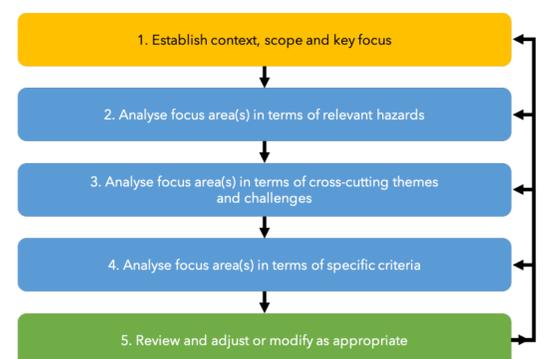


Figure 1: Research Steps

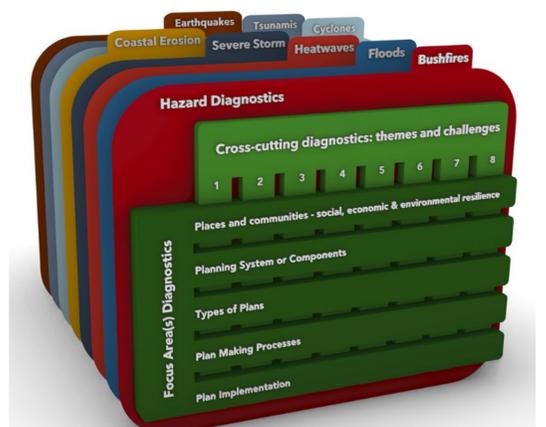


Figure 2: Sets of Diagnostic Tools