

NATIONAL EMERGENCY

RESPONSE

Official Journal of the Australian Institute of Emergency Services



VOLUME 25 NO. 4 SPRING 2012
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AUSTRALIAN INSTITUTE OF EMERGENCY SERVICES

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WEBSITE CONTENT

The website has sections for each State as well as National Areas. If you have ideas for State Division content, please contact your State Registrar, for National content, email web@aies.net.au Please be aware that all content must go past the National Registrar prior to web publication to ensure it meets required guidelines.

NATIONAL EMERGENCY RESPONSE



Official Journal of the Australian Institute of Emergency Services

Spring2012 • National Emergency Response

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FRONTCOVER

(Front-Back): Woodside Beach Surf Lifesaving Club member Rowan Day and police officers Tony Wilson and Graeme Schoobert.
Photo: Michael Feaver. See story on page 23.

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Bob Maul, LFAIES
General Secretary/Registrar

The AIES National Council is pleased to announce the following emergency services, and related, professionals were elevated to Life Members, Fellows or joined the AIES between March and June 2012.

Name	Service	State
Roger Benson	SES	NSW
Jeff Campbell	RFS	QLD
Noel Clifford	EMQ	QLD
Christine Elliott	ARC	VIC
Joshua-Paul Gardner	Cobar Mines (EM)	NSW
Joanne Gianotto	SES	NSW
Noel Gillard	Health Service	QLD
Barry Henderson	BHP Billiton (EM)	WA
Chris Jones	AMSA	ACT
Matthew Palmer	Marine Rescue	NSW
Tony Pearce	SES	NSW
Warren Phillip-Clarke	Medical Safety Officer	WA
Kim Lawrence	ARC	TAS
Robert Mulhern	Police	QLD
Ian Nielsen	SES	TAS
Matthew Palmer	Marine Rescue	NSW
Melissa Sekava	Santos (EM)	QLD
Thomas Sugget	SES	QLD
Kevin Waterman	First5Minutes	QLD
Chris Webb	Mine Rescue	WA
Gary Young	SES	QLD
Sean Curtin	ESTA	VIC

AMSA: Australian Maritime Safety Authority. ARC: Australian Research Council. EM: Emergency Management. RFS: Rural Fire Service. SES: State Emergency Service. ESTA: Emergency Services Telecommunications Authority.

EDITOR'S REPORT

Kristi High

It is great to see the demographic of *National Emergency Response* (NER) readers and contributors expanding.

If you are keeping an eye on the list of new members, you will see a growing trend in the number of emergency management officers from mining companies joining the institute.

My aim for the Summer 2012/13 edition of NER is a feature on fulfilling the emergency management role onsite at any one of Australia's booming resource locations. If you would like to be included in the feature, or know someone who would fit the task, I would love to hear from you.

It is great to see the young folk getting involved in the institute and contributing to the journal.

Receiving AIES Young Volunteer 2011 recipient Thomas Walsh's memoirs as he returned from his sailing adventure on *The Young Endeavour* was like a breath of fresh air.

This CFS vollie, electrician and all round great guy can also put pen to paper and deliver a story. Now a member of the AIES, hopefully we will be hearing more from Thomas (that's an invitation Thomas).

We also had a guest writer/editor this edition. Monash University journalism student Elizabeth Naylor put her interest in the emergency services to work by taking on an internship at *National Emergency Response*. Elizabeth delivered two great stories and we thank her for contributing to the Spring edition.

Finally, I would like to thank all our contributors, including Karen Kimpton,

who has shared her findings from a bushfire project that focused on the frail older and vulnerable community, and the wonderful ladies at the Australia Red Cross and New Zealand Red Cross for their report on how the two organisations work together. These two contributions came out of the Earth, Fire and Rain conference held in Brisbane earlier this year. As our President Alan Marshall talks about in his report, conferences are invaluable for networking and information sharing. It is not possible to attend them all so we are grateful to the conference presenters who share their papers with our members through the journal. Well folks, one edition left for 2012 and that means it's your last chance to be a contributor for the year. I would love to hear from you. Kristi ●

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

Alan Marshall, LFAIES

National President

EMERGENCIES AND REFORM

Major reform is happening all around us as we enter a new era of emergency management. We are encouraged to strive for continual improvement in emergency management to ensure the highest level of protection for organisations, people, property and communities. We manage smaller emergencies fairly well, but reports through royal commissions and other formal enquiries on extreme events over the last few years across Australia on fires, floods, cyclones and storms, suggest we need major legislation, administrative, and culture change. Organisations are still operating inwards and working in silos. This inhibits an all-hazards, all-agencies approach to managing all emergencies effectively and efficiently. Reform must continue.

CONFERENCES

At emergency management conferences, delegates gather information, share data, join workshops, visit trade displays, and generally network with their colleagues across a wide spectrum in a common field. Conferences on emergency management offer information, new theories, case studies and in some instances, best practice. Delegates are free to choose how to use whatever is on offer. Recent conferences like the Earth, Fire and Rain event held in Brisbane in April 2012, have reinforced continual improvement in a number of areas. Among these are sharing a common understanding of emergency management, training and exercising together, working to common operating standards, and sharing and using the same operational picture.

All these points are valuable in highlighting the interest in attending the conferences. Conferences are not formal training sessions. They do not have an identified accountable outcome against an agreed training standard. Conferences are valuable in presenting the latest to the delegates through experts in their field, through the hands-on experiences obtained from being in the emergency. Delegates need to report back to their organisations the learning obtained from conferences, the contacts, the sharing, the information and the relevant applications. The quality of training, your equipment compliance, safety standards and performance structures do not come from a conference. However, it does pose a question in our progress, where we are now in our understanding of mitigation and preparedness, and on change and reform.

RISK

Emergency risk management, a specialist application of risk management, is the major tool for working towards the objective of prevention of emergencies. Having identified a risk and decided that it cannot be eliminated, there are two ways of increasing safety or reducing risk – lessen the likelihood of an incident or reduce its consequences. The methods for increased safety are mitigation and prevention as applied to risk management. The definition of mitigation in the COAG Natural Disaster Report is 'mitigation consists of measures taken in advance of, or after an emergency aimed at decreasing or eliminating its impact on society and



the environment'. As we move through the spring phase of preparedness and into the summer season, it is timely to revisit risk. The new era of emergency management as per the national plan for disaster resilience is 'know the risk, learn from experience, get ready'. Disaster will happen, disaster resilience is your business, and connected communities are resilient communities with emergency management shared. The issues raised by the national plans may again be stating the obvious, but the obvious in the past has not kept us safe, nor eliminated the impact.

JOURNAL CONTRIBUTION AWARD

Keeping to the theme of our journal, each year the General Council awards a contribution of a published article in the *National Emergency Response*. I encourage you all to continue the delivery of your excellent articles to your magazine.

On behalf of the General Council of the Australian Institute of Emergency Services, stay safe, healthy and continue the networking. ●

WHY TOUGHER PENALTIES SHOULD BE INTRODUCED FOR MOTORISTS WHO FAIL TO STOP



Secretary of The Police Association
(Victoria)

Senior Sergeant Greg Davies



It is high time that motorists who endanger the public (including their own passengers), police and themselves were held to account, and that the blame for pursuit outcomes was placed squarely at the feet of those who cause them – fleeing motorists.

Recently there has been media speculation on the Victorian legislation around police pursuits. The discussion is as a result of the Police Association seeking additional legislation from government in relation to motorists who cause police to pursue them.

It must be remembered that pursuits are not instigated by police as a first step. Police engage in pursuits only after a driver fails or refuses to stop when requested to do so by police. Unfortunately, too often the decision to flee from police ends in tragedy.

There are many issues surrounding police pursuits.

This first is the definition given to pursuits is unfair and factually wrong – a person can fatally hit a tree after traveling 20 kilometres beyond the cessation of a brief pursuit by police and the incident will be recorded as having been caused in the course of a police pursuit.

Secondly, a police officer has no more than a split second to decide whether or not to pursue a vehicle. Police often have no idea at the time whether the driver has committed a murder,

armed robbery, abduction, or merely be an unlicensed driver.

The consequences of the officer's decision may be enormous. If police do not pursue and a rapist escapes, they will be answerable as to why they let a serious criminal offender go free. If they do pursue and people are endangered, for no more than a driver whose blood alcohol content is .06 percent, they will be answerable for that.

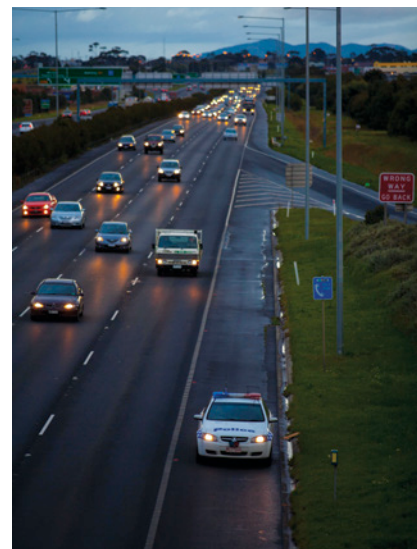
Why? Ultimately, police must always have the right to pursue suspects. Without that right we signal to every criminal in our society that the sure-fire way to avoid arrest is to drive rapidly away from police – for they will not pursue.

It is high time that motorists who endanger the public (including their own passengers), police and themselves were held to account, and that the blame for pursuit outcomes was placed squarely at the feet of those who cause them – fleeing motorists.

A change to the legislation, making 'Flight in a motor vehicle from police' a serious indictable offence, with an appropriate level of imprisonment

attached, will send that message. It may or may not have an immediate effect but, over time, it surely must.

Never have I heard a police officer say 'I think today I'll pursue an innocent person to their death'. It is about time our society not only realised that, but also backed something tangible and real, rather than rhetoric, to make our state a safer place. ●



EARTH: FIRE & RAIN



Australian & New Zealand Disaster and Emergency Management Conference

29-31 May 2013
Mercure Hotel, Brisbane

Following the success of the inaugural 2012 conference, this event will again be held in Brisbane in 2013 at the Mercure Hotel.

The Conference will provide a forum to examine the issues surrounding natural and man-made hazards.

A joint initiative of three 'not-for-profit' organisations – the Australian Institute of Emergency Services, the Australian & New Zealand Mental Health Organisation Inc, and the Association for Sustainability in Business Inc, the conference program will focus on 'PPRR' Prevention, Preparedness, Response & Recovery and incorporate keynote addresses, concurrent sessions and workshops covering human and social issues, economic and environmental challenges, infrastructure, community and communication topics.

Conference streams will include:

- Human and Social Issues
- Relief and Recovery
- Economy and Environment
- Risk Management
- Business Continuity
- Social Media
- Community Engagement
- Volunteer Involvement
- Crisis Management
- Policy and Governance



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Abstract submissions now being accepted

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Email: conference@anzdmc.com.au
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Thomas Walsh was the 2011 AIES recipient of the AIES Young Volunteer Award. As part of his award, Thomas recently took his place on board training ship The Young Endeavour. He is also now a member of the AIES and we welcome Thomas to the institute. A passionate, accomplished and motivated young volunteer, here is his journey to serving the One Tree Hill community as a CFS First Lieutenant.

AIES Young Volunteer 2011

Thomas Walsh MAIES

When my family moved from a beachside suburb to the One Tree Hill area, I was a 10-year-old boy with an innate passion for adventure. Naturally, my younger brother and I got up to as much mischief as we could possibly get away with – climbing trees, making go-cart and motorbike tracks, generally being boys and worrying the life out of Mum. I remember often helping Dad get a bonfire going. Once, my brother and I cleaned out Dad's shed with anything and everything we thought was good to go on the fire. The exploding paint tins were our moment of triumph, and Dad's moment of horror.

Life in a small country town has a special community feel and it was this spirit that first gave me the drive to meet new people and become an active member of the One Tree Hill community. I had just turned 16 when Dad and I first visited the One Tree

Hill Country Fire Service (CFS) to find out what it was all about and how I could play a part in this important organisation.

I was so motivated to be a real contributor to country life, to volunteer in a way that helps the people in my community. Although being so young felt like an obstacle at first, I got my driver's license and fronted up at the station to join the CFS. The brigade was manned by so many experienced and knowledgeable volunteers, it was only a matter of time that I was taught the ropes and was off to my first call. Unfortunately, in my excitement to get ready, by the time I got to the station, all the trucks had turned out and I missed the call. I realised then that if I was going to do this emergency service, I'd better learn to get dressed quicker. I now live in a house that is just a quick 30-second run from the station.

Family support has been paramount

to my success in volunteering. Time spent away from families is the sacrifice many of our members make in order to serve the community. Our pagers go off at all times of the day and night and we are always making a judgement on whether or not to prioritise the community's needs over family and work commitments. Other unsung heroes of volunteering are the employers of the volunteers, who understand and support their commitment to community service. I've worked for Tea Tree Gully Electrical for over a year now and my boss Aaron understands the impact my volunteering role has on my job as an electrician. There have been many times when major incidents have taken precedence over work at short notice and I thank all the bosses who offer their full support to employees who may vanish for days on end to join strike teams interstate and to families who wait at home worrying.



Photos: AIES Young Volunterr 2011 Thomas Walsh on board the Young Endeavour training ship.

Currently at One Tree Hill CFS I hold the position of First Lieutenant after serving as training officer and senior fireman for a couple of years. Having been taught by some of the most experienced volunteer firefighters in the state, it is a privilege to be in a position to pass on this knowledge to the brigade members through training, meetings and incident debriefing.

I was honoured and humbled when Captain David Cockburn nominated me for the Young Australian Volunteer of the Year Award in 2011. I feel like I give just as much time and effort to the service as any other volunteer who answers the call of the pager. I do have a passion for what I do and am always willing to learn more, try something new and take on the challenges that the role of first lieutenant brings. Volunteering in the CFS is a 24/7 commitment that I take seriously. The friendships I have made along the way are a rewarding bonus and ones I am sure will endure the test of time. There's nothing like jumping out of bed and into a fire truck at 2am to help bond with like-minded members of the community.

As part of my award, I was provided with the opportunity to sail on the Young Endeavour from Melbourne to Hobart. Knowing that this would be a chance of a lifetime and an intense physical challenge, I joined the gym to lose a few kilos and get myself as fit as I could. The hands-on journey was like no other experience I've had.



This challenge gifted to me and all the planning and decisions were out of my hands. The crew are an incredible group of experienced sailors who clearly love their jobs. They guided us every step of the way and coordinated everything from our sailing responsibilities on board to our four hourly night time roster. I'm used to having interrupted sleep with CFS calls but this was a whole new sleep-deprived experience.

I was the eldest of the group that week and the other young participants amazed me with their skills and attitudes. I went on board with the intention of making the most of this unique experience, giving every challenge 100 percent effort and willing to participate in any opportunity presented, knowing that I would step ashore with no regrets. I treasure one quiet moment of reflection one afternoon at the

bow of the boat, with a book in hand and the wind whipping up the sea spray. What an incredible reward for my commitment to volunteering. But we don't volunteer for those sorts of rewards; we do it for our love of the community in which we live.

I cherish my volunteering role as a leader in the One Tree Hill CFS. I intend to continue to develop my skills and knowledge to help forge a strong future for the service. I thank Captain David Cockburn for my nomination and I have a deep gratitude to the Australian Institute of Emergency Services for bestowing upon me this award and the unforgettable experience on the Young Endeavour. I hope the institute continues this program for many years to come to acknowledge the commitment of our youth to volunteering and emergency services. ●



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3 The funds in *Money* magazine's Best of the Best Lowest-Cost Super Funds were chosen from SuperRatings' platinum-, gold- and silver-rated balanced funds and ranked on their annual costs associated with a \$50,000 balance. First State Super was the winner in 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012.

IN BRIEF

EUREKA CLIMB



Australia's biggest vertical race is back. The annual Eureka Climb will take place on Sunday 18 November 2012 at the Eureka Tower in Melbourne. Emergency Services personnel looking for the ultimate training challenge are encouraged to take part in the Eureka Climb – a unique charity fundraising event held at one of the world's tallest residential buildings. As part of the event, the Emergency Services Challenge will have its own wave time and, while official uniforms are optional, participants are encouraged to wear full kit in tackling the 1,642 steps to the finish line on level 88. Register at www.eurekaclimb.com.au

SOCIAL MEDIA MAPS



Facebook, Twitter and YouTube could play an official role in emergency response, according to Esri Australia Chief Technology Strategist Josh Venman. He said cutting-edge Geographic Information System technology that maps location of social media posts had given crowd-sourced information new credibility among emergency services organisations.

"Members of the community already use social media to upload and exchange enormous amounts of information during disasters, such as a photo of a bridge that is damaged, or video footage of flood waters rising," he said.

"By mapping tweets, Flickr photos and YouTube clips during a crisis, response personnel can gain a powerful new perspective of a situation to support decision-making." Mr Venman was speaking at the Information Sharing for Emergency Management Conference that brought together emergency services and federal, state and local government.

WFG

The 12th World Firefighters Games will be held over 10 days in Sydney between 19 and 28 October 2012.

Participants can join in more than 71 sporting events, social activities and a bit of fun at the Games Village like arm wrestling, beach cricket, bucket brigade, and the firehouse cook-off.

The World Firefighters Games was initiated by an American entrepreneur and a committee of international firefighters in 1990 and has grown into one of the world's largest participation sporting events. Eligibility to participate is extended to all full-time and part-time firefighters, members of other emergency services, aviation and military organisations, and their direct family members. The games will raise money for the Burns Unit at Westmead Children's Hospital. Visit www.worldfirefightersgames.com.au



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CFA volunteers are better equipped to serve their communities with the arrival of 9000 customised P25 digital portable and mobile radios.

CFA GOES DIGITAL ACROSS VICTORIA

Victoria's Country Fire Authority (CFA) is digital-ready across the state, after rolling out portable and mobile radios to 1200 stations as part of an innovative Radio Replacement Project.

Over the past two years, CFA has worked with Tait Communications to upgrade its critical radio system, which includes P25 digital-capability.

As part of the \$32 million contract awarded in 2010, Tait supplied and installed over 9000 customised P25 digital portable and mobile radios, which will be supported by a 10-year services agreement. Tait also supplied advanced TB9100 base stations for the upgrade of CFA's incident management network, meaning the organisation is digital ready across the state.

CFA Project Director Doug Booth said the project had been delivered successfully despite

being an extraordinarily difficult and complex process.

"The Radio Replacement Project is all about putting better communications technology into the hands of firefighters," he said.

"With 57,000 members to train, 1220 fire brigades to be visited, 5000 portable radios to be delivered and 4000 mobile radios to be installed across 57 different types of vehicles, I think the roll-out has been an extraordinary success.

"With Tait's P25 digital-capable radios our fire brigades are connected like never before, taking CFA's field communications to a new and sophisticated level of operations.

"Furthermore, the radios will allow CFA to communicate with other state emergency response agencies as new digital networks become

available, improving coordination of resources during large-scale incidents and disasters."

Also worthy of celebrating is the number of rural fire brigades in Victoria with first-time access to handheld portable radios for their critical communications, in addition to their vehicle-mounted mobile radios.

"This means that CFA volunteer firefighters are now better equipped to protect the communities they serve, which is a significant outcome," Mr Booth said.

The P25 terminals filter out background noise from helicopters, trucks, sirens, hoses and machinery, supporting multiple modes of operation including analog, P25 conventional and P25 trunked.

Tait delivered further enhancements to the TP9100 portable radios following



(Centre) CFA Project Director Doug Booth celebrates a major milestone in the organisation's Radio Replacement Project with volunteers. Tait Communications has supplied and installed digital portable and mobile radios and base stations as part of an upgrade of the CFA incident management network.

extensive feedback, consultation and testing with CFA brigades, increasing audio loudness and providing greater water protection for CFA's demanding operational environments.

As part of the wider project, Tait is also upgrading CFA's incident-management network with its advanced TB9100 base

stations, making the entire statewide network digital-ready.

The TB9100 base stations also support both analog and digital operation, allowing critical communications interoperability with public safety agencies that are yet to migrate to digital.

The solution features genuine P25 open standards, meaning CFA has the flexibility to incorporate other vendors' radio equipment into the overall solution. This multi-vendor interoperability means public-safety organisations like CFA can get the maximum value from their investment, because of the open standards, which allow them to customise their systems now and in the future.

The solution also provides CFA with support services from Tait's Melbourne-based facility, including specialised equipment maintenance to protect CFA's investment in digital technology.

Tait Asia Pacific General Manager Brett Smythe said the installation of the new P25 terminals, on time and on budget, marks a significant milestone in a long term partnership with CFA and paves the way for planned future enhancements of CFA's communications, like GPS location and crystal-clear digital audio.

"There was close coordination between CFA, Tait and AA Radio project teams to strike an optimal installation time following CFA member training," he said. ●

Digital Ready

One of the biggest communications technology projects undertaken by CFA has reached practical completion.

The on time and on budget installation of 9,000 Tait P25 radios for 1,220 brigades marks a significant milestone in our long-term partnership to deliver communications improvements for CFA.

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Image Credit: Keith Pakenham, CFA

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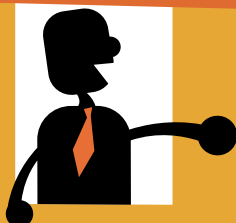
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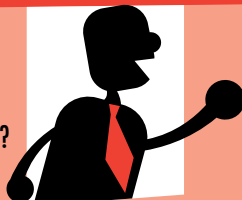


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ENJOYING THE ADVENTURE

AIES SA Committee Member David Mack

AIES South Australia Committee Member David Mack has enjoyed a long spanning firefighting career that has taken him overseas on emergency deployments, and earned him awards and recognition. However, for this 30-year veteran of the SA Metropolitan Fire Service and seasoned volunteer, it is the dynamic lifestyle and team camaraderie that makes a lifetime spent in the emergency services all the worthwhile.

Elizabeth **Naylor**

A member of the AIES SA Division Committee since 2010, Mr Mack has had a distinguished career and is the recipient of a number of awards for his work. Among these is the National Service and Humanitarian Overseas Medal for his work in Indonesia following the Boxing Day Tsunami of 2004.

This deployment came from Mr Mack representing the Metropolitan Fire Service (MFS) within the volunteer incident response team of the Australian

Medical Assistance Team, which includes members from medical professions and emergency response personnel such as firefighters and logisticians.

Mr Mack also received a Certificate of Appreciation for the International Year of the Volunteer. Some of his volunteer work includes five years with Neighbourhood Watch and seven years volunteering with the Country Fire Service.

Always one to enjoy a challenge, Mr Mack said when you work in

the emergency services every day was different.

"The thing I enjoy most about working in the emergency services is the dynamic lifestyle," he said.

"No one day is ever the same. It's a continual adventure, one that I feel privileged to be a part of"

A firefighter with the SA MFS for 30 years, Mr Mack said the best thing about his job was the camaraderie and the ability to contribute to community outcomes.



AIES SA Committee Member David Mack has served with the SA Metropolitan Fire Service for 30 years.



David Mack was part of the Australian Medical Assistance Team in Indonesia following the 2004 Boxing Day Tsunami.

In 2005 he took on the role of Commander for Organisational Performance Safety and Review within the SA MFS. In this position his duties

include making recommendations on emergency strategy, and reviewing organisational health, safety and welfare issues.

When Mr Mack was invited to join the SA Committee for the AIES he saw it as a great opportunity.

"It was a privilege to be invited on to the committee and I am excited about contributing to the transitional phase that the institute is going through," he said.

Some of his duties as a committee member include attending bi-monthly board meetings, reviewing policies and charters, and ensuring that the SA division engages the community and emergency services.

Mr Mack has also been delegated a sub-committee that is organising the 2013 Resilience Conference. His experience as an organiser of the Asia-Oceania Resilience Conference held in Singapore in 2010, along with his Masters of Business Administration that was completed last year, Mr Mack's input into the conference and to the AIES SA generally is invaluable.

On days off firefighting, volunteering and representing the AIES in South Australia, Mr Mack takes to the Adelaide and country roads on his motorbike. Travel and foreign culture is a big part of the Mack family life and his philosophical view is 'all professional endeavours are treated as lifelong learnings'. ●

Guest speaker surprised with NER award

AIES Tasmania had the privilege of Antarctic Division Martin Boyle MAIES attending its Ausmas dinner recently in Black Buffalo. Overseeing the emergency service training of all personnel heading to Antarctica, Martin gave a thorough overview of what is involved working in the extreme conditions of the world's coldest and most isolated continent. He highlighted the mutual international relationship that has developed between all countries working in Antarctica that comes in to play particularly when emergency strikes. Martin spoke about the cost and effort involved in these types of rescues, which has a trickle affect including cutting short the ongoing program because



recourses are needed elsewhere. At the dinner, Martin was surprised to be presented with the AIES pen prize for his excellent three part series on

search and rescue in Antarctica, which ran over three concurrent issue in *National Emergency Response Journal*.



Disaster Response Emergency Management & Public Safety

Australian National Expo 2012

22nd - 24th October 2012
Gold Coast Convention & Exhibition Centre

1 MEETING PLACE

4 CONFERENCES

1 EXHIBITION

Conference 1



Conference 2



Conference 3



Conference 4



45 Speakers including:



Scot Phelps
Professor of Disaster Science,
Emergency Management
Academy of New York City,
and CEM Commissioner
International Association of
Emergency Managers



Ed Blakely
Professor, Blakely
Global, Fellow of the
American Academy of
Public Administration, A
Guggenheim and Fulbright
Fellow



Dr. Leonard Notaras AM
Executive Director, National
Critical Care and Trauma
Response Centre
Royal Darwin Hospital



**Major General R.G. Wilson
(Ret'd) AO**
Chair
Queensland Reconstruction
Authority



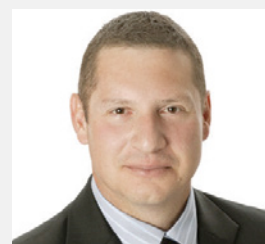
David Parsons
Manager, Emergency
Management
and Security Unit
Sydney Water



Andrew Stark
Chief Officer
ACT Rural Fire Services



Dr Darrell Williamson
Deputy Director
CSIRO ICT Centre



Greg Italiano
Executive Director
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EXPERTS HELP SHAPE GROUND-BREAKING CONFERENCE

ElizabethNaylor

In the face of disruptions both large and small, there is a growing need for emergency services to be ahead of the game.

2011 saw a number of disasters including the Canterbury Earthquakes, the Brisbane Floods and the Japanese Tsunami, all of which placed extraordinary stress on emergency systems. In response to these events and to promote readiness, The Disaster Response, Emergency Management and Public Safety (DEP) Conferences and Expo has been created.

This breakthrough event will feature four conferences including the Emergency Response and Management Australia Conference, the Organisational Resilience Conference, the Public Safety and Communications Conference and the CCTV World Conference. Alongside these conferences, there will also be a trade show featuring products and services that will enhance emergency management and public safety operations. Delegates will have the choice of attending one single conference or attending the sessions of their choice from each conference.

"The conference plays a critical role for Australia to develop and share both research, thinking and practical experience across a wide range of areas."

Featuring international speakers including expert in emergency management Scot Phelps and urban planning specialist Ed Blakely, this conference will provide delegates with practical and applicable methods in building public safety. Some of the issues to be discussed will include creating emergency management and response plans, building community engagement, volunteer management, addressing training and development needs, and new technological developments in the field of public safety.

An impressive list of more than 40 local speakers, hand selected by an

expert advisory board to the conference organisers, includes representatives from emergency services organisations, government agencies and departments, and hospitals.

Member of the DEP Advisory Board and Assistant Director of Research at the Australian Emergency Management Institute Michael Tarrant is one emergency service expert playing a key role in ensuring the conference is high-level, relevant and timely for the hundreds of delegates expected to attend.

"Years ago these types of conferences were run by the government but that's not the case any longer," Mr Tarrant said.

"We have been working collaboratively with the organisers to develop themes for the conferences, identifying valuable keynote speakers for sessions and talking with them about how they might organise those sessions."

Mr Tarrant, also an Associate Professor in the Public Health Faculty at the Queensland University of Technology and in the Department of Tropical Medicine at James Cook University in Townsville, joins five other

advisory board members from varied organisational backgrounds including the utilities, government, banking and emergency service. He is especially skilled with over 25 years experience in disaster management education and is a conference veteran, having spoken on the topic of disaster management in China, Canada, England and the US, and is on the planning committee for the World Conference on Disaster Management.

Mr Tarrant said the DEP Expo was an important step in improving Australia's knowledge and skills in disaster management.



Assistant Director Research at the Australian Emergency Management Institute, Michael Tarrant, has assisted the Disaster Response, Emergency Management and Public Safety Conferences and Expo organisers to pull together a ground-breaking national event.

"The conference plays a critical role for Australia to develop and share both research, thinking and practical experience across a wide range of areas," he said.

"It fills a really important gap in building Australia's emergency service capabilities."

Mr Tarrant will deliver a keynote address during the conferences on developing people for disaster management roles.

"The section I will look at is how we develop people for a disaster management role, and what will be the competencies of executives who work at his level," he said.

"I'll be talking about how we can develop people so they can take on these roles, and with the people who are in these roles, how do we ensure they do the best job they can."

"It takes a long time to completely comprehend disaster management due to its complexity and the many different aspects that can be covered."

The Disaster Response, Emergency Management and Public Safety (DEP) Conferences and Expo will be held at the Gold Coast Convention Centre on 22-23 October 2012. For more information visit www.depexpo.com.au ●

BUSHFIRE PROJECT TARGETS THE FRAIL OLDER AND VULNERABLE COMMUNITY



Karen Kimpton presented findings from a bushfire preparedness project that focused on frail older and vulnerable residents in the Yarra Ranges region, located on the eastern fringe of metropolitan Melbourne, at the Earth, Fire and Rain conference held in Brisbane earlier this year. The Bushfire Awareness and Preparedness of Frail Older and Vulnerable Residents in Yarra Ranges project provided an insight into the rationale of vulnerable residents responding to bushfire risk, and highlighted activities undertaken by council during the project.



*Please note this paper has been edited to fit with the style of National Emergency Response Journal.
View the full paper at www.anzdm.com.au*

Illustration: Kathryn Steel



Karen Kimpton

Master of Emergency Management Program, Charles Sturt University, Bathurst, Australia.

Includes references to work undertaken by Yarra Ranges Shire Council Manager Aged and Disability Services Cheryl McInnes.

In May 2008 a 12 month Yarra Ranges Shire Council pilot project on Bushfire Preparedness project was finalized. The pilot was developed in response to extreme risk assessments for places of assembly and institutions located within the shire (Shire of Yarra Ranges, 2007).

The pilot targeted community facilities, and community and residential aged care providers. The bed-based services provided support and accommodation to frail elderly and disabled persons.

The pilot project developed and measured the effectiveness of strategies to increase fire preparation awareness and strengthen community education networks to deliver fire safety messages to community organizations and bed-based providers.

Findings determined the need to strengthen bushfire preparedness messaging to this cohort.

In 2009, the state government funded a six month Bushfire Preparedness Program in the shire.

The primary objective of the 2009 Bushfire Awareness and Preparedness of Frail Older and Vulnerable Residents in

Yarra Ranges project was to identify at risk groups and embed fire safety messages.

The impact of the February 2009 fires that devastated communities across the shire was significant.

In response, council activated five relief centres with the support of staff and employees from other councils.

Council policy described relief centres as a building or place to provide basic life support and essential needs to affected persons.

The flow on effect of the 2009 Victorian Royal Bushfires Commission's investigation of vulnerable community members' 'stay or go' capacity informed direction for bushfire preparedness messaging (BVRC, 2009). The Victorian state government's Prepare, Act, Survive campaign was the key driver to community education for the 2009-2010 bushfire season.

The 2009 Bushfire Awareness and Preparedness of Frail Older and Vulnerable Residents in Yarra Ranges project context was defined by the above determinants, and this context shaped the activities of the project.

PROJECT ACTIVITIES UNSTRUCTURED INTERVIEWS

The project commenced mid-September 2009. At this time the volume of calls and correspondence to council from residents in relation to fire preparedness had increased significantly.

While calls were broad ranging in content, some standardised information was collected to measure the issues vulnerable, frail aged and disabled persons were citing as barriers to bushfire preparation.

A total of 55 unstructured interviews were completed and assessed.

These interviews provided a framework to measure caller circumstances and bushfire preparedness. Callers' two main presenting issues were around property maintenance to ensure fire preparedness, or a request to council for support or resourcing to relocate on hot days.

Other identified issues in order of frequency were self-described social isolation, self-described low income, concern for domestic



Of interest was the consistent anecdotal theme that neighbours were an unreliable source of support to vulnerable elders during an emergency.

animal care and availability of accessible vehicles to transport from high fire risk areas.

Of the 55 persons interviewed, 45 did not have an adequate bushfire survival plan. They incorrectly believed council would open relief centres on hot days. When advised relief centres would not open on hot days for the purpose of community relocation, only three callers had a contingency.

The most concerning theme across the group was the expectation of council, emergency services organisations and government to provide resourcing to vulnerable persons to facilitate relocation or emergency supports.

Barriers to effective messaging were identified as unrealistic reliance on emergency service provision, poor help seeking behaviours across personal networks, denial of risk, ambivalence regarding risk and a sense that factors such as luck or faith would act to protect from fire risk.

Referral across services was also acting as a barrier to effective messaging.

Of the people interviewed, 31 had been advised to contact the council by a case managed service, or an emergency services organisation for assistance with relief centre location, transport, accommodation and financial support to facilitate relocation arrangements on code red or extreme days.

Such service provision was not within the scope of council.

KEY STAKEHOLDER LIAISON – COMMUNITY CARE 2009

Liaison with key stakeholders identified a number of concurrent initiatives to support vulnerable populations living independently in the community with bushfire preparation.

Policy development by the Department of Human Services Eastern Metropolitan Region Disability Program provided direction to disability funded providers and clients of the department. Supports were put in place to raise awareness about bushfire preparedness with clients of the program.

SUPPORT TO RESIDENTIAL FACILITIES, RETIREMENT VILLAGES AND COMMUNITY CARE

The project was widely promoted by the council. Services providing support to young disabled, vulnerable or frail aged residents were encouraged to make contact with the project manager.

The singular common theme was the perceived cost of relocation placing a disproportionate burden on those with fixed incomes.

Information provision, network development and an information session were provided by the project manager.

Large community care providers of packaged care or case managed services had developed policy to support vulnerable client groups. However, providers were reporting concerns around the parameters of roles and responsibilities for staff working with vulnerable persons to plan and prepare for bushfire.

All community care organisations were expressing the view there was no service coordination arrangement in place to meet community care planning needs.

The Victorian Country Fire Association (CFA) commenced development of information products to ensure persons with a sensory or cognitive disability living independently were provided with FireReady messaging. (Elliot.2010).

Of the 55 persons interviewed, 45 did not have an adequate bushfire survival plan.

The Australian Red Cross REDIPlan materials were providing an all-hazards approach to emergency planning with a specific resource for seniors. (Australian Red Cross, 2009).

The CFA FireReady campaign was underway and Region 13 had scheduled community meetings across the Shire. The project manager attended several of these meetings and discussed local fire preparedness arrangements with participants.

WORKSHOPS

In November 2009, the project manager developed two community care workshops. The workshops enabled council to advise the sector about bushfire preparedness arrangements for 2009-2010 and clarify relief centre operation as a recovery function. The council also provided advice on emergency management arrangements and the roles and responsibilities of emergency services organisations.

The rights and responsibilities of frail aged and disabled persons to self-determine bushfire survival plans and duty of care responsibilities by community care providers was the focus of policy context discussion.

Workshop participants were provided with the opportunity to ask questions of panel members including WorkSafe Victoria, CFA staff leading resource development for vulnerable persons, other emergency management organisations' staff and council.

INFORMATION SESSIONS - HaCoS CARERS

Three information sessions were provided to council's Home and Community Support (HaCoS) carers, iterating the findings from the unstructured interviews and workshop themes. These carers provide a range

of in-home care services to frail elderly and young disabled persons and their carers.

The sessions allowed staff to discuss duty of care issues and identify strategies to better support bushfire preparedness across work groups and for client groups.

COMMUNITY INFORMATION SESSIONS

Community information sessions were provided throughout December 2009, and January and February 2010, with a total of 350 people attending.

The sessions provided clarity around council service provision and enabled the project manager to measure emerging trends in terms of responsiveness to bushfire preparedness messaging.

All groups raised issues related to ageing. Of interest was the consistent anecdotal theme that neighbours were an unreliable source of support to vulnerable elders during an emergency.

Financial risk associated with relocation was generally perceived by all groups as a greater threat to individuals in terms of their personal risk matrix than fire risk.

COMMUNITY RADIO

Providing community education to socially isolated, vulnerable persons in remote rural locations was an identified council concern. A community radio station provided programming to disabled persons living in rural and remote communities.

The project manager led four community radio programs with a bushfire preparedness focus. Two of the sessions were co-presented with Region 13 CFA.

PROJECT PRODUCTS MAPPING

For the purpose of the project vulnerable persons were defined as frail elderly and disabled persons living in a community care setting.

Maps (Yarra Ranges Council, 2010) were developed identifying wildfire overlay areas, road access, demographic data (ABS 2006 Census Data) and

sites of residential facilities to provide a notional sense of concentrations of vulnerable community care populations.

This information was then used in conjunction with Council HaCoS data. The HaCoS data identified clients geographically who had been assessed as socially isolated and/or in receipt of higher than average HaCoS service provision.

This mapping informed project direction and was expanded upon by Council's HaCoS program in identifying (desk top review) and encouraging or supporting vulnerable shire residents to develop a Bushfire Survival Plan.

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- Yarra Ranges Council, 2010 *'Bushfire Awareness and Preparedness of Frail Older and Vulnerable Residents in Yarra Ranges'* Yarra Ranges Council, Lilydale. Appendices A, B and C describe project products. Appendices D, E, F and G describe survey templates and findings. ●



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LIFESAVERS HIT THE SURF AT STATE TRAINING CAMP

Club Captain Mornington LSC

Victorian surf lifesavers hone their skills at a training camp held on the state's east coast.



A group of surf lifesavers gathered for a training camp on Victoria's east coast recently to ensure their skills were at the best level they could be.

The Victorian Cross District Life Saving Water Rescue Craft Training Camp was held at Gippsland's Woodside Beach in June.

Almost 40 surf lifesavers from nine Victorian clubs braved Victoria's chilly winter weather to volunteer as trainers, assessors or candidates.

Now in its fifth year, Mornington Life Saving Club Captain and Member of the Australian Institute of Emergency Services, Bernadene Hansen, coordinates the annual camp.

"The original aim was to train inflatable rescue boat drivers and crews for club patrol duties," she said.

"However, with constant review, it was identified that the benefits to the life

saving community are far deeper than ever expected."

The camp now also involves personal watercraft and offshore boat training and allows participants the opportunity to be mentored by skilled personnel.

"The camps also strengthen connections between participating clubs and the Life Saving Sports water safety crew with many candidates moving on to assist and run water safety for state carnivals," Ms Hansen said.

"Others become involved in search and rescue exercises, which help the organisation's young members become involved in state positions such as district and regional officers.

"We have the benefit of the Paynesville Water Police being involved, sharing their knowledge and skills which gives the candidates the opportunity to not just see distress flares in action but also getting to have a go and firing them off."

The cross-organisational activities assist in the improvement of all participants, with one camp delegate, a police officer, commenting on how impressed he was with the lifesavers' ability to have their equipment ready for use in such a short amount of time.

"The bonding between the participants is what surprises the organisers the most," Ms Hansen said.

"With each course that is run it is commented that it is probably just this group of people that have managed to connect so well but the pattern is continued course after course.

"The amount of time that these people put in – with a willingness to learn and the enjoyment they have doing it – is to be commended.

"It can only make one feel proud to stand in the red and yellow, knowing we have so many extremely dedicated members." ●



Australian Red Cross delegate Kristen Proud providing personal support to New Zealand Red Cross workers following the devastating earthquake that hit Christchurch.

ACROSS THE DITCH

EXPLORING THE PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN THE AUSTRALIAN AND NEW ZEALAND RED CROSS IN DISASTER RECOVERY

Authors: Australian Red Cross National Recovery Coordinator Kate Brady, and Community Recovery Advisor Jolie Wills and National Recovery Manager Elizabeth McNaughton from New Zealand Red Cross.

Risk is a dominant cultural theme of our age – be it climate change, increased urbanisation, population growth, environmental degradation, or terrorism.

We live in an increasingly risk-prone, uncertain and interconnected world.

This paper was presented at the Earth, Fire and Wind conference held in Brisbane recently. It has been edited to fit with the style of National Emergency Response Journal.

View the full paper at www.anzdmc.com.au

While the Australian and New Zealand Red Cross societies have worked together in a number of ways historically, this new age of risk demands new approaches. Foremost is the scaling up of our partnership in order to leverage off each other's capacities and resources so we can do more and reach further as a Red Cross movement. Collaboration must be stepped up – the global challenges we are facing demand it, as do the natural disasters occurring in our own countries.

The Australian and New Zealand Red Cross societies have had a long standing relationship and have worked closely together in many emergency events. Other than facilitating public appeals for the others emergency events until 2011, this relationship has almost exclusively focused on assisting a third party. For example, sending personnel to countries in the Asia-Pacific region that have needed emergency assistance, or working on development projects within the region. Within both organisations, this falls into the scope of

the international programs department. Rarely has this partnership extended to the domestic services program work.

In January 2011, following nearly two months of solid activation, as a result of the Queensland and Victorian floods, WA bushfires and tropical Cyclone Yasi, Australian Red Cross accepted an offer from the New Zealand team to send 12 personnel to assist incident management teams. From the Australian side, this was a welcomed offer – resources had started to become stretched as a result of such a

prolonged activation around the country. Australian Red Cross National Manager Emergency Services Andrew Coghlan said the offer of assistance was welcomed.

"When we got the call from the Kiwis, it was welcome. We knew they'd be prepared and trained, and as they were coming from another national society, we knew they would understand where we were coming from without having to explain the organisational context," he said.

"Having fresh people to help at that time was fantastic. It worked well, and we would definitely look at using their teams in a response again if the situation called for it"

From a New Zealand perspective, it offered an opportunity for personnel to gain international experience they might not otherwise have had access to. Emergency Management Officer from South Island Stephen Manson said he was somewhat apprehensive about the amount of system information the New Zealand crew would be required to learn before they could be of assistance to the Australian team.

"We expected the systems, structures and guiding legislation to be foreign and pretty different from the New Zealand context, but in reality the structure was about 95 percent the same, which was helpful," he said.

"Their Australasian Inter-Service Incident Management System (AIIMS) structure is very similar to the New Zealand Coordinated Incident Management System (CIMS) structure, and the workplace standards are shared between Australia and New Zealand."

The kiwi crew stayed to assist for 34 days before returning home. Unfortunately, Australia was given the opportunity to repay the favour sooner than anyone would have liked when the February 22 2011, 6.3 magnitude earthquake struck the Canterbury region of New Zealand, resulting in 185 deaths, and widespread impact on people, property and infrastructure. The Australian Red Cross sent 12 personnel with experience in operations, media and communications to support.

In remarkably similar circumstances to the Australian experience following the 2009 Victorian Bushfires, New Zealand Red Cross recognised the need to deliver longer term recovery programs as part of their domestic emergency management work in response to the Canterbury earthquakes. Elizabeth McNaughton was appointed to the role of Recovery Manager in April 2011, and soon after came to Australia to gather information and lessons learned about the

recovery work that had been undertaken there, including the work following the 2006 East Coast Tasmanian fires, the 2008 Mackay floods and the 2009 Victorian bushfires. This information fed into initial planning for the New Zealand program, and three Australian emergency services personnel were sent to Christchurch in the second half of 2011 to support the start of the Canterbury recovery program while the team was being recruited.

Loren Hackett, one of the Australian Red Cross personnel sent to New Zealand talked about her experience.

"Our main purpose there was to support the New Zealand crew to develop a personal support program that went beyond their normal response. We were able to offer the systems and training that we had in place, and to help the New Zealand team modify our tools to fit their context. We helped pilot the training there and supported Elizabeth with the planning work that she was doing. It was also a good opportunity for us to tell them about some of the challenges we had faced when we set up the Victorian bushfire recovery team. It can be overwhelming if you feel like you're on your own. I think one of the main jobs we had when I was over there was to make sure their team felt like they had support they could call on if they needed it."

In December 2011 and again in February 2012, Australian Red Cross sent recovery personnel to first support the induction of the appointed New Zealand recovery team, and then to provide support to staff around the anniversary of the February earthquake. While the intention was for the Australians to provide support,

the information flow was two-way and the Australian Red Cross is currently looking at how they can implement a number of pieces of work being undertaken by the New Zealand team.

Working together in both response and recovery builds internal capacity, strengthens the resilience of both organisations and enhances services to affected people.

PRINCIPLES OF A GOOD ALLIANCE

There has been a lot of research undertaken regarding partnerships between not-for-profit organisations, that may help to explain the success of the relationship between the two organisations. Ashman (2001)¹ describes effective collaboration as involving:

- equitable and genuine partnerships that grow out of mutual respect and trust
- compatible purposes, strategies and values
- a two-way exchange of information, ideas and experience.

In their 2005 working paper for the Overseas Development Institute, Blagescu and Young state that '*Partnerships are neither rigid nor static, but fluid dynamic relationships which develop with time. In practice, there are two main barriers to effective partnerships (i) inequality/power imbalances, and (ii) the partner's internal management systems.*'²

Such research helps to explain why the partnership between New Zealand and Australian Red Cross in emergency management has been successful to date. The collaboration is based upon the same end purpose, vision, principles, temperament and values.



(L-R) In Christchurch (2011), New Zealand Red Cross (Nelson) team members Hugh Leckie and Mike Preest talk with Australian Red Cross Peer Support delegate Angela Sutherland. Photo: Australian Red Cross-David Wethey.

One of the main contributing factors to the success of the partnership is the equal relationship between the two organisations, meaning that there has not been a power imbalance to overcome.

Relationships have been built between both teams which embody trust, communication and transparency, and this model of working collaboratively has been embraced enthusiastically by the leadership on both sides of the Tasman. The power in the relationship has been balanced as both of us have needed help from the other at different points, and have been able to take lessons learned and apply them to our own context. The systems that we work within, while different in some ways, are generally very similar and translation between the two contexts is relatively straight forward.

BENEFITS OF WORKING TOGETHER

There have been numerous benefits of working together.

As a movement we have joint policies, standards, guidelines and disaster preparedness and response tools. Working in partnership allows us to expand on these commonalities. We have been able to share tools, such as planning guidelines, saving time and resources thereby making us more nimble in responding to domestic response and recovery needs.

Working in emergency management is stimulating and rewarding, but can also be emotionally and physically taxing. Robust self-care strategies are required to

recognise and manage stress. Self-care is extremely important in order to be able to best support, as an individual, team and organisation, affected individuals and communities. Having colleagues from across the Tasman who are sufficiently removed from the situation, but who have been there themselves and understand how the team members might be feeling at different stages, is invaluable. Reminders of the importance of caring for ourselves in order to stay the distance, recognising that recovery is an endurance feat, have been greatly appreciated.

From the New Zealand Red Cross' perspective, the practical experience and learning opportunities afforded from assisting during the Queensland floods and Cyclone Yasi increased capacity and ability to respond to the February earthquake.

EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION

With regard to the benefits of knowledge sharing, the old adage two minds are better than one applies. We can learn and build capacity quickly if we can pool knowledge, skill bases and experience – taking each from the pool what will work best for our own situations.

By both organisations sharing and exchanging knowledge and information openly, we each improve capacity resulting in an ultimate improvement in the quality of our respective services. We can review each other's guidelines and query how similar situations have been

handled across the Tasman, thereby adding value and improving all we do. Through collaboration, both organisations can better meet their visions to best serve the populations we support.

Ultimately we both have the same goal in our recovery work – to support people who have been affected by emergencies to cope with the disruption it has caused.

One of the most important benefits of knowledge sharing is the resulting alteration in 'start points'. Rather than beginning from zero, the Australian and New Zealand Red Cross can pick up on each other's processes, knowledge and initiatives and thereby begin from an advanced point and build further. This has immense advantages for the organisation which does not have to start from scratch, and it has benefits for the partner who is sharing their initiative as further progress is made which can then be capitalised upon in the future.

WHERE CAN WE GO FROM HERE?

While currently both organisations are using each other's work to transfer ideas and adapt them for the local context, there is more opportunity to work together on joint projects.

The population flow between the countries is considerable. It is difficult to calculate an exact number of Canterbury residents migrating to Australia following the earthquakes. Some estimates of the population flow to Australia from people affected are more than 50,000^{3,4,5} with around 3300 people moving in June 2011 alone⁶. Large scale events, such as the Canterbury earthquakes, present an excellent opportunity for both national societies to support people affected by emergencies moving to the other country. We know that our philosophy, approach to support and training are similar, we have an excellent relationship, and already have a good and frequent, if informal, communication flow. The opportunity for us to create formal support systems across the Tasman is enormous.

Another area where partnership provides added strength is advocacy. 'The frequency of disasters is increasing. These challenges require a clear direction combined with new ways of working, new skills, reflection and learning. We need to work together to make disaster risk reduction a global, national and local priority and to build a culture of safety across the region'.⁷

It is essential to work together to advocate in order to ensure that today's



In Christchurch (2011), Driver Martin de Jong and Australian Red Cross delegate Luci Lovelock plan their morning calls before heading out to try and ease the worry for city residents missing friends or family members. Photo: Australian Red Cross-David Wethy.

When we got the call from the Kiwis, it was welcome. We knew they'd be prepared and trained, and as they were coming from another national society, we knew they would understand where we were coming from without having to explain the organisational context.



Australian Red Cross delegate Jacqui Pringle in the media tent at the civil defence headquarters set up at the Christchurch Art Gallery near the centre of the city. Photo: Australian Red Cross-David Wethey.

hazards don't turn into tomorrow's disasters. New Zealand and Australia are key players in advocating for disaster risk reduction and our partnership demonstrates an example of finding new way of working to respond to this era of risk and the increased frequency of disasters.

Another example of where our partnership could have direct relevance is in promoting partnerships in developed countries through the International Federation of the Red Cross. Traditionally many partnerships have formed between developed and developing countries, or between developed countries who are jointly seeking to support a developing country. In this instance, the partnership consists of two developed countries supporting each other's domestic recovery operations of comparable size. While this is certainly not an exclusive example of this type of partnership, the way in which we are working together could have relevance for other national societies in developed countries.

CONCLUSION

Given that both organisations are national societies of the Red Cross movement, we share the same fundamental principles and ultimate goals of our work. The similarity in governance and organisational structure, common language, similar government arrangements and (while in many ways different) comparable national cultures, have been helpful. While these factors have undoubtedly contributed to the success of the partnership, it has taken more than that.

The openness and willingness of both organisations to communicate honestly and to give the other open offer to ideas, feedback and free access to documentation and intellectual property has contributed directly to our successful relationship. The need for transparency, trust and the assumption that both parties have something to offer to the other cannot be understated and is the foundation to the success of this partnership.

There is genuine respect and trust between the two organisations – from the senior leadership to the on the ground level. We celebrate each other's wins, commiserate and dissect the challenges, use each other to bounce ideas off without fear of looking stupid or un-strategic, ask for help on big and small things, keep in touch regularly both formally and informally, learn each other's systems and figure out what we can replicate and adapt, offer to review the documents that no one else will and provide professional and personal support in a line of work that can often be draining or overwhelming if you feel isolated.

In the truest sense of the often misused line, we are in this together. To date we have shared personnel, equipment, uniforms, ideas, feedback, contacts, research, resources, meals and accommodation. If either organisation identifies something that works well, or trials a way to navigate a common problem, it's mutually beneficial to people impacted by emergencies. In this way we literally become more than the sum of our parts.

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Australian Red Cross was formed in 1914, nine days after the start of World War I. Red Cross activities began in New Zealand during the same period. In 1915 New Zealand activities were consolidated within a single branch of British Red Cross before forming the New Zealand society in 1931.

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To provide a professional body for the study of the roles and functions of Emergency Services and Emergency Management Organisations throughout Australia, and the promotion and advancement of professional standards in these and associated services.

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- To raise the status and advance the interests of the profession of emergency management and counter disaster services administration.
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NATIONAL EMERGENCY RESPONSE JOURNAL

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BEFORE THE STORM

A mad scientist, a robot and a house full of strange beasts. What has this got to do with emergency services?

Well, if you're in to games, *Before The Storm* takes a haunted house and fills it with a bunch of weird creatures that aims to educate about storm preparation and disaster management.

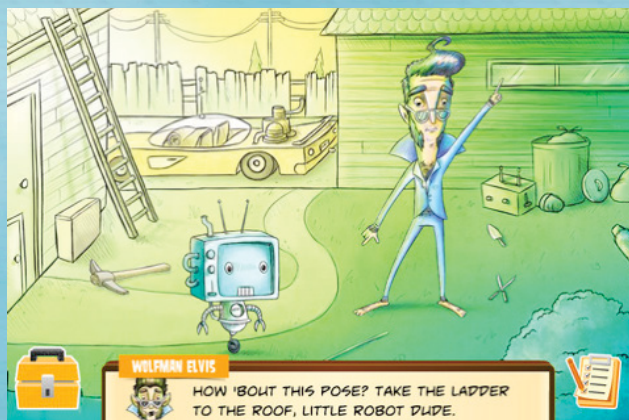
The Attorney-General's Department School Education Program at Australian Emergency Management Institute has developed the game aimed at middle year students. But really, who's going to know you're not in year 5 anymore?

Before the Storm features a mad scientist building a robot and his hapless cyborg offsider iGor who is trying to prepare the house for storms. Players need to help iGor search the house to find all the items he needs for his disaster/emergency survival kit, then use these items to prepare and repair the property, before and after the storm hits.

The game plays over four stages – storm preparation, storm threatening, during the storm and the post storm clean-up.

Based on the federal government's Storm Action Guide, the game has been developed as part of the implementation of the National Strategy for Disaster Resilience endorsed by the Council of Australian Governments in 2011.

Before the Storm can be downloaded free from iTunes onto your iPhone or iPod from Apple-iTunes (search for Before the Storm). ●





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