

# NATIONAL EMERGENCY



## RESPONSE

Official Journal of the Australian Institute of Emergency Services

A.I.E.S.

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AUSTRALIAN INSTITUTE OF EMERGENCY SERVICES

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# NATIONAL EMERGENCY RESPONSE



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Winter2013 • National Emergency Response

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**FRONT COVER**  
Ian Lyons, CFA volunteer.



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**Bob Maul, LFAIES**

*General Secretary/Registrar*

AIES is pleased to announce the following emergency service people became members of the Institute between March and May 2013.

Name	Organisation	State
Harold Colvin	ARC	TAS
Ross Phillips	RFS	NSW
Kieran Deale	Police	NSW
Timothy Holland	CFA	VIC
Anthony Macvane	RFS	NSW
Donald Garlick	Health Service	VIC
Matthew Pinder	SES	QLD
Stephen Monsieigneur	Health Service	QLD
Charles Vesely	ADF (ARMY)	VIC
Denise McInnes	Health Service	VIC
Ricky Ross	Police	VIC
Lisette Reinke	SES	SA
Philip Ohman	SES	ACT
Martin Boyle	Aust Antarctic Div	TAS

Aust Antarctic Div: Australian Antarctic Division. ADF: Australian Defence Force. ARC: Australian Research Council. CFA: Country Fire Service. RFS: Rural Fire Service. SES: State Emergency Service.



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or log in at [au.linkedin.com](http://au.linkedin.com) and search for 'Australian Institute of Emergency Services' under 'Companies'.

## EDITOR'S REPORT

**Kristi High**

**W**elcome to the Winter 2013 edition of National Emergency Response.

While the weather may be cooling down, issues continue to run hot at the AIES.

In this edition we celebrate National Volunteer Week. Held in May, this recognition of volunteers is important as Australians stop to say 'thank you' to the 6 million Australians who volunteer their time each year, contributing more than 700 million hours of unpaid work.

The AIES was proud to support the Australian and New Zealand

Disaster and Emergency Management conference, *Earth, Fire and Rain* again this year, with many members attending the event held in Brisbane in May.

We are pleased to publish two papers presented at the conference. Thank you to Jane Shakespeare-Finch and Amanda Gearing for generously sharing your work. Both papers investigate different aspects and outcomes from the devastating floods in Queensland in 2011.

AIES President Alan Marshall reminds us in his report that Australia is a country prone to natural disasters. Through research such as this we can improve

our preparedness and responsiveness for the future.

We plan to feature more papers from the conference in the coming issues and are grateful to the conference presenters who contribute their work so that our members who can't attend the conference can share in the learnings.

Remember NER is your journal and an important channel available to you for sharing your stories with an ever-widening audience within the Emergency Services community. Please continue to contribute your articles or let us know about the types of issues you'd like to read about. ●



# FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

Alan Marshall, LFAIES

*National President*

## STRATEGY FOR DISASTERS

The National Emergency Management Committee for Australia developed the National Strategy for Disaster Resilience, which was released in February 2011. The purpose of the strategy is to provide high-level guidance on disaster management to federal, state, territory and local governments, business and community leaders and to not-for-profit sectors. The strategy is a long-term, evolving process of delivering sustained behavioural change and enduring partnerships. In emergency management terms, resilience is a trait that can be observed following, and in response to, a substantial change in circumstances. This public document and its passage through to government legislation, sets out to manage through a high level of community trust and cooperation, the focus on a whole-of-nation resilience-based approach to disaster management. Australians expect their governments at all levels to do their best to ensure that their communities are as well protected from emergencies as is reasonably possible. The process is working together, exercising plans, sharing information and training, networking and feedback through continual improvement.

The seminar 'Resilience Conference' supported by the Australian Institute of Emergency Services (AIES) to be held in Adelaide on 18–19 July 2013 will focus on the adoption of building community and organisational resilience. The Australian spirit is never more alive than when we rally together to help each other in times of crisis and disaster. Are you in a more safe and sustainable community? What happens when the prescribed response authority can't cope?

Governments will change, and their support shifts with economic times. Emergency management structures are streamlined and sometimes merge to meet the ever-rising costs. 'Every time history repeats itself the price goes up.'

The National Strategy for Disaster Resilience material, released through the National Emergency Management Committee for Australia, is a base to capture the history, the lessons learnt, the continual improvement and to communicate with all sectors, so that we pass on and record the information in a high level structured and managed approach, that is accountable. This material provides an approach to manage a serious disruption to community life, the result of which threatens or causes death or injury in that community and/or damage to property that is beyond the day-to-day capacity of the prescribed statutory authorities. The public released documents are at: [www.em.gov.au/Publications/Program](http://www.em.gov.au/Publications/Program)

## FUTURE DISASTERS

Australia is a country prone to natural disasters and we need to learn from experience and prepare ourselves for times of emergency.

Future disasters also include terrorism which remains a major security challenge for Australia. In recent years, a number of plots have been uncovered by the coordinated efforts of Australia's security and law enforcement agencies, as well as our international partners. Terrorists and their methods are constantly evolving. Australia must be flexible and adaptable to change in the global environment for all future disasters. Apply the 'All Hazards' all agencies community shared approach, to make the protection of life inclusive.

Information in planning for the future, the AIES has also supported the conference in Brisbane on 29-31 May 2013 titled, Earth: Fire & Rain. This is the second year that your Institute has supported this conference in Brisbane. This year the conference examined what we learnt in the past few years and it provided a comprehensive forum that shone the light on resilience and it offered professionals



(and future professionals) the opportunity to examine the expertise, competencies and systems relating to the preparedness for future disasters, emergencies and hazards and the abilities to recover from them quickly and efficiently. The conference was a joint initiative of three not-for-profit organisations, the Australian Institute of Emergency Services, the Australian and New Zealand Mental Health Organisation Inc and the Association for Sustainability in Business Inc.

The various conferences through May to July held in Brisbane, Melbourne and in Adelaide, are all based on the National Emergency approach and they provide additional information along with hands on reports to manage future disasters.

## JOURNAL CONTRIBUTION AWARD

Keeping to the theme of our journal, each year the General Council awards the 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 I thank you all for your support, stay safe, healthy and continue your networking. ●

# POSTCARD FROM HIROSHIMA



**Robert Tickner**

*CEO, Australian Red Cross*

Australian Red Cross has been working over several years through the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement to win support for a legally binding international agreement to ensure nuclear weapons are never used again and are ultimately eliminated.

Australian Red Cross CEO Robert Tickner reports from a historic Red Cross Red Crescent meeting in Hiroshima in May 2013.

This postcard is to let you know about this amazing and uplifting meeting of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement which is currently happening in this iconic and deeply moving Japanese city.

I am here with Australian Red Cross President Michael Legge, Dr Helen Durham and board member John MacLennan. Also here is Greg Vickery who as you know is the former President of Australian Red Cross who now heads up the Standing

Commission of the Movement.

The meeting is convened by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and a small number of national societies including Australia, but attended by a wide ranging and diverse group of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies - ranging from American Red Cross, Azerbaijan and Malaysian Red Crescent Societies, Norwegian and Swedish Red Cross to Megan David Adom from Israel, Jamaican Red Cross and German Red Cross as examples.

## BRINGING THE HISTORIC RESOLUTION TO LIFE

The purpose of the meeting is to develop a plan of action to give effect to the historic resolution of the International Red Cross Movement which was passed in 2011 at the Council of Delegates which called on the governments of the world to 'pursue in good faith and conclude with some urgency and determination negotiations to prohibit the use of and completely eliminate nuclear weapons through a legally binding international agreement, based on existing commitments and international obligations.' We will also be preparing a draft follow up resolution for the Council of Delegates to be held in Sydney later this year.

The 2011 resolution only happened because Australian Red Cross worked with key other national societies such as Norwegian and Japanese Red Cross and the ICRC to win support for the critical further intervention of Red Cross in this significant humanitarian concern of the people of the world.

The decision taken in 2011 has had a huge influence in the global debate on nuclear weapons where progress by governments has sadly been painfully slow. We are pleased that in Australia there has been cross party support for the resolution but we are



*Peace Park memorial Hiroshima.*





Board member John MacLennan, President Michael Legge, Dr Helen Durham and CEO Robert Tickner.

watching the performance of all the major parties very closely to ensure that they remain behind our work in this area.

Very significantly the decision in 2011 helped inspire 127 governments to come together in Oslo earlier this year in what was the first ever (yes the very first) conference of governments to discuss the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons. A further global meeting of governments will be convened by the Government of Mexico early next year to take the issues further and we want the Australian Government to come in solidly behind that meeting.

### VISITING THE EPICENTRE OF THE BOMB

Yesterday was the first day of the meeting here in Hiroshima and we started with a visit near to the site of the epicentre of the bomb which is now one of the most moving places on the planet. In my life's work I have been to many places of great human tragedy and where the humanitarian violations

were a blot on human history, but a visit to this peace park and museum often transforms the lives of those who come here as it did mine and I am sure others in our group.

It is not a place of devastation now which is testimony to the power of the human spirit and humanitarian ideals. Thousands of international visitors come each day to see and to listen to the stories of Hiroshima which are told in the profound hope that there will be no more Hiroshimas. In the peace park thousands of beautiful Japanese school children also come each day and mingle wonderfully with the international visitors and their own people. It is truly a magical place both of great sadness and profoundly inspirational.

We also heard from Mr Keijiro Matsushima, one of the survivors of Hiroshima, who was a 14 year old boy at the time of the bombing and described the first moments after the blast and the way in which an entire city of living breathing human beings was destroyed in the blink of an eye.

He spoke movingly of the carnage and of the 'ghosts' who managed to survive a couple of kilometres away from the blast who he saw walking away as shells of people with skin and bones exposed and burnt horrifically. They did not survive long of course. Mr Matsushima also inspired us with his forgiveness and willingness to work with the American people and all other people of good will in the world from all nations, religions and cultures to rid the world of nuclear weapons.

One of our group said yesterday that as Red Cross people it is not just enough that we have a love of humanity which is all important but that we also have to ensure that this love of humanity inspires us to have the courage to do something about it.

And so it is with nuclear weapons and the contribution which our Movement can make to the world if we have the courage to lead according to our principles and they are the very same principles which inspired Henri Dunant in 1869 – namely that civilians





Atomic bomb dome in Hiroshima. The only left building after the 1945 bombing.

should be protected from conflict and from violations of international law which threaten their lives.

### INTERNATIONAL RECOGNITION OF THE MOVEMENT'S WORK

Following our visit to the Peace Park the meeting opened with speeches from the President of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) Mr Tadateru Konoé, the Mayor of Hiroshima Mr Kazumi Matsui, former United Nations High Representative for Disarmament Affairs Sergio Duarte and Chair of the Standing Commission Greg Vickery.

I was asked to chair the first session which looked at the global context of the current debate. Speakers were Mr Duarte and also Peter Herby who had represented the ICRC on arms related negotiations since 1994 and has recently taken up a position in Norwegian Red Cross.

It was quite remarkable to hear the Ambassador so strongly welcome the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement engagement with the nuclear weapons issue which he said had contributed

to "new energy, new impetus, new constituencies and new ideas". Ambassador Duarte is a veteran of disarmament negotiations and processes over many decades and it was wonderful to hear his backing for the contribution of our work.

### FROM REFLECTIONS TO ACTION

The next session of the meeting was chaired by Australian Red Cross' Dr Helen Durham who gave those attending an opportunity to reflect on the deeply moving visit to the museum and peace park which I have already referred to. There is always a risk with a session like this that people could remain silent and not participate or become sentimental or self indulgent but the session was none of this. Helen got people to soulfully reflect on the day and the contributions of people were deeply authentic and moving.

It bonded the group and gave us the common purpose we need to take us forward today to work on the Plan of Action as well as a draft resolution for the Council of Delegates

### ROBERT TICKNER - CEO, AUSTRALIAN RED CROSS

During his tenure, Robert has overseen historic reforms to modernise and harmonise the work of Australian Red Cross to increase the organisation's capacity to work for vulnerable people.

In 2012, Robert was seconded to the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies in Geneva to act as Under Secretary General for Humanitarian Values and Diplomacy. Robert is focused on building a collaborative and innovative organisation to increase the impact and effectiveness of Australian Red Cross in addressing disadvantage among the most vulnerable people.

Prior to taking up his Red Cross appointment, Robert was the CEO of Job Futures Ltd, a large national network of community based employment service providers.

Robert served as Federal Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs from 1990-1996 and is Australia's longest serving Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs. Before being elected to the Federal parliament, he was a lecturer at the Institute of Technology. He later served as Principal Solicitor to the NSW Aboriginal Legal Service. Between 1977 and 1984 he served as a Councillor on the Sydney City Council including a very brief period as Acting Lord Mayor.

Robert holds Bachelor of Laws, Master of Laws (Hons) and Bachelor of Economics degrees and has undertaken the first stage of an Executive MBA.

in Sydney in November. We need to develop to truly motivate and inspire the people of the world to convince governments to support an international agreement to eliminate and render the use of nuclear weapons illegal under international law.

*This article has been reprinted with the permission of Australian Red Cross and first appeared at [www.redcross.org.au](http://www.redcross.org.au)* ●



# IN BRIEF

## NEW OPPORTUNITIES TO SERVE FOR QUEENSLAND POLICE



Queensland police will have the opportunity to serve in Papua New Guinea under an agreement between the country's Prime Minister Peter O'Neill and Premier Campbell Newman.

Mr Newman announced that up to 150 Queensland Police Officers will volunteer help to improve the policing operations and protocols in the Royal Papua New Guinea Constabulary (RPNGC).

"The PNG Government wants to greatly increase its police service's ability to tackle crime as well as ensuring officers have the skills to manage a modern and evolving service," Mr Newman said.

"The Queensland Police Service (QPS) is already world renowned for its training and mentoring capabilities and it will be a great opportunity to share this knowledge with our closest international neighbour.

"As part of the agreement PNG will exchange up to 150 of its officers with the QPS," Mr Newman said.

"Each of these officers will assist our neighbour to establish and bed down world-class policing practices, and they'll come away knowing they have made a real difference to the long-term

future of PNG and its people," Police Minister Jack Dempsey said.

Queensland police officers and the QPS have a long association and history with the RPNGC dating back to 1911.

## OPERATION ORANGE



NSW STATE EMERGENCY SERVICE

April saw orange clad people running around Sydney's CBD competing in the New South Wales State Emergency Service's Operation Orange: Checkpoint Challenge race.

The race was designed to provide NSW SES volunteers with an opportunity to practice their current skills and learn new ones such as first aid, rescue and navigation, in a fun environment that promotes team camaraderie and builds team morale.

The race is also an opportunity for members of the public to learn a little more about NSW SES and to witness training exercises.

## RE-LAUNCHING HIGH PERFORMANCE



Surf Life Saving Australia (SLSA) were successful in gaining funding to proceed with a new High Performance program based on a key objective of winning back the 2014 World Lifesaving Championships and building world championship depth to maintain a number one

world ranking beyond 2014.

SLSA Acting CEO Greg Nance was pleased with the funding result but acknowledges the significant challenge ahead of the Australian Lifesaving Team to achieve the key objectives.

Newly appointed head coach, Danny Short said, "There is no doubt New Zealand are raging hot favourites to retain their title in 2014. However, the one thing I can guarantee is that Australia will be there with renewed passion and determination to perform to a level we know we can."

## PARAMEDICS WIN THE RIGHT TO CHOOSE



**Ambulance Service of New South Wales**

Health Minister Jillian Skinner has welcomed NSW Industrial Relations Commission (IRC) decision to allow the Emergency Medical Services Protection Association (EMSPA) to register as a union representing paramedics.

EMSPA launched its bid for registration in the IRC after many paramedics expressed a desire for an alternative to the Health Services Union.

"It was the Coalition that introduced the legislation which enabled paramedics and junior doctors the right to choose the organisation that represents them," Mrs Skinner said.

"I have worked with the paramedics who founded EMSPA since the early days and I congratulate them on their achievement.

"These paramedics fought for the right to be able to choose and I am pleased for them that this day has come," she said.

The Ambulance Service of NSW said once the process of registration as a union was finalised, EMSPA would be afforded the same access as other unions.





Social networks disseminate emergency information during disasters.

# HARNESSING THE POWER OF REAL AND VIRTUAL SOCIAL NETWORKS DURING DISASTERS

Amanda **Gearing**

*MA Research (QUT) and Investigative Journalist*

Journalist and PhD student at Queensland University of Technology, Amanda Gearing, conducted an in-depth analysis of the use of social media during the Toowoomba and Lockyer Valley floods in Queensland in January 2011. Her paper was presented at the Australia and New Zealand Disaster and Emergency Management conference, Earth: Fire and Rain, in Brisbane in May 2013.

In a two part series her insightful paper is republished. Part two appearing in the next issue of National Emergency Response.



## ABSTRACT

The mass media and emergency services organisations routinely gather information and disseminate it to the public. During disaster situations both the media and emergency services require acute situational awareness. New social media technologies offer opportunities to enhance situational awareness by crowd-sourcing information using real and virtual social networks. This paper documents how real and virtual social networks were used by a reporter and by members of the public to gather and disseminate emergency information during the flash flood disaster in Toowoomba and the Lockyer Valley in January 2011 and in the days and weeks after the disaster.

## INTRODUCTION

At times of natural disaster, power supplies, telephone lines and mobile telephone networks are often disrupted. Journalists who need to quickly gather accurate information may not have access to their usual fax or email feeds from emergency services and welfare organisations. The advent of Facebook, Twitter, online forums and other social media offers reporters access to information, photographs and videos which can be tracked back to source for verification. This paper recounts how the social media were used in the reporting of the deadly flash flooding which engulfed the city of Toowoomba and seven rural communities to the east of the city on the afternoon of 11 January 2011. The disaster struck without any official warning to either the emergency services or the public (Gearing and Thomas 2011; McKenna and Gearing 2011; Owens, Bita and Gearing 2011; Gearing 2011h, 2011e, 2011b).

Further, this paper explores how citizen reporters used social media to convey warnings and emergency information; how reporters used social media to report the event and generate and follow news leads; how individuals used social media as an emergency communication system to find out if family members or friends had survived; how emergency services organisations used social networking sites to deliver news

and emergency information directly to their audiences; how individuals and organisations used social networking sites to co-ordinate emergency supplies of food, clothing and other assistance and how individuals and families created 'tribute pages' on social networking sites in memory of those who died.

## ONE-WAY TO TWO-WAY NEWS

Until the advent of the printing press, news and information primarily spread via word of mouth. Invention of the printing press led to the organised dissemination of news via traditional newspapers, radio and television media that, according to Dennis McQuail, (2000, 55) were 'largely one-directional, impersonal one-to-many carriers of news and information.' The mass media continued a similar mode of communication until relatively recent history, when the advent of the computer age, mobile phones and online social networking technologies have facilitated an increase in the amount of news that travels by word

only two opposing perspectives are presented.

Whilst most bloggers are focussed on micro-local events, if the events that happen are of state, national or global significance, news blogs can quickly attain a global audience. Early examples of global news blogs include the attack on the World Trade Centre in New York on 11 September 2001; the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq; the Boxing Day 2004 tsunami in Sumatra and the London bombings in July 2005, (Bruns 2006). By 2009, it was common for first reports of disasters to come not from traditional media outlets but from local residents using online social networks such as Twitter (Shirky 2009). The technical development in recent years of adding a video camera function to mobile phones has enabled members of the public on the scene of unexpected events to video the events as they happen and upload them almost immediately to the internet. Onlookers with mobile phones have become eye-witness recorders of events ranging from the personally significant to the globally significant

*'socially-networked people in disaster zones may prove to be more reliable sources than official emergency services agencies'*

of mouth, multi-directionally and person-to-person.

During major disasters, residents are sometimes the only people who witness events or are in a position to be able to record live pictures of the event as it occurs. Bowman and Willis (2003, 47) noted that the dynamics of emerging news technologies mean that for the first time in history, members of the public can now publish words and pictures online more immediately than traditional outlets can gather and disseminate news and images. When many people record the same event, 'multiperspectival news' emerges (Gans 2003, 103). Facts are presented from a wide range of perspectives, in contrast to the traditional reporting of 'both sides of the story' where commonly

(Bita and Gearing 2011). During the flood disaster, the relay of information from the media to the public and vice versa became a dynamic system, with audiences turning to the media for emergency information and the media appealing to audiences for eye-witness information, photographs and video footage which was then broadcast to the public.

## SOCIAL MEDIA WARNINGS

The only accurate, but unofficial warning, of the January 2011 inland tsunami was given by a sonographer and amateur weather watcher, Neil Pennell. He noticed on the Bureau of Meteorology weather radar that a very large storm was brewing and watched as two large cells within the large cloud mass merged to form a super-storm (Gearing 2011g). Mr Pennell realised people on

the ground who looked up would see cloud but would have no warning of the danger of the intense storm within the larger cloud mass. He navigated to the Bureau of Meteorology's warning page to check that suitable warnings were being issued. They were not. He checked back several times and saw, with rising anxiety, that there was still no effective warning being issued to the public. He accurately pinpointed the location of deadly impact in Grantham and considered phoning the local police. He lifted the phone to dial Helidon, the town upstream from Grantham – realised the police would think him crazy – and replaced the receiver. Knowing the large volume of rainfall in the Lockyer Valley over previous weeks, he realised the catchment was saturated and that the high rain rate being recorded by the Bureau could generate a large amount of almost immediate run-off with the potential for dangerous flash flooding (Pennell 2011a). In an online forum discussion he questioned a meteorologist on the forum, asking how to warn people of what he foresaw and feared:

Dave, I live in an area that is equally not used to being so saturated . . . I just know that 56mm in an hour here would produce a flood of frightening proportions and one likely to put lives at risk. Falls higher than this in the immediate area are likely. I repeat my question . . . Does someone in . . . Grantham . . . need to know what's possible? Who do we tell? (Pennell 2011b)

Other members of WeatherZone also provided site-specific warnings to other Lockyer Valley communities. Strikingly accurate flash flood warnings for specific towns in the Lockyer Valley were given via the weather forum more than three hours earlier than the official Bureau of Meteorology warnings were issued for those locations (Gearing 2011g). The disaster was unfolding faster than authorities could provide adequate warnings. One implication for journalists covering disasters in future is that socially networked people in disaster zones may prove to be more reliable sources than official emergency services agencies which lack current situational awareness. As a citizen reporter, I posted warnings based on the intensity of rain and the

amount of flooding near the top of Mount Lofty that I observed from my house. I posted a video with a voice-over to my Facebook page warning that Brisbane could be at risk of flooding in coming days. My citizen journalism report was the first warning that many people had of the onset of the disaster in Toowoomba and was many hours earlier than specific warnings issued by authorities.

From the watershed in Toowoomba, floodwaters from the city flowed west. Floodwaters from the escarpment and the Lockyer Valley flowed to the east towards Brisbane. The Toowoomba flood caused a spike in Twitter traffic as residents alerted others to the impending floods in the city of Ipswich and the state capital of Brisbane. Axel Bruns and his colleagues found a spike of Twitter traffic of more than 600 tweets on the hash tag 'qldfloods' on the evening of 10 January in response to the Toowoomba CBD flooding (Bruns et al. 2011). Tweets on the qldflood hash tag increased in frequency over the following day as the flood approached Brisbane peaking at 1,100 tweets per hour, as seen in Figure 1.

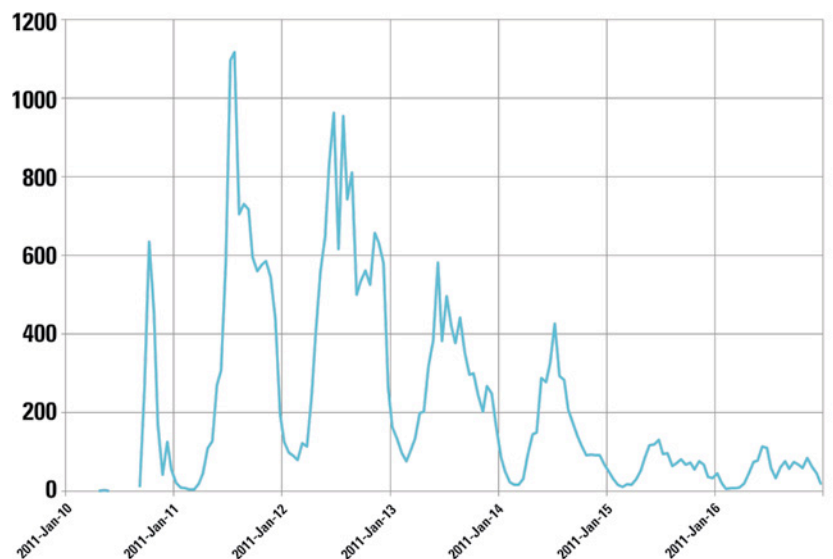


Figure 1. #qldfloods tweets per hour, January 10-16, 2011 (Bruns et al. 2011, 23).

### ONLINE SOCIAL MEDIA

Online social media played vital roles during the Toowoomba and Lockyer Valley floods for individuals, citizen reporters, journalists, media outlets and emergency services organisations.

Many people used social networking as an emergency communication system to find out if family members or friends had survived; citizen reporters in the first locations affected by the disaster used social networking to convey warnings and emergency information to family and friends further downstream and to report the event; reporters and media organisations used social networking sites to report the event and generate and follow news leads; emergency services organisations used social networking sites to deliver news and emergency information directly to their audiences (Charlton 2011; Gearing 2012i). After the disaster, individuals and organisations used social networking sites to co-ordinate emergency supplies of food, clothing and other assistance; and individuals and families created 'tribute pages' on social networking sites in memory of those who died (Gearing 2012i).

### EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS: ARE YOU OK?

Hundreds of people were unable to contact family members in the disaster zone because phone lines and power

supplies had failed. They used mobile phones to access Facebook to try to get information from the disaster zone to find out if their families and friends were alive. Hundreds of people were not contactable. Most of them were alive and safe but had no communications until services were restored up to eight days later.



For those who perished, it would be several weeks until their bodies were found. Three bodies were never found. (Gearing 2011c, 2011d)

The rural township of Murphys Creek in the foothills of the Great Dividing Range had never had mobile phone reception. Once the landline network was destroyed by the flash flooding the only way to communicate was via social media. Intense two-way communication between flood survivors and their families and friends outside the disaster

*'Online social media played vital roles during the Toowoomba and Lockyer Valley floods for individuals, citizen reporters, journalists, media outlets and emergency services organisations.'*

zone was recorded on community Facebook pages. 'Toowoomba and Darling Downs Flood Photos and Info' was set up on 10 January to help locate a missing person. By the next day the page had 37,000 Likes and continues to offer emergency information (Birch 2011). A second Facebook page 'QLD Floods - Withcott, Murphy's Creek, Postman's Ridge - Community Support' was created on 13 January 2011, to help co-ordinate a community-based recovery effort. People outside the disaster zone used the page to communicate with people inside the disaster zone who had no communication. For example, on 11 January, Fiona posted to the Facebook page that she was 'trying to find information about Ken Smith of Twidales Rd, Helidon Spa. If anyone has heard if Ken is ok could you please let me know, my uncle Len from Canada is concerned'. The reply came six hours later: 'Thanks everyone Ken called my parents this morning. Cheers'.

The traditional role of police to locate missing people and confirming their safety was quickly replaced by social media networking amongst the community. Similarly, journalists linked into the social networks were able to source information and make contact with families who were searching for missing people (Gearing and Thomas 2011).



Increasingly media organisations use social networking during disasters.

The benefit for readers of receiving information from news bloggers is that the bloggers are directly engaged in the news events, or at least have first-hand information. On 10 January

2011, residents in the disaster zone posted photographs of the flood on social networking sites. One of these, Jiaren Lau (2011), created a news blog with photographs and very detailed text about his experience of the disaster. While he was not a journalist, his report demonstrated his in-depth knowledge of the city of Toowoomba and its geography at the top of a mountain range, and included text about his experience of the event and the photographs that he had taken.

Media organisations and emergency services are increasingly using social networking technologies in addition to television and radio, to provide information to citizens during disasters (Nicholls 2012, 46). At the outset of this disaster, media organisations began crowd-sourcing information. I tuned in to Toowoomba's ABC radio station which by then was taken off networked programs from Brisbane and began broadcasting live by putting to air callers who phoned in with eye witness accounts of the disaster as pedestrians and cars were being swept from the streets. The callers were able to name the flooded roads to warn other motorists and give the locations of landslides that had cut highways. Television news reporters browsed YouTube for videos of the floods that were being uploaded and used the vision to compile footage for their news bulletins. Road closures meant news crews could not access Toowoomba or the Lockyer Valley by road.

Read part two in the next edition of NER. If you can't wait until the next issue, the complete paper and references can be downloaded from the Earth: Fire and Rain conference's book of proceedings at [anzdmc.com.au](http://anzdmc.com.au) ●

### CITIZEN REPORTERS

Dan Gillmor describes how audiences, who were once passive consumers of news produced by reporters, are now producing news themselves using new media platforms. Journalism has made the transition from 'journalism as lecture' to 'journalism as conversation' (Gillmor 2004, xxiv; Hermida 2010). The three distinct groups – journalists, newsmakers and audience, as described by (Hermida 2010, 237) – became blurred during this disaster because some audience members volunteered themselves as newsmakers. Several Toowoomba residents who witnessed the flood in the CBD took video footage which they uploaded to YouTube or sent to other people to warn them about the flood. In some cases, emergency workers were alerted to the disaster by people in Toowoomba before they were alerted by the emergency services for which they worked (Tate 2011).

Veteran reporter and digital journalism researcher Alfred Hermida has observed (2010, para 11) that there has been a shift in the relationship between journalists and the public:

The shift from an era of broadcast mass media to an era of networked digital media has fundamentally altered flows of information. Non-linear, many-to-many digital communication technologies have transferred the means of media production and dissemination into the hands of the public, and are rewriting the relationship between the audience and journalists.

# MILLIONS TO THANK

Australian volunteers are essential to our society and many Australian emergency services simply could not exist without them. National Volunteer Week, celebrated across Australia from 13–19 May 2013, recognised and paid tribute to the more than six million Australians who donate their time and skills each year.

National Volunteer Week is Australia's largest celebration of volunteers and this year's theme was 'thanks a million'. A perfect sentiment, given the millions of volunteers in Australia contributing more than 700 million hours of unpaid work to their local communities.

Emergency services volunteers certainly contribute significantly to those national numbers and many held their own celebrations in May to say 'thanks a million'.

Here we recognise just two of the organisations, their members and employers who give of themselves to help others in times of need.

## NSW SES



*David King, NSW SES, and family.*

NSW State Emergency Service's (SES) Commissioner Murray Kear says National Volunteer Week is a time to say thank you for the commitment and effort of NSW SES volunteers.

"Whether it be saving the lives of a person stuck in flood water, chain sawing through a large tree which has fallen on someone's home or rescuing a victim of a road crash, these are some of the reasons why we want to say 'thanks a million' to the amazing volunteers of the NSW SES," said Mr Kear.

The NSW SES Hawkesbury Unit Deputy Controller, Dave King is one such volunteer whose passion for volunteering for the NSW SES started way back in 1977 when he joined the Service as a 16 year old.

Dave not only loves to volunteer but his passion is to teach and mentor new recruits to the Service and to pass on his many years of expertise and experience. He has even managed to recruit his whole family including his wife and two daughters.

"Being a part of the NSW SES is certainly a family affair in the King household. My wife and two daughters have all joined the NSW SES Hawkesbury Unit. You could say my daughters were born into the NSW SES. They grew up listening to our many stories and debriefs of SES stories around the kitchen table," said Mr King.

"Both my daughters are Emergency Department nurses who deal with a lot of trauma cases so the skills they have acquired volunteering for the NSW SES complement their chosen career path.

"I love that I'm passing on a legacy of my skills, knowledge and expertise onto the next generation of Kings," Mr King said.

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*David King, NSW SES.*





## Victoria CFA

When the north-east of Victoria is affected by fire, flood or other natural disasters, Peter Leach is a man in demand.

As a highly-trained member of Country Fire Authority's (CFA) aircraft unit and one of the region's Air Observers, he can be called on at any moment to manage the logistics behind a fire bombing operation or go up in a plane or chopper to gather critical aerial data.

And as a senior volunteer with Wangaratta Fire Brigade he might find himself out on the back of a truck or in the Incident Control Centre during major incidents.

But this balancing act is only made possible by the support of Australian Munitions, and its parent company Thales Australia, where Peter works as a Fire and Emergency Systems Coordinator. Thales employs around 40 CFA volunteers at sites in Benalla and Mulwala, just over the NSW border from Yarrowonga.

Support of volunteers is a core part of the multinational company's 'good neighbour' philosophy, not only in Victoria but interstate and internationally. The company in Australia actively supports its volunteers both informally and formally, with official policies clearly recognising their contribution to local communities across the country.

Peter realises the importance of his employer's willingness to release volunteers for operational duties.

"It's very important – critical," he said.

"Firefighters can be away for extended periods if they are deployed on a strike team... and we can only do this with the support of our employer.

"Especially for people like myself



*Fellow CFA volunteer and Peter Leach's Aircraft Unit colleague, Ian Lyons.*

and Ian Lyons (also a member of the Aircraft Unit), they know how important we are in filling specialised roles where there are limited personnel available.

"CFA has invested a lot in my training – I'm well aware that it's no use doing that for someone who is not available, so your employer has to be party to that.

There are also benefits for the company, which as a Major Hazard facility maintains its own Emergency Response Team, having employees with broader CFA training is a real bonus.

"Next week I'll be on a course at Fiskville – the Certificate IV in Training and Assessment – and that will give me the kind of skills I can take back to my job.

"Thales has its own Emergency Response Team training facility which includes things like breathing apparatus tunnels that have been utilised by CFA and SES.

"In the past specialist equipment belonging to the company has been taken out to incidents in the community. So I'd say it's a really strong mutual

arrangement that's good for everyone," he said.

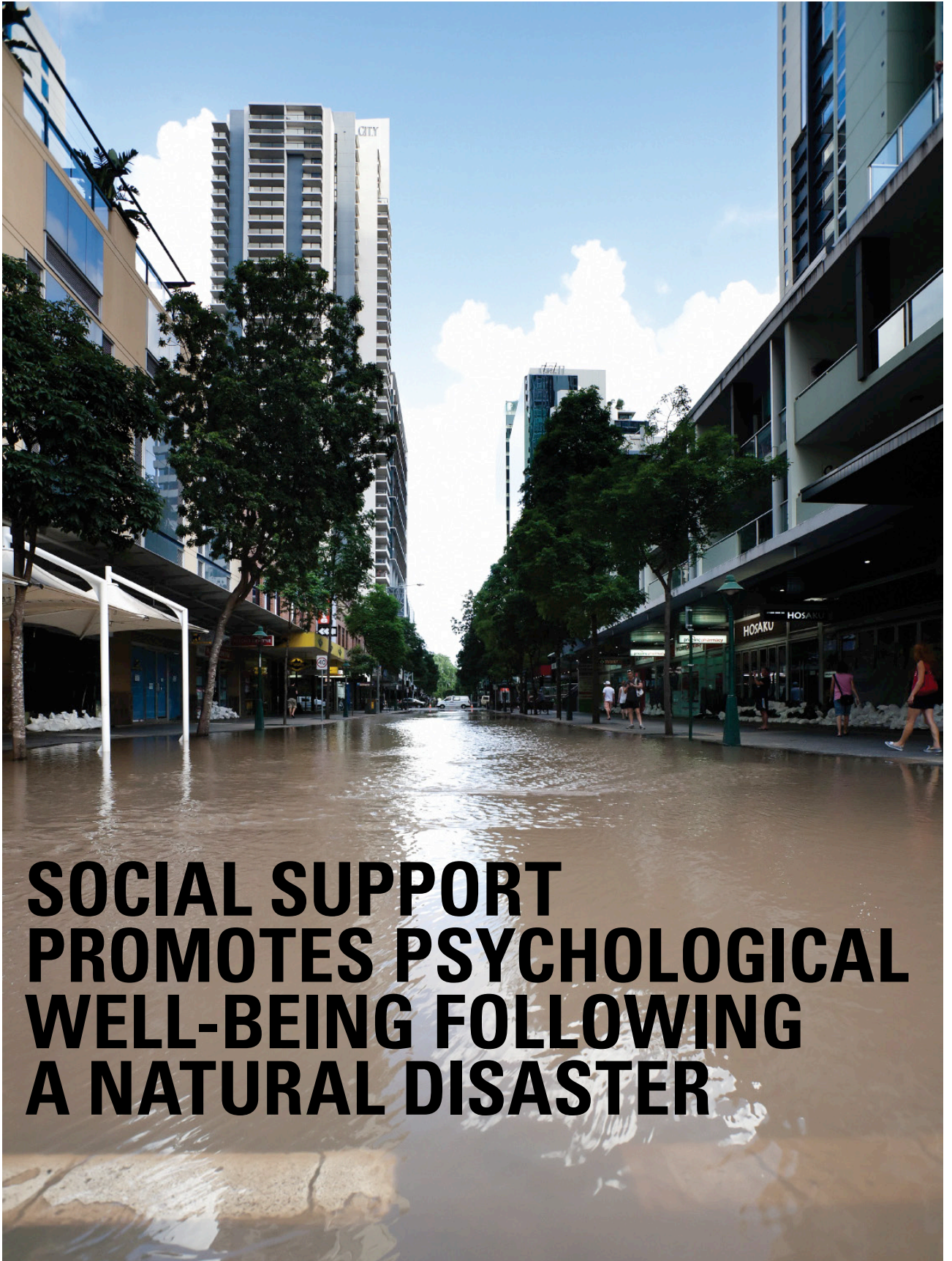
Peter's role as an Air Observer involves going up in the air to survey areas affected by fire or flood, relaying information to ground crews. He played a major role during the 2012 floods and even assisted with plotting the recent tornado that travelled all the way from Cobram to Bundalong.

Aircraft Officers coordinate logistics behind operations involving aircraft such as firebombing or reconnaissance.

Thales in Australia is part of a leading international electronics and systems group serving the defence, aerospace and space, security, and transport markets in Australia and throughout the world.

Thales Australia is a trusted partner of the Australian Defence Force and is also present in commercial sectors ranging from air traffic management to security systems and services.

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# SOCIAL SUPPORT PROMOTES PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING FOLLOWING A NATURAL DISASTER

Associate Professor Jane **Shakespeare-Finch** and Ms Julie **Green**

*School of Psychology and Counselling, Faculty of Health, Institute of Health and Biomedical Innovation,  
Queensland University of Technology*

*Brisbane in 2011 floods.*





Associate Professor at Queensland University of Technology, Jane Shakespeare-Finch, presented her research findings of the relationship between giving and receiving social support during and after a natural disaster at the Australia and New Zealand Disaster and Emergency Management conference, Earth: Fire and Rain, in Brisbane in May 2013.

The following is an extract from the presented paper. The complete paper and references can be downloaded from the Earth: Fire and Rain conference's book of proceedings at [anzdmc.com.au](http://anzdmc.com.au)

## ABSTRACT

Receiving emotional support has consistently been demonstrated as an important factor associated with mental health but sparse research has investigated giving support in addition to receiving it or the types of support that predict well-being. In this paper the relationship between giving and receiving instrumental and emotional social support and psychological well-being during and following a natural disaster is investigated. A survey administered between four and six months after fatal floods was conducted with 200 community members consisting of men ( $n = 68$ ) and women ( $n = 132$ ) aged between 17 and 87 years. Social support experiences were assessed using the 2-Way Social Support Scale (2-Way SSS; Shakespeare-Finch and Obst, 2011) and eudemonic well-being was measured using the Psychological Well-Being Scale (PWBS; Ryff and Keyes, 1995). Hierarchical multiple regression analyses were used to examine expected relationships and to explore the differential effects of the four factors of the 2-Way SSS. Results indicated that social support shared significant positive associations with domains of psychological well-being, especially with regards to interpersonal relationships. Receiving and giving emotional support were respectively the strongest unique predictors of psychological well-being. However, receiving instrumental support predicted less autonomy. Results highlight the importance of measuring social support as a multidimensional construct and affirm that disaster response policy and practice should focus on emotional as well as instrumental needs in order to promote individual and community psychosocial health following a flooding crisis.

## INTRODUCTION

Although crises can introduce stressors that challenge well-being, not all people incur negative long-term psychological consequences. Following an initial decline in their sense of well-being, the vast majority of people are resilient to the deleterious effects of stress, maintaining or returning to pre-event levels of functioning (Bonanno, et al., 2011). One important protective factor strongly linked to well-being is social support (e.g., Brown et al., 2003; Liang et al., 2001). Among the myriad of stressors faced by individuals, natural disasters represent a unique category of crisis that can elicit social support in unusually large proportions due to the impact such events have on whole communities (Tyler, 2006). In January 2011, a catastrophic flooding crisis impacted vast areas of Queensland, Australia, devastating many communities and generating massive outpourings of social support. While these events were extreme, natural disasters are common in Australia. Thus, examining the impact that social support had on the well-being of both givers and receivers of that support may inform future personal and community level decisions regarding potential health benefits and risks of different supportive responses.

## DISCUSSION

Results support the prediction that social support would be associated with higher rates of Psychological Well-Being Scale (PWB). This was the case for all domains of PWB except autonomy, where mixed support was obtained; emotional support predicted better autonomy, but receiving instrumental support predicted reduced reports of autonomy. Findings provide preliminary indications that in the context of this natural disaster, giving and receiving emotional support uniquely predicted improved well-being whereas instrumental support did not.

Although social support variables accounted for significant proportions of variability overall and in each factor of PWB, only receiving and giving emotional support shared a significant positive relationship with well-being. However, for approximately half of the time, instrumental and emotional support were given and received simultaneously. Conceptually, this suggests that whilst instrumental support (e.g., sandbagging and cleaning up) was not uniquely predictive of well-being, it was an important social context that served as a vessel through which emotional support was given and received. Indeed, instrumental support received from non-professionals can be interpreted as emotionally supportive due to the care and regard communicated (Semmer, et al., 2008). As previously found (Brown, et al., 2003; Liang, et al., 2001), it was the compassion and kindness embodied in supportive actions that predicted an improved sense of well-being. Moderate correlations between receiving and giving help suggest that some individuals also gave emotional support almost a third of the time. Receiving emotional support from others may have activated a norm of reciprocity, inducing the desire to reciprocate (Liang, et al., 2001). As the second strongest predictor of well-being, giving emotional support likely contributed to further increases in well-being, corresponding to the benefits of giving support associated with volunteering (Meier and Stutzer, 2008; Mellor, et al., 2008; Mellor, et al., 2009; Piliavin and Siegl, 2007).

Salutogenic theory conceptualises floods as one of many potential stressors and social support as a generalised resistance resource (Antonovsky, 1987). Social support's substantive positive relationship with well-being during and following the floods supports this theoretical proposition. The results also emphasise that in a disaster response context where social support is

responsive and reciprocated, emotional aspects seem to be a crucial ingredient for psychological wellness although often packaged as tangible aid. This form of coping can be bi-directional, with both receiving and giving adding to an individual's sense of coherence. The rates of reciprocity found in this study are comparable to those of non-disaster community contexts (Liang, et al., 2001; Piferi and Lawler, 2006). Thus, past uni-directional social support research may have missed the health benefits of bi-directional support.

Emotional support's capacity to predict well-being is consistent with past studies of adolescents receiving emotional support in religious contexts and adults who gave and received emotional support (Schwartz, et al., 2009; Schwartz, et al., 2003). For adults, the relative importance of each was reversed when compared with this study; giving emotional support was more predictive of mental health. This highlights the importance of context, as unlike the religious community sample, participants in the present study shared a distinct crisis. The greater importance of receiving emotional support may be due to more participants receiving than giving support and the stress of the floods. It should be noted that neither aforementioned studies assessed receiving instrumental support.

This study has provided useful information regarding the specific constructs theoretically proposed to compose PWB and their relationships with social support. Given both the floods and this study were framed by the health promoting properties of social support, it is not surprising that interpersonal well-being (i.e., positive relations with others) was most strongly connected with social support. This subscale incorporates bi-directional social exchanges and focuses on the psycho-affective benefits of interpersonal relationships. For example, participants agreed that, in the context of the floods, "people would describe me as a giving person, willing to share my time with others" and "I can trust my friends and they know that they can trust me". This bi-directionality of support affirms the conceptual validity that giving and receiving emotional support were the strongest predictors of interpersonal well-being, consistent with findings that receiving social support during a natural disaster facilitates perceptions of social well-being, including enhanced community connectedness and valuing mutual support (Kaniasty, 2011; Norris and Kaniasty, 1996;

Tyler, 2006). Self-acceptance was the only other form of well-being that bi-directional emotional support uniquely predicted. For example, participants agreed that the support they received and gave contributed towards feeling "confident and positive about myself." This mirrors longitudinal evidence for a causal link between receiving emotional support and higher levels of self-esteem (Kinnunen, et al., 2008).

In order, social support was associated with increased personal growth, environmental mastery, purpose in life, and autonomy. The overlap of the four factors of social support accounted for more variance in these domains of well-being than they did uniquely, with the exception of autonomy. Thus, while receiving emotional support was the only unique predictor of these constructions of well-being during the floods, it cannot be extricated from the distinctive instrumental-emotional context in which social support was exchanged. Participant reports suggest that social support experiences during the floods afforded opportunities for personal growth. During disaster response and recovery efforts, assistance was exchanged between strangers, family and friends. It is plausible that people's social worldviews were challenged by these unique and emotionally intense social exchanges, adding to participants' sense of personal growth. Receiving emotional support also uniquely predicted people's perceptions of being able to manage the environmental challenges associated with the floods and enhanced purpose in life. This pattern of results was not replicated in the relationship between social support and autonomy.

Social support was weakest in predicting autonomy which is a conceptually logical outcome. Akin to Western standards of individualism (Ryff and Singer, 2008), autonomy by definition is focused on the individual and their drive to act according to their own values and standards (Ryff, 1995). Social support adds others' values and standards into the system in which the autonomous individual is attempting to assert his or her personal agency. While it appears that receiving emotional support facilitated perceptions of autonomy during the floods, the result was reversed for receiving instrumental support. This could mean that receiving instrumental support undermined perceptions of personal agency. However, this study's correlational design cannot test the conceptual proposition that social support preceded

increases in well-being. Further, the statistical relationship between social support and autonomy was unlike other domains of well-being, highlighting the distinctiveness of this construct in the present sample. This result may support prior caveats regarding inter- and intra-cultural variations in salience of different components of well-being (Campion and Nurse, 2007), and the cross-cultural applicability of autonomy (Gallagher, et al., 2009).

When compared with studies that consider social support's effect on physical health, this study's outcomes are both similar and different. Greater longevity and physical functioning has been predicted in volunteers (Musick, et al., 1999) and older adults (Brown, et al., 2003; Hays, et al., 1997) who gave support, but during the floods both receiving and giving emotional support best predicted PWB. Thus, the benefits of giving emotional support, but not instrumental, appear to share commonalities with measures of physical and psychological wellness. Where receiving instrumental support predicted increased mortality and poorer physical functioning, this form of support was also linked with perceptions of lower autonomy during the floods. Feelings of dependence (Liang, et al., 2001; Lu and Argyle, 1992) and a reduced sense of autonomy may lead to learned helplessness (Hays, et al., 1997). Floods specifically have been shown to elicit feelings of helplessness due to their inevitability (Nesbitt, 2010) which may eventually indirectly impact physical well-being via the direct effect of PWB on human physiology (Ryff, et al., 2004). Combined with the positive effect of emotional support on autonomy, results indicated that being able to exchange emotional support and not just receive instrumental help may be important to personal agency.

This study's holistic operationalisation of social support and eudaimonic perspective of well-being represents a unique contribution to the natural disaster literature. Results demonstrate that extricating these four factors of support in future research is essential. Further, this study has demonstrated the relevance and utility of a eudaimonic measure of well-being in natural disaster contexts.

Results and limitations of this research suggest directions for future studies. The correlational design used prevents causal attributions from being tested (J. Cohen, et al., 2003). Consequently, although social





support was conceptualised as preceding and subsequently predicting PWB, longitudinal research supports reciprocal causality (Diener and Ryan, 2009; Piliavin and Siegl, 2007; Thoits and Hewitt, 2001); greater social support can lead to improved well-being, as can higher rates of well-being promote healthy social connections and the desire to give. Longitudinal research including measures pre- and post-disaster would help to verify the direction of effects the results imply. Future research could also explore whether receiving instrumental support was detrimental to individual's sense of agency or whether individuals with higher pre-event levels of autonomy simply did not need this type of support.

Most prominent in guiding future research is the necessity of measuring social support using the two types and directions employed in this study. The significant predictive capacity contingent on the direction and type of support highlights the inclusion of a comprehensive measure of social support is vital. The 2-Way SSS (Shakespeare-Finch and Obst, 2011) is the first measure to address this need and its continued use would benefit future research. Given the exploratory nature of this study, replications in similar and different contexts are necessary. Due to the unique community cohesion and well coordinated support during the Brisbane floods, the findings here may not apply to communities where the response to natural disasters is less effective, as was the case when Hurricane Katrina struck New Orleans in 2005 (Kulkarni, et al., 2008). Replications in natural disaster contexts where support is less forthcoming will illuminate whether emotional support is as strongly predictive of well-being in the absence of adequate instrumental support.

The practical implications of this study pertain to disaster response policy, communities, individuals, and mental health practitioners. The need to provide emotional and social support to communities impacted by disaster is acknowledged in Australian state policy (Queensland Department of Community Safety, 2010). This study affirms that acts of giving instrumental support can convey compassion in action, embodying the most important ingredient for well-being during the floods: emotional support. Communities should be encouraged to accept and lend both types of support to family, friends and strangers in disaster recovery efforts.



*'participants agreed that the support they received and gave contributed towards feeling "confident and positive about myself."*

In Brisbane, state and local government and community groups coordinated community volunteer efforts to maximise the provision of instrumental social support in preparation for and after the floods. Results suggest these community initiatives were psychologically valuable. Consequently, in the absence of adequate social support during similar crises, individuals would have less opportunity to extract something positive from their experience and may be more prone to symptoms of psychological distress (Campion and Nurse, 2007; Mason, et al., 2010). This can lead to mental health problems in the longer-term (Nesbitt, 2010) further straining individual and community resources.

As posited by salutogenic theory, social support was a valuable coping resource in this context, serving to promote psychosocial wellness following crisis.

Whilst instrumental support addressed the material damage wrought by the floods, it was the care and regard conveyed in these actions that was most psychologically beneficial. Not only were receivers of emotional support benefited, but also those who gave emotional support. However, less autonomy was predicted by receiving instrumental support, so a balance between interdependence and independence may be important. This study affirms the value of bi-directional interpersonal exchanges and of tending to emotional as well as material needs in disaster response efforts to promote individual and community psychosocial wellness and recovery. Fundamentally, the research demonstrates that the capacity to receive and to give social support provides opportunities to cultivate well-being and envision new ways of being in the world, even amidst a natural disaster. ●



# TASMANIA SETS THE PACE ON FIREFIGHTER PROTECTION

The Tasmanian Government has moved to become the first state in Australia to introduce supported presumptive legislation recognising all twelve occupational cancers for firefighters.

Similar legislation to support Victorian firefighters with occupational cancer has been introduced by Greens MP Colleen Hartland, but is yet to get the support of Government parties.

Tasmanian Police and Emergency Management Minister David O'Byrne today introduced legislation to end the impossible task of firefighters proving which chemicals they encounter have caused their cancer from the many hundreds of fires and emergencies they may have attended.

They will be able to access medical support, leave and compensation – removing the burden which currently falls on their family and friends.

United Firefighters Union national secretary Peter Marshall says similar laws

support stricken firefighters in Canada and the United States, as well as federally employed firefighters working in Canberra and Australian airports.

"In Australia, the federal legislation was passed after a thorough Senate inquiry examined the links between firefighters and cancer, and was unanimously supported by all political parties.

"Today is a breakthrough and firefighters sincerely appreciate today's initiative by the Tasmanian Government.

"We hope this legislation will also have the bipartisan support of all parties in the Tasmanian Parliament.

"And that politicians in other states will soon recognise the unique risks that firefighters face.

"They head into danger as others flee – but the effect of prolonged exposure to carcinogens, toxins and other chemicals can cost their health," Mr Marshall said.

In Hobart, Tasmanian firefighter Daniel



Redpath, 42, welcomed the Tasmanian move. The father-of-one is now back at work after his personal battle with prostate cancer.

"This legislation means that firefighters with cancer can focus on their health and work on their recovery, without worrying about the financials," he said.

"Previously if we got sick it was just 'see you later, see you when you get back'.

"We're a close family, the firefighting community, and support each other.

"Through this legislation we will also know that we have the broader community standing behind us," he said. ●

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# AMBULANCE VICTORIA SHOWING UK PARAMEDICS HOW IT'S DONE



*Ambulance Victoria air ambulance and personnel.*

An Ambulance Victoria air ambulance intensive care paramedic travelled to the UK showcasing our world-leading health care system.

**M**obile Intensive Care Ambulance (MICA) flight paramedic Ben Meadley completed a speaking tour funded by Paramedics Australasia and the UK College Of Paramedics to explain how things are done down under.

As well as his work on the air ambulance helicopters and planes, Ben is a lecturer in pre-hospital medicine at Monash University and a Medical Educator for the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners.

Ben spent time doing operational shifts as an observer on air ambulance helicopters and in road ambulances in West Midlands.

"We are incredibly fortunate to have the ambulance system in Victoria which is amongst the best in the world," Mr Meadley said.

"Advances in paramedic clinical care on the road and in air ambulance, with things like the introduction of carrying blood for in-flight transfusions, have led to better outcomes for patients.

"It's good to be able to share this knowledge with UK paramedics and

maybe pick up some ideas from them too," Mr Meadley said.

Air Ambulance Victoria planes and helicopters are frequently used to treat and transport critically ill cardiac arrest patients and heart attack patients from rural communities to the large hospitals in Melbourne. ●

Ambulance Victoria is a world leader in improving outcomes for patients who suffer a form of cardiac arrest that allows the heart to be 'shocked' back into rhythm by a defibrillator. This is known as ventricular fibrillation and ventricular tachycardia (VT/VF).

In Melbourne, 56 per cent of (VT/VF) cardiac arrest patients arrived at hospital alive after being brought back to life by paramedics. Since 2003,

the number of people being discharged from hospital to home has almost doubled from 16.1 per cent to 31.4 per cent.

42 per cent of (VT/VF) rural cardiac arrest patients are brought back to life by paramedics and transported to hospital. Approximately half of these patients are discharged from hospital, representing an increase from 8.1 per cent in 2003 to 16.7 per cent in 2011.

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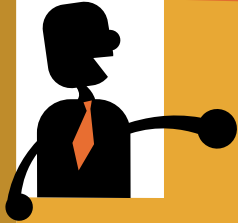
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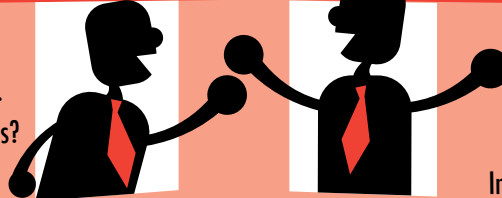
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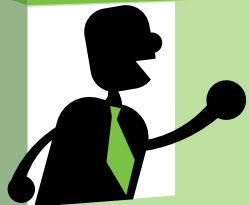


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**PROUDLY NOT FOR PROFIT**

# WARNING CENTRES, EMERGENCY WARNINGS AND EVACUATIONS, PART II

Ian Mannix

Churchill Fellow 2012

In 2012, Churchill Fellowship recipient Ian Mannix travelled overseas 'to study US and Canadian emergency warnings, warning centres, warning broadcasts, and evacuation procedures for natural disasters'. This article is Part II of Mr Mannix's report to the Winston Churchill Memorial Trust of Australia. Part I was published in the Autumn issue of *National Emergency Response*.

## US WEATHER SERVICE RADIO

The US National Weather Service (NWS) has a multi-faceted approach to community safety which includes creation and dissemination of warnings and information.

In addition to the usual weather forecasters, the NWS has in its 120 or so regional offices a warnings officer who works on disasters. The NWS has its own terrestrial weather radio system, which fills the gap when commercial radio doesn't issue warnings. It is both another level of complexity, and another level of certainty.

The NWS radio network consists of 1,013 transmitters dotted around the country,

each with a range of about 60 kilometers. It is estimated that 98 per cent of all people are within range of National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Weather Radio, which runs the NWS.

That makes it an important part of the US natural hazards warning system, so knowing a little about it can be useful in comparing and contrasting different warning platforms.

Weather radios are widely available for homes, office, schools or business. Prices can vary from \$20 to \$200, depending on the model. The frequency on which they transmit is much higher than the commercial AM and FM

bands, so the public are required to buy a special weather radio.

Features vary a little but generally they are activated when a tone alarm is broadcast by the NWS for 'warning' or 'watch' messages delivered by the NWS. The audio is recorded. It is a bit monotone, and will play on a loop, at various intervals (not continuous) determined by the event.

The tone (1050MHz) will activate all the receivers, which are equipped to receive it, even if the audio is turned off. This is especially useful for warnings which occur during the night when most people are asleep.

Many are geocoded, so the owner can opt to receive messages at county or city level, and can opt out of some message categories. For example, a person in a coastal county, but not right at the beach, might not care about coastal flood warnings. This feature may also be called 'Event Blocking' or 'Defeat Siren'.

Most are AC adapted with battery backup for power outages. Some receivers come with an external antenna jack, normally in the back of the unit, to connect to a larger antenna, which can be indoors or outdoors.

National Weather Radio (NWR) broadcasts are in the public service VHF frequencies, just above FM radio and between the current TV channels 6 and 7 – so the radios are usually sold as AM/FM/Weather radio. They can be used in cars.

Some radios have a jack to plug-in external notification devices, such as strobe lights or bed shakers, which can be useful for those with special needs.

## PROGRAM

### September

- 24 California Emergency Management Agency  
California Warnings Centre
- 25-26 Manton, California  
Emergency Management Agency Tahoma County (Reading, California)  
KQMS Talk Radio (Reading, California)
- 28 National Weather Service (Kansas City)  
Joplin

### October

- 1 National Weather Service (Washington)
- 2 Federal Emergency Management Agency FEMA
- 3 National Forest Service
- 9 American Broadcasting Corporation (New York)
- 12 Emergency Management Agency (British Columbia)
- 15 Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (British Columbia)
- 18 Pierce County, Washington State  
National Weather Service, Seattle
- 19 Washington SECC
- 20 Washington EMA





Weather radio puts responsibility in the hands of the NWS for both creating and disseminating warnings. The system is robust, and many weather service warning teams allow the service to broadcast a range of other non-weather related warnings.

The highlight of the system is the sleep mode, in which the audio is only turned on when needed. This puts it in a special place, above all existing radio and TV, all online media and most mobile platforms.

It meets the *UN Guiding Principles for Effective Early Warnings*, particularly with respect to accessibility, if the strobe lights and vibrating beds and chairs are attached.

The coverage is extensive, but might not be top-of-mind for all Americans. In Mantion, California, no one mentioned weather radio; and in Joplin, Missouri, in 'tornado alley' only a couple of people mentioned they had one, although one turned it off when it became too intrusive. The manager at my Washington DC hotel had never heard of it and said there were none in the building.

James Bremer, the program director and senior engineer at KQMS in Redding told me his station could add weather radio broadcasts to their automatic emergency alert content if they thought it might be warranted. "But often it's too repetitious," Mr Bremer said.

NWR type infrastructure might be a barrier to creating these systems in other countries, but in reality new servers/ codecs can direct audio to existing AM and FM radios, and an inaudible tone could switch the radios on, so the system would these days be much less capital intensive.

Local government in Australia, which has embraced the concept of tourist radio on the FM band in Australia, and which has over the years enthusiastically supported community radio, might find this a useful local communications system. It would cost less than giving very household three different coloured rubbish bins.

## US NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE AND EXTERNAL PARTNERSHIPS

The NWS in the US has a symbiotic working relationship with the broadcast media, which far surpasses anything in Australia.

Although The ABC has wonderful and often personal relationships with the Bureau of Meteorology, the US NWS systemises the process.

The central pillar behind the success of the NWS relationship is the integrated warning team, but there are other very important elements.

1. Warnings officers in all 122 regional forecasting centres who have an emergency and community education role.

2. Direct access between warnings officers, forecasters and broadcasters.

A very important component of this approach is NWSChat, the real time interactive communications system (<https://nwschat.weather.gov/>), which would be well worth considering in Australia for all emergency agencies and the Bureau of Meteorology. It allows direct communications with experts 'off line' seeking more information, more urgently, raising questions and providing feedback. To quote the NWSChat home page:

*"NWS partners can use NWSChat as an efficient means of seeking clarifications and enhancements to the communication stream originating from the NWS during a fast paced significant weather or hydrologic event. NWSChat is an Instant Messaging program used by NWS operational personnel to share critical warning decision expertise and other types of significant weather information essential to the NWS's mission of saving lives and property."*

Mike Hudson, the warning specialist at Kansas City, Missouri, says it helps to ensure that the messages being broadcast over multiple platforms are consistent: "If people receive more than one message at a time it can lead to paralysis. Inconsistent messaging leads people to shop for information, taking up valuable time to see if other radio and TV stations are carrying the same message," Mr Hudson said.

Real time chatroom content between the duty warnings forecaster and all media, or between emergency agency duty officers and the warnings media, would enhance understanding at critical times.

NWSChat is linked directly to the local warnings officers.

The use of Instant Messaging (IM) and chatrooms has proved to be valuable for this type of communication internally in many businesses, but to open them to various partners, like the NWS has done, is a bold step, which reflects the relationship between broadcasters and the NWS.

The technical details are online and the following information is edited from the site:

*<https://nwschat.weather.gov/NWSChatSecurityWhitepaper.pdf> NWSChat is maintained by the National Weather Service and is situated behind a firewall. NWSChat is comprised of a pair of servers configured in a resilient primary/backup configuration,*

*and receives auto-updates for all operating system patches and bug-fixes. The systems are scanned quarterly to identify and correct IT security vulnerabilities as required by NOAA IT Computer Security policy.*

*Individual user accounts are required for NWSChat; shared or group accounts are disallowed. A standardized account naming syntax is also enforced for manageability. To register with NWSChat, users must submit an online form. Once submitted, the selected primary office receives an email of the request, and will approve or deny authorization for each user. Once approved, the requesting user is notified via email and then must complete online training for NWSChat.*

*Most multi-user chatrooms on NWSChat are open to NWS partners once they are authorized by the NWS. However, certain rooms are restricted for members only access. This is necessary to secure information in specific chatrooms intended for certain partners only. For example, some information may be required by emergency managers that is not appropriate for media partners due to the sensitivity of and timeliness of emergency operations. As a result, a members only chatroom would be provided limiting access to NWS and authorized emergency managers exclusively, for a given location.*

*In order to participate in NWSChat, you must meet at least one of the following standards:*

- *Be a member of the emergency management (EM) community: Members of the EM community includes public safety officials who serve as employees or contract agents of a government agency at the federal, state, local, or tribal level and are charged with protecting the public from hazards that are influenced by weather or weather related events. Other members of this community include: safety and emergency personnel, from universities or other large entities with large populations, whose roles are functionally equivalent to the public safety officials described above, and Amateur Radio Emergency Services.*
- *Be a government partner of a NWS office: This includes government partners who have missions that require close coordination with the NWS. Government partners include (but are not limited to) the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), and water and land management officials.*



- Be a member of the electronic media: members of the electronic media are parties, and contract agents of parties who:
  - have a need to actively participate in discussions with NWS Forecast Offices on imminent weather or other hazards, and
  - operate systems that routinely and rapidly relay weather and water watches, advisories, warnings and forecast information to a significant part of the population served by an NWS office; via electronic information distribution such as radio, television, internet, cellular, and other wireless means.

*Note: Individuals, companies, or other entities involved in chasing weather events and posting or streaming video or pictures of the event, but do not otherwise have a need to communicate with NWS do not meet the qualifications for this Service.*

### BUSHFIRE EVACUATIONS

Evacuations from hazardous areas are a standard part of the tool kit of the US emergency manager. The protocols vary from place to place, and they are still ironing out some of the problems in some areas but it is clear that the system in place leads to a clear understanding by the community of their responsibilities.

But it is equally clear the term 'mandatory evacuation' is perceived to be optional.



*Tsunami evacuation route sign in San Francisco.*

There are many times an evacuation isn't possible, tornadoes and rapidly moving fires come to mind and it is understood that the chance of evacuation using roads immediately after an earthquake will be determined by the level of damage.

Like Australia, police have various laws they can use to force people to evacuate,



*Signage in uptown Manhattan.*

but in reality, they will be very reluctant to physically remove a person from their home if they want to try and defend it. Persuasion is their most effective tool. One Canadian emergency manager said: "There are laws that can be put in place to remove children from dangerous places. That soon convinces parents to follow."

An American emergency agency staff member said one other phrase has been found to be particularly persuasive: "Before I go I need to know how tall you are so I can bring the right size body bag back."

The law is outlined in Community Wildfire Protection Plans, which are implemented in nearly all fire prone regions. This is from Lane County in California:

### THE LAW

*A county, city or municipal corporation may authorize an agency or official to order mandatory evacuations of residents and other individuals after a declaration of a state of emergency within the jurisdiction is declared. An evacuation under an ordinance or resolution authorized by this section shall be ordered only when necessary for public safety or when necessary for the efficient conduct of activities that minimize or mitigate the effects of the emergency (ORS 401.309). BE AWARE; after a mandatory evacuation order goes into effect emergency responders will not risk their lives to save you should you choose to stay at your home after the order.*

Evacuation procedures need to be planned and trained for. Many roads have warning signs along them which are opened only when an evacuation is in place, restricting travel on the whole road to one direction. Other road signs are left permanently on display, which serves as a useful community education tool that constantly advises road users of the perceived risk.

The public needs to know when to evacuate and where to go. Clearly this needs good local pre-planning. Doug Gantt, Fire Manager Officer with The US Forest Service says, "You have to front load all this stuff"

Emergencies are handled by Counties. In the case of bushfires the incident controller will advise the Sheriff that the fire threatens homes or a community and the evacuation is carried out by law enforcement officers.

During the Ponderosa fires, Shingletown was issued with a voluntary evacuation notice that was superseded about two hours later by a mandatory evacuation notice. This two level evacuation procedure reflects the same benefits of the graduated warning system for fire risk used in Australia.

At Manton when the fire was out of control and time was much shorter, things worked a little differently. One genteel soul told me (after advising me to cover my ears) "The sheriff's car drove into my drive, sounded the siren, and he yelled 'You'd better get the ... outta here.'"

However next door in Washington State there is a three level evacuation procedure for fires (but not for lahars).

This is how the evacuation notices unfolded for the multiple fires in the Wenatchee fire complex in Washington State from 11 September 2012. The Washington State Emergency Management Agency (EMA) web site contains all the details of the way the evacuations launched, ramped up, and then gradually were downgraded.

This is the warnings content of the excellent fire web site called Inciweb, set up by federal fire authorities to be used by state and county emergency agencies.

**Incident:** Wenatchee Complex Wildfire  
**Released:** 9/11/2012

*Level 1, 2, and 3 Evacuation Status is akin to a 'Ready, Set, Go' level of evacuation notices with Level 1 asking residents to be ready to evacuate if conditions change, Level 2 means residents should be set to go at a moment's notice, Level 3 means authorities are advising residents to evacuate because their homes are in imminent danger (under Level 3, residents will not be allowed to return to their homes until fire danger decreases). Evacuations remain in place for the following areas affected by the Byrd Canyon Fire:*

- Downey Canyon – Level 1
- State Route 971 Navarre Coulee Road (east side) – Level 2
- State Route 971 Navarre Coulee Road (west side) – Level 3
- State Route 97A Tunnel to Davis Canyon – Level 3
- State Route 97A from Byrd Canyon to State Route 971 – Level 3



The explanations at the top of the warning were inserted because fire managers weren't confident the community was fully aware of the evacuation procedures. No survey has been done about how many people evacuated, or when, but no one died or was injured.

Over time the evacuation levels were reduced.

## WARNINGS IN ACTION

### The Ponderosa fire



*Manton Corners, centre of the community.*

The Ponderosa fire started by lightning in August 2012, a few kilometers from the town of Manton, in the Californian Sierra Mountains. It burnt out 57 homes, tens of thousands of acres of dense mountain forest, and resulted in the urgent evacuation of 3,000 people from a subdivision near Shingletown.

The residents of Manton, close to the fire ignition zone, relied on community word of mouth, and to a certain extent Facebook, for warnings. Local Sheriff Department officers were able to warn people verbally. Residents further afield had some hours to prepare and received telephone based evacuation alerts. Local radio stations carried news of the warnings in news bulletins.

Some roads were closed by Sheriff's department officers before residents knew there was a fire, suggesting that the warning system did not work well in the initial stages.

When the fire put up smoke mid morning on the Ponderosa Way, about five kilometres out of town, retired power worker Tom Carter might have been among the first to see it, from the ridge he lives on. He saw the smoke and drove to Ponderosa Way immediately. The fire was just getting started at 10:30 am.

Someone alerted California Fire and the local fire trucks raced through town with their sirens on.

"You have to let the community know what's going on," said Mr Carter. He hit Facebook, loaded pictures, and began chatting. "A picture is worth a thousand words, everyone reposted the pictures. I've convinced many people to get on Facebook and help each other," he said.

"Word of mouth is important," he said.

Christine Case is the post manager. She tucks herself away in a weatherboard building five and half days a week. The post office in the US is open Saturday mornings, and there's a terrific public battle on between the government, which wants to reduce costs, and the community, which wants Saturday deliveries.



*Christine Case and Tom Warner outside the Manton Post office.*

Her first warning was on wheels. "I saw the California Forestry fire truck go past, so I knew they'd been alerted. In the next three hours I saw more and more fire trucks," Ms Case said. She debated whether to stay in town and help out, or go home, which is an hour drive away.

The local radio station, K-shasta, 104.3fm, carried a news item about the fire. Ms Case heard the report, but doesn't recall hearing any other radio based warnings. No one called her with advice or questions. "I didn't really know exactly where the fire was," Ms Chase said. "As I left town the California Highway Patrol was closing the roads and I couldn't get back for three days," she said.

Sharon Borden is a frail elderly woman who lives on Ponderosa Way. Someone called her to tell her about the fire. "Word of mouth gets around quickly" Ms Borden said.

Ms Borden expects a call in a situation like this, but is a little confused about where it might come from.



*From L: Sharon Borden and Nancy Neal in Manton's diner.*

She did the first thing everyone does, looked for more information. She turned on the radio and the local fire radio scanner. She alerted friends who lived in a caravan in her back yard, who immediately went to look at the fire. They returned shortly after with good news.

"They said they'd seen the fire and it was moving away," Ms Borden said.

Then the wind changed.

"A law enforcement officer pulled up in my driveway, blasted his siren and said, (she apologises for the language) 'You might want to get the ... out of here or you will die, the fire's less than ten minutes away.'"

"I was going to stay and fight, we have a good defensible space, but he seemed to give me no choice," she said.

"I have a lot of faith. I am a member of St John's Orthodox Church, and my house is heavily blessed. I was told by a monk from the local monastery that my house would always be safe," she said.

Sharon relies quite a bit on her friend, Nancy Neal, who lives 30 minutes away.

"I wanted to call Sharon as soon as I knew there was a fire. I called her, the store, the fire station, the diner and I couldn't get through on any of the phones. I was scared to death.

"It was very upsetting, so I drove down, but the roads were closed," Ms Neal said.

Sharon's home paddock was burned; one of her three goats died, 40 chickens perished in their shed, and the corner of her house was damaged, before the fire fighters doused the flames.



*Regrowth, Ponderosa Way, six weeks after the August 2012 bushfires.*

The fire occurred on the day of the Manton roast, an annual thanksgiving style event where the whole town comes together.

Sue and Gary Young, who owned a fly fishing tourist venture about 10.5 kilometers east of the town, were not at the roast, but a lot of people they would normally expect a message from, were. The day was quiet for them.

Sue described her home in the forest quite lovingly: "Our property consisted of dams and trees, firs, oaks, cedars, historic apples and pines.

"These were full grown trees some more than 150 years old. They'd never been in a fire," she said.

They listened to the fire radio scanner and knew there was a fire in the area somewhere. "The scanner doesn't have anything specific about fires or their locations," said Ms Young, "we never knew which way the fire was coming from."

But previous experience and many years living in the area meant that Gary was not overly concerned.

"Normally in these parts," he says, "if a fire was four miles away we'd have a couple of days to prepare. We've had false alarms and I wasn't overly concerned." They continued to look for signs of fire, but they didn't receive any warnings.

But suddenly they saw the flames about a kilometre away. "We only had 20-30 minutes to prepare and get out," Mr Young said.

The house and ten outbuildings were destroyed. "We built the house in 1981. It was redwood, with a fire retardant asphalt roof, but it didn't quite work the way it has been planned.

"It looks like the surface of the moon there now. But the fish are still there," he said.

Gary and Sue are still wondering if they will rebuild.



Gary and Sue Young in Julia Pritchard's diner.

Fanned by strong winds, the fire raced towards the regional centre, Shingletown, and its outlying development community of Lake Macumber.

It was moving so quickly that evacuations were ordered that afternoon.

Shingletown farmer Elaine Wusstig lives seven kilometres west of the town, and was never threatened. "When I saw that big plume of smoke I thought Mt Lassen had blown up," Ms Wusstig recalls.

"I would have thought I would get a reverse 911 call or something like that, but we didn't get any warnings at all," she said.

Majka Hikel is a real estate agent at Shingletown. She was in her office all day. She lives at the Lake Macumber development, among 200 or so houses each deep in the forested area.

"I closed the office at 4pm, and it



Farmer Elaine Wusstig in Shingletown serves Julia Pritchard, owner of Manton's diner.

was mostly clear blue skies on the way home. But when I got home debris started falling from the sky.

"It was chunks of branches and small embers," Ms Hikel said.

They received a 911 call suggesting they consider evacuating, and they began preparing. "It took another couple of hours, and I did it so fast, I left my make-up bag," she said.

A mandatory evacuation alert was phoned through at 6pm and they left to go to a friend's house.

"The fire looked very close, and we were very scared," Ms Hikel said.

They turned the radio on and listened to information throughout the night and the next day. A total of 56 homes were destroyed between Manton and Shingletown but the big subdivisions were saved.

"We have an awesome fire fighting service," says Ms Hikel. Her home wasn't damaged.



## CONCLUSION

The wild fire threat to Manton, and eventually Lake Macumber and Shingletown, was very similar to that experienced in Australia every summer.

Initially local emergency agencies tried to deal with the event alone, and only when it became clear they would not control the fire, did the control escalate to County level, and eventually to the State Warning Centre. At this time the full resources of the state were brought to bear and widespread warnings were issued using the emergency alert system. The statewide council also



A sign on Ponderosa Way near where the Manton fire started.

created a blog and all available information was brought to one location, although no one in these communities mentioned they visited the site for information. It did however contain comprehensive and immediate information that the news media used to good effect. The local K-Shasta radio station was not staffed on the weekend and did not automatically carry the warnings.

The best warning therefore initially came from families and friends, and it proves again how important it is to have a well connected and motivated community able to act even when there is no official warning.

In the absence of any other warning, the evacuation notices delivered from the state warning centre via the telephone alert service were effective.

In Australia, ABC Local Radio would have been available to issue alerts and warnings should the incident controller create them. This would have resulted in warnings being disseminated while the fire was at Manton. ABC Local Radio would automatically issue warnings on line and social media.

The comprehensive Inciweb blog created by the State Warning Centre is an advance on the Australian experience where police, fire, ambulance and others create their own sites, and busy, or even sometimes extremely stressed residents, have to visit numerous sites seeking comprehensive information.

*To be continued in National Emergency Response Journal Spring 2013 edition.* ●

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Ian Mannix is the Manager Emergency Broadcasting and Community Development on ABC Local Radio, Collinswood, South Australia. View his blog at [www.forewarned.info](http://www.forewarned.info)





# VICTORIAN PRESIDENT'S REPORT

## Annual General Meeting of the Victorian Division of the Australian Institute of Emergency Service Inc

7:30 pm 10 May 2013

Club Ringwood, Crn Maroondah Highway and Oban Rd, Ringwood, Victoria  
Park View Room

### AGENDA ITEMS

Welcome distinguished guests, members, ladies and gentlemen, to the 2013 Annual General Meeting of the Victorian Division of the Australian Institute of Emergency Services. Safety issues for evacuation, bar and toilets and other arrangements.

**Victorian Division:** Committee members. Alan Marshall, Grant Coultman-Smith, Ian Munro, Bruce Dickie, registrar, Alan Alder. Alan set in place the arrangements for tonight but he is an apology this evening due to his recent hand operations.

**Apologies:** There are 17 Apologies for tonight's meeting.

**Minutes 2012 Vic AGM:** Were published in the NER magazine, Winter Edition 2012.

### Matters arising from previous

**Minutes:** No matters on minutes.

Moved: John Crennan

**Membership:** There was one Vic. Div. member listed in the Australia Day Honours.

Mr Anthony (Tony) Scott OXFORD, ASM, CSTJ, MAIES Vic Div.

As National President I posted a letter congratulating Tony on his award of the Ambulance Service Medal on behalf of the National Council.

The membership for 2013 is 116 up 10 new members from 2012. I thank all members for their continued support and interest in the Australian Institute of Emergency Services. I encourage you all to contribute articles to your NER Magazine.

**Treasurers Report:** I table copies tonight, and I sign a copy for our AGM records.

An audited original has been sent to the National Council. Moved as is: Ian Munro

**Election of Office Bearers:** There were no other nominations for office bearers up for re-election, Alan Marshall, Grant Coultman-Smith, Ian Munro, so the incumbents are re-elected.

**Dates of Meetings:** National AGM will be held Adelaide on 17 July 2013 .

The Victorian Division AGM for 2014 will be held in the first quarter of 2014.

**Other Business:** I welcome our guest speaker for this evening:

Associate/Professor Brett Aimers, Officer of St John, Fellow of the Australian College on Nursing, Registered Nurse and a Member of the Victorian Division of the Australian Institute of Emergency Services. (OSTJ, FACN, RN, MAIES)

Brett is Chief Professional Officer for St John Ambulance and an Assistant Director with the Australian Emergency Management Institute within the National Security Training Education and Development Branch.

He is a Fellow of the Australian College of Nursing and a Clinical Associate Professor with Australian Catholic University in recognition of his expertise in emergency management and clinical leadership. Brett has a keen interest in disaster health, volunteer leadership and holds a number of visiting and Adjunct appointments including at Flinders University within the Centre for Disaster Health.

Tonight, Brett will be talking about the emerging role of 'health' as a traditional component of emergency management today and how St John Ambulance, as a unique health service, responds from a national level in response to a large scale emergency.

**A/Professor Brett Aimers OSTJ, FACN, RN, MAIES**



Ian Munro's comments re speaker: Associate/Professor Brett Aimers

The presentation was very informative and it showed how St John has restructured Australia wide to be a national organisation, with state autonomy, yet able to be expanded as required from their national body through the team at St John Headquarters in ACT on request.

There are clear lines of communication on training, structure, and radio frequencies, common across the Australian division of St John. A coordinated body able to respond with advanced first aid and medical support and a stand-alone radio communications network.

Also in Victoria, St John has just started a new stand-alone business in non-urgent patient care transport operating under contract with Ambulance Service Victoria. St John continues to be active in its core business of saving lives through first aid in the community and through its schools program of teaching first aid to save lives.

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 9:50 pm. ●

# **Indigenous Training Australia Pty Ltd**

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Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Postcode \_\_\_\_\_

Position/Title \_\_\_\_\_

Statement of experience and qualifications. (Note: Applicants may supply extra, relevant information and attach it hereto)

**Experience (as an Emergency Officer/Worker)**

From	TO	Appointment/Position	Duty/Responsibility

**Emergency Training Courses**

Institution	Course/Year	Results (where applicable)

**Qualifications (Degrees, Diplomas, etc)** \_\_\_\_\_

**Decorations/Awards etc** \_\_\_\_\_

**Referees** (Persons who have known me for several years and can give evidence of my character and background)

Name	Address	Phone	Email
(1) _____	_____	_____	_____
(2) _____	_____	_____	_____

I declare the above particulars to be true and hereby agree to be bound by the Constitution, By-Laws and Code of Ethics of the Institution)

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

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**For Office Use** Application recommended: Member  Associate  Student  Corporate Affiliate   
 Fee Received  Receipt No: \_\_\_\_\_ Divisional Registrar \_\_\_\_\_

Completed Application forms with fees should be forwarded to the Division Registrar in the State where you normally reside. Further information may also be obtained by contacting your Division Registrar or General Registrar of the Institute at the following addresses:

#### **NATIONAL COUNCIL**

The General Registrar  
Australian Institute of Emergency Services (General Council)  
Post Office Box 710, Spit Road, Spit Junction, NSW 2088  
Ph: (02) 9968 1226  
Email: registrar@aies.net.au  
National Web Site: www.aies.net.au

#### **AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY**

The Registrar – ACT Division of Australian Institute of Emergency Services. PO Box 504, Civic Square ACT 2601  
Email: registrar.act@aies.net.au

#### **NEW SOUTH WALES AND NEW ZEALAND**

The Registrar – NSW Division of Australian Institute of Emergency Services. PO Box 695, Haberfield NSW 2045  
Email: registrar.nsw@aies.net.au

#### **QUEENSLAND**

The Registrar – QLD Division of Australian Institute of Emergency Services. PO Box 590 Fortitude Valley, QLD 4006  
Email: registrar.qld@aies.net.au

#### **SOUTH AUSTRALIA, WESTERN AUSTRALIA AND NORTHERN TERRITORY**

The Registrar – SA Division of Australian Institute of Emergency Services. PO Box 10530 Adelaide Business Centre, SA 5000  
Email: registrar.sa@aies.net.au,

#### **TASMANIA**

The Registrar – TAS Division of Australian Institute of Emergency Services. PO Box 1 Lindisfarne, TAS 7015  
Email: registrar.tas@aies.net.au

#### **VICTORIA**

The Registrar – VIC Division of Australian Institute of Emergency Services. C/O 44 Webb St, Warrandyte, VIC 3113  
Email: registrar.vic@aies.net.au

#### **THE INSTITUTE'S AIMS**

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.

#### **THE INSTITUTE'S OBJECTIVES**

- To raise the status and advance the interests of the profession of emergency management and counter disaster services administration.
- To represent generally the views and interests of the profession and to promote a high standard of integrity and efficiency in the skills of emergency and counter disaster administration.
- To provide opportunities for association among members and students to promote and protect their mutual interest.
- To facilitate full interchange of concepts and techniques amongst members.
- To bring to the notice of the public such matters that are deemed to be important for safety and protection of the community and to promote research and development of emergency services generally.
- To establish a national organisation to foster international
- co-operation in counter-disaster services administration.

#### **THE INSTITUTE OFFERS**

- An opportunity to be part of a progressive Australia-wide Institute dedicated to the progression and recognition of the Emergency Service role in the community.
- An independent forum where you can be heard and your opinions shared with other emergency service members.
- A journal with information from institutes and other sources around the world in addition to the interchange of views between Divisions in Australia, as well as access to the Institute website.
- Reduced fees for members at Institute Seminars and Conferences and an information service supplied by professional experienced officers.
- A Certificate of Membership.

- The opportunity to use the initials of the particular membership status after your name.
- Corporate members receive a bronze plaque free of charge and can advertise on the AIES website, as well as provide articles for inclusion in the Institute's journal.

#### **MEMBERSHIP**

Costs  
Nomination Fee: \$20.00  
Annual Subscription: \$50.00  
Fellows: \$60.00  
Corporate Subscription: \$250.00  
Note: Institute Fees may be tax deductible.

#### **Classes**

There are four classes of membership:

- Members • Fellows • Life Fellows • Corporate

There are five categories of affiliation with the Institute that may be offered to persons who do not meet the requirements for membership:

- Associate • Student Member • Retired Member
- Honorary Member • Honorary Fellow

#### **Eligibility**

Applications for membership will be considered from persons who are at least eighteen years of age and who:

- Are members of a permanent emergency service or associated service, or
- Are volunteer members of emergency or associated services.

Admission as a member may be granted if in the opinion of the General Council the applicant meets all other conditions of membership and passes such examinations and/or other tests as may be required by General Council.

#### **MEMBERS**

Our members come from

- Ambulance Service • Community Services • Emergency Equipment Industry • Emergency Management Organisations
- Fire Services • Health, Medical and Nursing Services • Mines Rescue • Police Service • Safety Officers • SES • Transport Services
- Volunteer Marine Rescue • Volunteer Rescue Associations





# AIES CONTACTS

## GENERAL ENQUIRIES

Email: [enquiries@aies.net.au](mailto:enquiries@aies.net.au)

The General Registrar  
Post Office Box 710  
Spit Road,  
SPIT JUNCTION NSW 2088

## NATIONAL COUNCIL

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Phone: 0428 308 008

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Phone: 0488 204 043

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Robert Maul LFAIES, JP  
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## VICTORIA

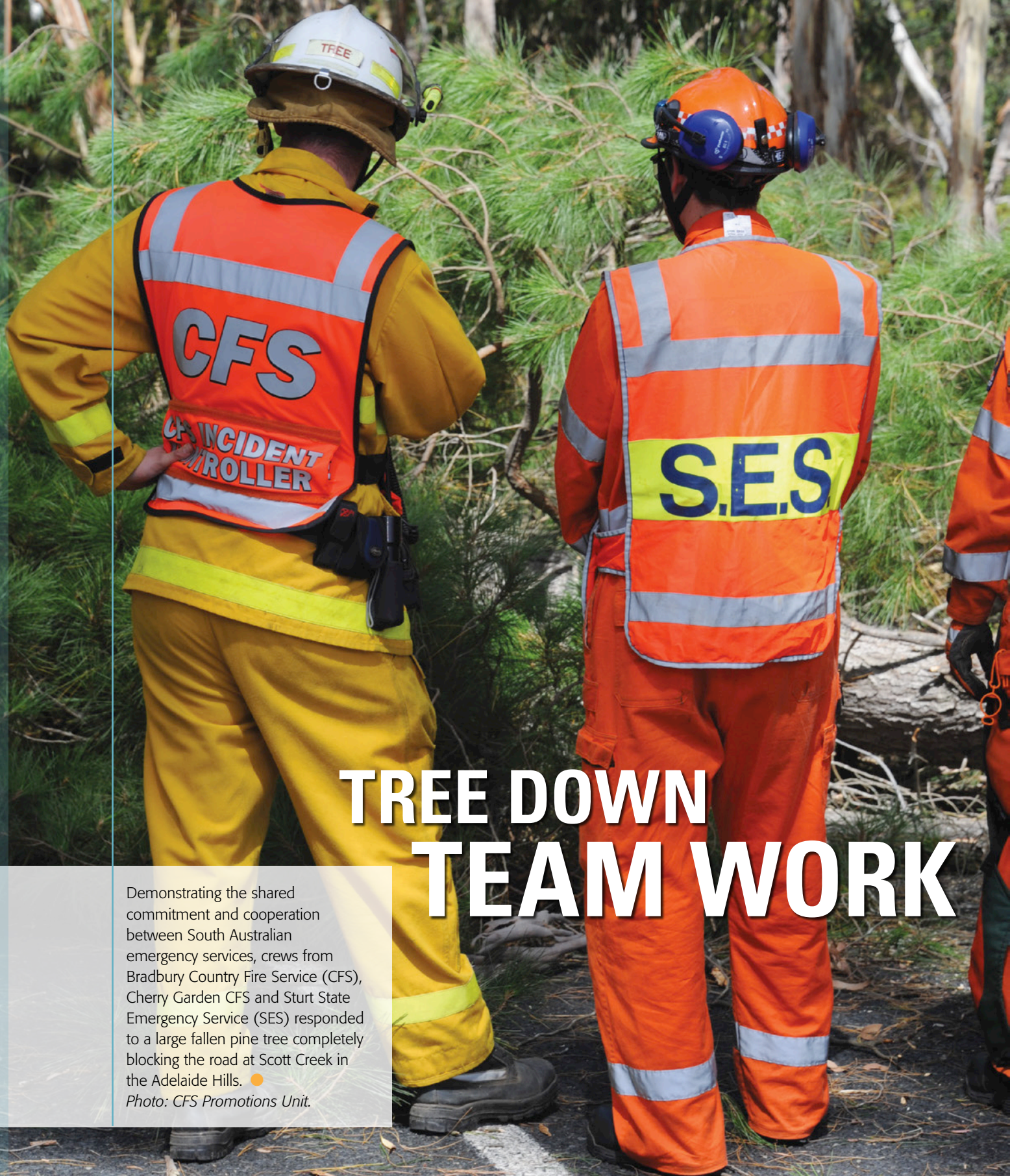
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## NATIONAL EMERGENCY RESPONSE JOURNAL

Editor  
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Phone: 0407 366 466





# TREE DOWN TEAM WORK

Demonstrating the shared commitment and cooperation between South Australian emergency services, crews from Bradbury Country Fire Service (CFS), Cherry Garden CFS and Sturt State Emergency Service (SES) responded to a large fallen pine tree completely blocking the road at Scott Creek in the Adelaide Hills. ●

*Photo: CFS Promotions Unit.*





**Blue Light** brings police and youth together to provide young people with positive lifestyle alternatives and strategies to avoid becoming an offender or victim of crime. Visit [www.bluelight.org.au](http://www.bluelight.org.au) and [www.bluelight.co.nz](http://www.bluelight.co.nz) for more info.

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- Free from alcohol
- Free from drugs
- Free from anti-social behaviour
- and FUN!



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**bluelight**

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[www.bluelight.co.nz](http://www.bluelight.co.nz)

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