

# NATIONAL EMERGENCY

## RESPONSE

Official Journal of the Australasian Institute of Emergency Services



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# NATIONAL EMERGENCY RESPONSE



Official Journal of the Australian Institute of Emergency Services

Autumn 2022 • National Emergency Response

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NSW SES Manly Unit -  
Pittwater Road, Manly



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# NEW MEMBERS

The Australasian Institute of Emergency Services is pleased to announce the following emergency services people joined the AIES between November 2021 and March 2022.

NAME	DIVISION	ORGANISATION
Nathan Barclay	NSW	Service NSW
Nicholas Berry	NSW	Royal Australian Navy
Scott Bulliman	NSW	Seimens
James Burnett	NSW	Department of Primary Industries
Matt Campbell	SA/WA	Rio Tinto
Jason Carr	NSW	Department of Health
Ian Colless	NSW	Police
Paul Copeland	VIC	SES
James English	VIC	Australian Volunteer Coast Guard
Mathew Hopwood-Glover	VIC	Fire Rescue Victoria
Benjamin Leslie	NSW	Disaster Relief Australia
Cougar-Jack Lubach	QLD/NT	Rural Fire Service (QLD)
Andrew McLachlan	NSW	Rural Fire Service
Nathan Moore	QLD/NT	Surf Life Saving (QLD)
Cameron Morrison	QLD/NT	St John Ambulance
Lyndon Pace	NSW	Rural Fire Service and St John Ambulance
Carl Peterson	QLD/NT	Moreton Bay Regional Council
Gregory Pringle	VIC	St John Ambulance
Steven Riley	VIC	CFA
Jasmine Royds	QLD/NT	Queensland Health
Michael Shapland	QLD/NT	SES
Leon Smith	TAS	SES
Blake Ulyatt	SA/WA	Discover Medical Service



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<https://au.linkedin.com/company/australian-institute-of-emergency-services> or log in at [au.linkedin.com](https://au.linkedin.com) and search for 'Australian Institute of Emergency Services' under 'Companies'.

Articles, photographs and short stories are sought for the *National Emergency Response Journal*. Please submit items for the next edition to [editor@aies.net.au](mailto:editor@aies.net.au) by **27 June 2022**. There is an annual award for the best article submitted by an AIES member.

## AUSTRALASIAN INSTITUTE OF EMERGENCY SERVICE

# NOTICE OF 2022 AGM

The 2022 AGM of the Australasian Institute of Emergency Services will be held on Saturday 9 April 2022 at 6pm at the Holiday Inn, O'Riordan Street, Mascot, Sydney, followed by a social dinner and address by guest speaker. The AGM will be a hybrid event.

The order of business will be:

- 1 Welcome
- 2 Apologies
- 3 Proxies – Confirmation of the financial status of members on line
- 4 Minutes of the 2021 Hobart AGM, matters arising/adoption
- 5 National President's Report
- 6 Financial Report by National Treasurer
- 7 Notices of Motion
- 8 Presentation of AIES Awards
- 9 2023 National AGM date and location

At the conclusion of the AGM an address will be given by our guest speaker, Mr Andrew Gissing. The topic will be "The creation of catastrophe risk and the reimagining of disaster management". Andrew is the General Manager and Director of Risk Frontiers, a natural hazards research and development company. He previously held the position of Deputy Chief Officer/Director Emergency Management and Communications with the Victoria State Emergency Service. His address will also be broadcast by virtual means for members who are unable to attend the AGM physically.

The virtual link is via Zoom:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/3071251695>

Passcode **132500**

**Jim Pullin**

Company Secretary



# FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

Robert (Bob) **Maul**, LFAIES, JP (NSW)

*National President*

**A**fter an exhausting two years of lockdowns due to the COVID-19 virus, our emergency management operatives were again put to the test to deal with a further variant of this disease, the Omicron strain.

Although of lesser virulence, nonetheless Omicron proved to be a much more transmissible disease, with many more of our population catching the virus thus putting an incredible strain on our hospital, medical, ambulance, nursing and health services throughout Australia, including many more ancillary business and government enterprises as well as transport, grocery, pharmaceutical and dental services.

Fortunately, the advent of Omicron came after a vast majority of Australians had been doubly vaccinated and many had also received a booster injection. Our citizens should be very thankful for the sustained support given over a two-year period by tens of thousands of dedicated emergency management professional operatives at federal, state and local levels.

Without this prolonged support the casualty count and death rate would have been significantly higher. We, as a nation, owe these emergency management staff members a great deal of thanks as well as admiration for the wonderful support they gave to the public.

At the time of writing this report the Omicron variant was infecting many more individuals in every state, but there were signs throughout the country that the number of citizens being infected was dramatically lessening. Hopefully, at the time of my next report, the number of persons being infected will have significantly diminished, with the result that our nation will start to get back to full normality.

In recognition of the services rendered by both AIES members and other emergency management staff the Board of the Institute has given awards to individuals who performed meritorious service to the community

during the two years of the after an exhausting two years of lockdowns due to the COVID-19 pandemic crisis. These awards are well deserved, and, no doubt, State Division Committees of the AIES will recommend others for appropriate AIES awards in 2022.

The year 2021 presented some challenges to the National Board of the Institute due to the lockdowns imposed by both federal and state governments. Several scheduled conferences were either cancelled or were able to be conducted by virtual means, and this allowed some of our members to participate and attend. Furthermore, our State Division Committee Meetings and AGMs had to be held by virtual applications thus limiting physical attendance.

Nonetheless, I am pleased to advise that a significant number of individuals from various states applied for membership of the Institute and were admitted as members. Again, the emergency management qualifications of those who applied were of a high



standard, and the Institute welcomes the applicants aboard as members. The Board looks forward to their contributions to the Institute in the future.

In the past months a significant number of AIES members have been issued with their years of service/membership lapel badges which range from five years to 40 years of membership. Of noteworthiness, is the fact that many of these members received their 30 and 40-years membership lapel badges including ancillary certificates. The National Board and I wish to congratulate these



*Floods, Melbourne, January 2022*





Floods, SA & NT, January 2022

members for their service to, and membership of, the organisation for such lengthy periods.

The AIES AGM will be held at 6pm at the Holiday Inn Hotel, O' Riordan Street, Mascot on Saturday 9 April 2022, followed by a dinner and a presentation by a senior NSW State Emergency Management operative. To provide all our members throughout Australia with an opportunity to participate in the 2022 AGM, and listen to the presentation afterwards, the Board intends to broadcast both sessions by virtual means. Details of the link are shown on the AGM agenda included in this edition of NER. Those that attend the AGM in person are cordially welcome.

Floods of a magnitude of occurrence of once-in-a-200-year period caused massive damage to rail, roads, and vital utilities, including homesteads over a vast area stretching from the Northern Territory to the whole of central and south Australia in January 2022. A deep low-pressure system which had little movement resulted in torrential rain which lasted for over two weeks, eventually also impacting large areas of Victoria with consequential severe flash flooding of many suburbs in central and eastern regions of this state, including Melbourne.

The weather system that brought these floods resulted in billions of dollars' worth of damage to many townships and rural areas in South Australia; and many local government areas were isolated for several weeks necessitating large-scale food drops and provision of other vital commodities, particularly in central South Australia.

As usual, emergency services personnel from many entities worked tirelessly over extended periods providing much-needed assistance to isolated communities. The Institute commends the many emergency services personnel and volunteers from the various emergency management agencies for their efforts and professional assistance rendered to those impacted by the severe inundation, and members of the AIES National Board and Division Emergency Management Committees are sure that their efforts will be much appreciated and recognised by the communities in those areas that were flood affected.

Late last year the National Board following representations signed another MOU with the Women in Emergency Network. This organisation promotes and supports the contribution of women in emergencies and disasters, building stronger and more resilient individuals and communities. Our National Vice President Christine Miller is an active member of this organisation. The AIES is proud to have an association with this body.

It is appropriate to mention here that the Board recently elevated the status of Mr Graeme Tomkinson to that of a Fellow of the Institute. Graeme's association with the emergency services goes back to 1968 when he became a volunteer member of the NSW State Emergency Services and Civil Defence Organisation, and he has maintained that association until today. He has been the Local Controller for the Bankstown Local Government area for over 13 years and

30 years as the Deputy Commander of that unit. He has been a member of the AIES since 1978. He was appointed as a Region Emergency Management Officer for various NSW Police Service Regions from 1990 until his retirement in 2020.

Of course, it would be remiss of me not to also mention that Craig Ronan, ESM, a senior officer with the NSW SES and a long-time member of the AIES, also had his status elevated to that of a Fellow of the Institute last December. Craig has been a member of the NSW SES for 34 years and currently performs the appointment of Co-ordinator of Hazard Planning for the NSW Western and Southern Zones. He was awarded the Australian Emergency Services Medal in 2007 for meritorious service to the SES both as a permanent and voluntary member. The Board welcomes the elevation of these members in status to that of a Fellow of the Institute.

May I also on behalf of our Board congratulate Mr Sven Nillson, Mr Dwight Robinson, (NSW Health Services) and Inspector Mike Corby, Inspector James Logan and Chief Superintendent Ben Pickup (NSW SES) who the Board will present with AIES awards at the next AGM for the meritorious service they provided to the public during the COVID-19 pandemic period in the years 2020/21, and fire-fighting support rendered to the British Columbia Fire Service in Canada in 2021 during the devastating fires that occurred in this Canadian province last year.

I look forward to catching up with our members during the conduct of the 2022 AGM. ●



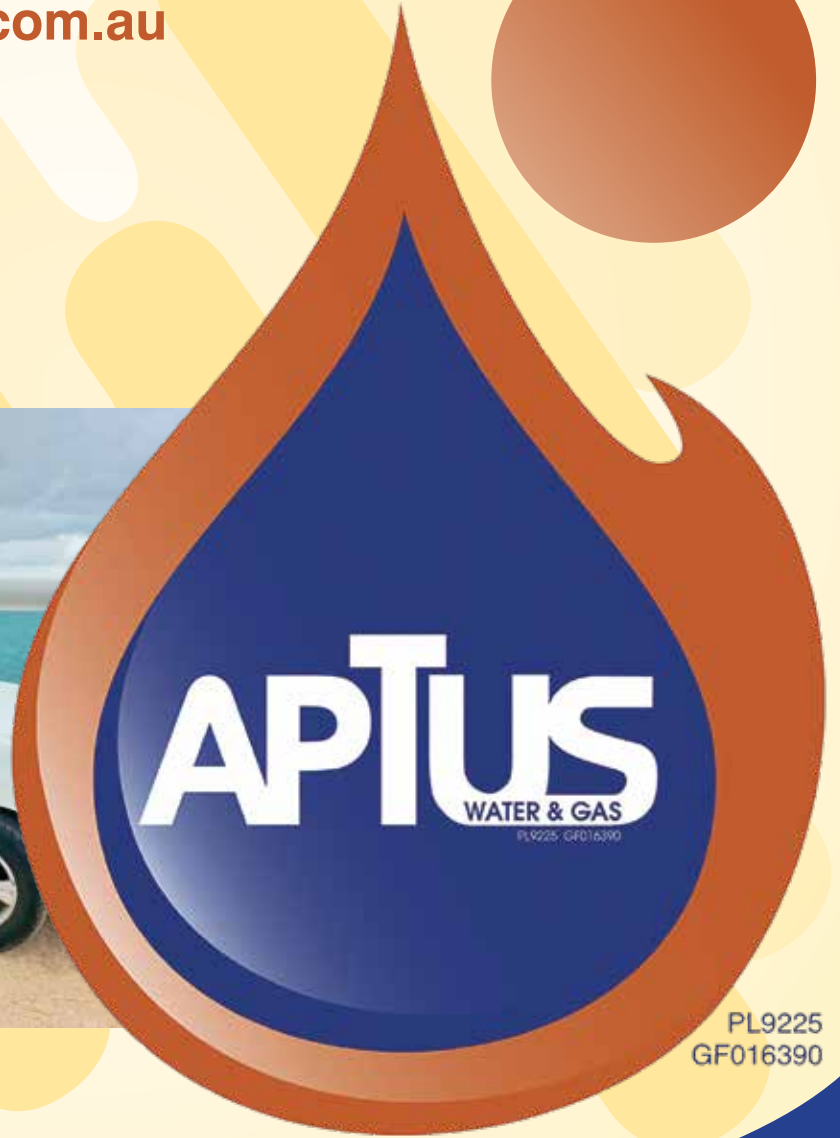
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# TONY'S TREK FOR MENTAL HEALTH

A walk covering 1440 kilometres will raise vital awareness of mental health in the emergency services sector.

Story courtesy of **CFA Victoria**

**C**hair of the Emergency Services Foundation and Inspector-General for Emergency Management Tony Pearce will start 'Tony's Trek' on 30 September 2022, a 54-day solo walk.

The walk will begin at the State Control Centre in Melbourne, from where Tony will head to Mallacoota, across the Alpine Range to Wodonga and back to Melbourne.

Throughout the course of the walk, Tony will travel through many areas impacted by the 2019-2020 bushfires – recognising the impact that severe fire events such as these can have on emergency services workers and community members alike.

Tony's Trek aims to raise awareness and support for building collaborative sector-wide mental health led by the Emergency Services Foundation (ESF).

Tony said the walk was inspired by his own experiences in the emergency services sector.

"Over my career, I've seen way too many people who have suffered trauma as a result of the work they've done in the emergency services sector," he said.

"Unfortunately, some of those people have taken their own lives, and many of them who haven't have gone on to suffer significant problems throughout their careers, and many of them well into retirement, and that's just a terrible shame."

Tony said that prevention is just as important as treatment.

"It's important though that we don't just think about treating people who have actually already suffered an injury. We've actually got to start thinking more about the preventative side and actually trying to stop people getting into a situation where they're so badly affected in the first place.

"That's why I'm so passionate about the work that the ESF is doing



with agencies to help prevent the impacts of mental health injury on our workforce."

Funds raised from Tony's Trek will be used to help ESF run two prevention-focused mental health initiatives – a Lived Experience Program and Pilot Residential Wellbeing Program.

"We're certain that both of these initiatives will have a significant impact and a significant benefit to the 125,000

paid and volunteer staff that we have working in the emergency services sector," Tony said.

"Too often they come away from their work deeply affected by what they've seen and what they do and we need to get on top of that."

The walk was officially launched on 18 February. To find out more about Tony's Trek, visit the ESF website [www.esf.com.au](http://www.esf.com.au). ●

# Living with PTSD? We Can Help



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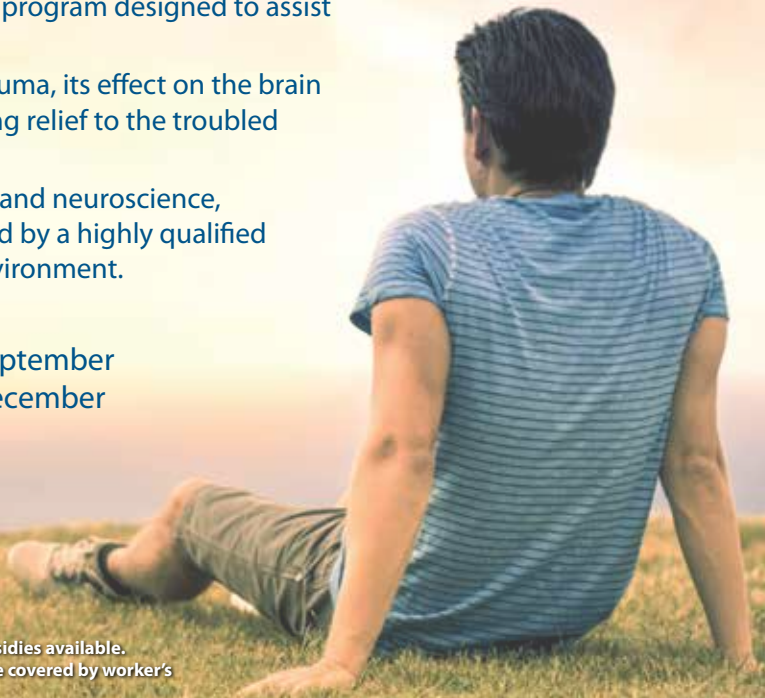
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# YOUNG VICTORIAN WINS SLSA AWARD

Port Melbourne Life Saving Club (LSC) volunteer and multi-tasker Tea-Rose Passon was rewarded for her incredible service to the organisation and to the community by taking out the 2021 National Volunteer of the Year Award.

The award from Surf Life Saving Australia (SLSA) recognises the top volunteer from all clubs across Australia.

Ms Passon holds numerous roles at Port Melbourne LSC, including vice president, patrol director, communications manager, youth development officer, board member, junior committee chair and schools program coordinator, and has played an integral role in engaging and developing youth members and pursuing opportunities to collaborate with other clubs.

The passionate beach-lover joined Port Melbourne LSC in 2014. Last summer (2020-21), she contributed more than 300 patrol and water safety hours while also promoting the *Save Lives Like a Girl* initiative and implementing the club's first Pink Patrol event – a state-wide initiative celebrating women in lifesaving.

Tea-Rose described the award as “an honour” and said her focus was ensuring that every person who visits the beach, goes home.

“The most important thing about being a volunteer is making sure everyone is safe on the beach and at the end of the day, goes home having had a great time,” she said.

Caring for people's wellbeing is ingrained in Tea-Rose's nature. She graduated from a nursing degree at the end of 2021, and teaching and protecting young people is where her heart seems to be.

“I love working with the Nippers and schools' programs and seeing the kids progress from one program to another, many year-after-year,” she said. “I'm also really proud that when I see young people at the beach who have done one of these programs, their sense of safety is just so much better than those who haven't.”



LSV chief executive officer Catherine Greaves applauded Ms Passon for her outstanding dedication to her club and LSV's broader lifesaving movement.

“I am so proud of Tea-Rose for being recognised as SLSA's top volunteer, amongst many other worthy candidates from around the nation, for her immense contribution to Port Melbourne LSC and LSV's wider operations,” Ms Greaves said.

“Tea-Rose's dedication to lifesaving embodies LSV's values of building stronger and safer communities, taking

personal responsibility for betterment, personal development through commitment to lifesaving and being relevant in today's and tomorrow's society.”

The AIES joins LSV in congratulating all nominees and thanks the volunteers for their tireless work helping our communities stay safe in the water. ●

**Chief Executive quotes provided by Life Saving Victoria, visit <https://blog.lsv.com.au/>**

# PREVENTIVE SEARCH AND RESCUE IS A JOINT RESPONSIBILITY

By Steven **Schwartz** MAIES

## INTRODUCTION

Hiking is an important pastime that brings many health benefits. It is also an extremely popular pastime (Dacey, K., Whited, R., & Gonzalez, P., 2021). Part of the appeal of hiking is the freedom that comes from engaging undeveloped wilderness environments. This lack of undeveloped environment comes with a lack of safety restraints. This means that wilderness users must accept some risk. Over the past 18 months I have spoken to several people that have been brave enough to share their lost stories with me. Three of my key learnings from these people are that effective prevention is phase-based, that prevention is a joint responsibility, and that prevention should come from listening to wilderness users.

## THE STUDY

I am a full-time PhD candidate at James Cook University in Cairns studying preventive search and rescue. This involves meeting with people that have been lost in the Australian wilderness or have been impacted by lost events. Through a series of interviews, I have heard in their own words what went right, what went wrong and would could be done to stop the frequency and severity of lost person events.

Roughly one-third of the lost people were female, two-thirds were male. The youngest was in his early 20s and the oldest in her mid-70s. Some of the lost people had been geographically disorientated and some people had been incapacitated due to injury. They had all been engaging in recreational wilderness activities at the time of their lost person incidents. Some had been on short day hikes, some on planned multi-day excursions. Some had been alone, others had company. Some were well equipped, some less well



*The author and colleagues about to commence search operations.*



*Search operations on Mt Bartle Frere.*

equipped. Some managed to self-rescue, others had to rely on rescue agents such as police, SES and rescue helicopter services. Some people were very experienced, others less so. All were capable, intelligent, recreational wilderness users looking for a good time who ended up in trouble in the wilderness.

## LEARNING OUTCOMES

Three key learning outcomes I have found are that lost person events happen in phases, that prevention should be a joint responsibility and that prevention should include the voice of wilderness users.

## LOST EVENT PHASES

In the winter of 2020 I suggested that we should take a phase-based approach to understanding lost person events (Schwartz, 2020). My interviews with lost people have identified six phases. These phases are pre-departure, pre-event, trigger, lived lost experience, rescue and recovery. The pre-departure phase occurs before a person leaves for their wilderness adventure. The pre-event phase occurs once they leave the trailhead and enter the wilderness. The trigger is what causes the person to become lost. The rescue is how they become unlost, and the recovery is how they

heal physically and psychologically. Each of these phases represents opportunities for hikers, wilderness managers, and others to help reduce lost person trauma.

## JOINT RESPONSIBILITY

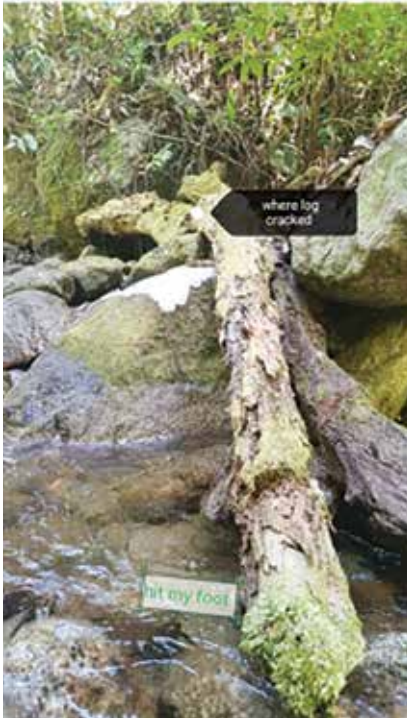
It is common to hear that lost wilderness users only have themselves to blame. This is not true and not helpful. All the lost people in this study are intelligent, capable people that enjoy the wilderness, and most have had a reasonable degree of wilderness experience. What's more it has been proven beyond doubt that this 'blame the hiker' mentality has little value in preventive search and rescue (Kortenkamp et al. 2017).

So, if it's not the hikers fault they got lost then who is responsible? There are two answers to this question. First the prevention opportunities and responsibilities depend on the phase of the lost experience. The second and more overarching answer to the question of responsibility is that it is a joint responsibility. As one rescue pilot told me, "We are all responsible" (HEMS operator, 2021).

With a bit of creative thinking, we can see co-operative prevention opportunities through each phase. During the pre-departure phase we can focus on education. During the







Even the most experienced hikers can have bad days.



Search helicopter photo taken by a lost person in Central Australia.



A lot of lost people seek to upgrade their navigation skills post rescue.



Injured hiker recovering post rescue.

pre-event phase we can provide well maintained tracks. Triggers can be addressed by looking at general and site-specific aspects. Rescues can be improved by making self-rescue easier and by learning from people that have needed help. Recovery can look to the specific physical and psychological needs of recovering lost parties. This approach also offers the opportunity to develop feedback loops to inform future wilderness users.

### LISTEN TO THE CUSTOMERS

If we take a customer-focused approach to lost person prevention and recovery this could be a real game changer. If we want to get serious about reducing lost person trauma, we could try to put our own thoughts, biases, and opinions to one side and talk to the people that have needed help. For example, if there is a well-known local hotspot such as a waterfall where people frequently drown then it could be a very good idea to speak to people that are taking unnecessary risks and learn about their attitudes, motivations, and behaviour drivers. It could be that this customer-focused approach is an effective way to learn why risk takers are doing dangerous things. It could even be more effective than increasing signage, threatening prosecution, or waving big sticks.

### CONCLUSIONS

Preventive search and rescue (PSAR) is anything that is done to reduce the frequency and severity of lost person events. PSAR interventions can occur before, during or after lost person events. They can be targeted at individuals, technological environments, natural environments, and broader community bases. They can also be generalised or targeted to high-risk sites or situations.

My hope is that readers of this article can reflect on the three key learnings I have outlined and challenge the narrative of blaming and lecturing hikers. A far more effective preventive search and rescue approach might be to treat wilderness users as intelligent people, to break lost events into phases and to listen to and work with lost people. This way we can cooperatively reduce lost person trauma and make wilderness recreation safer and less stressful for hikers, rescuers, wilderness managers and the wider community.

This method of understanding lost events, understanding lost people, understanding how to communicate with wilderness users and understanding how to change their behaviour could be a powerful tool in prevention. Ultimately the solutions are only restricted by our collective willingness to work cooperatively and think creatively. ●

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### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Steve Schwartz is a researcher with the James Cook University Centre of Disaster Studies. He is also the local controller for the Gordonvale SES Unit in Far North Queensland where he has been involved in numerous search and rescue operations. He is passionate about outdoor recreation and safety. He holds a Bachelor of Business and a Master's degree in Strategic Management. He is currently combining his academic and emergency services interests to find new ways to reduce lost person trauma.

# CELEBRATING WOMEN IN OUR FIELD

On Tuesday 8 March, emergency services organisations from around the country supported International Women's Day by holding special events within their workplace and by publicly showing support, appreciation and recognition for the women who serve and protect our communities in times of need.

Each year, International Women's Day celebrates the cultural, political and socio-economic achievements of women and aims to end the prejudice that women still face.

This day has been commemorated around the world on 8 March every year since 2010 but different versions of the day have been celebrated since the early 1900s.

This year's official theme, "Break the Bias", is a call-out to end the prejudice and create a gender equal world that is diverse, equitable and inclusive.

To all the women who volunteer or are employed in fire, ambulance, police and SES – we thank you for your service.

Also, we recognise the women who serve on the AIES National Board and State Divisions and our women members – your contribution is invaluable.

#breakthebias  
#IWD2022



**Victoria SES** ✓  
8 March

"Just wanted to share a fantastic photo taken at the VICSES Greater Dandenong Unit, from a very proud unit Controller. Our Deputy Controller Erin Wallace, provides wonderful leadership to all of our fantastic women at the unit (17 out of approx. 40 active members are women)."

"Women comprise 40% of the VICSES Greater Dandenong Unit Management Team, with a goal to reach 50% by the end of 2023 - hopefully earlier, as we have a number of very capable women at the unit." - Michael Prior, VICSES Greater Dandenong Unit Controller.

This is just one of many stories and photos shared today from our units across the state. Our women in orange play an integral role as part of our emergency services, and the safety of our communities. Thank you today, and every day.  
#IWD2022 #BreakTheBias



**NSW SES** ✓  
8 March

We are incredibly proud this #InternationalWomensDay2022 as we reflect on the phenomenal women supporting our communities through their roles with the NSW SES, and who themselves are "breaking the bias" around the roles women take on in emergency services.

Did you know that 36% of NSW SES memberships are women? We want to take the time to recognise the women of the NSW SES, in all of their roles, who are working with the community and supporting them in times of need, such as the current flooding event.



**Northern Territory Police, Fire and Emergency Services** ✓

8 March

The Northern Territory Emergency Service (NTES) volunteers are ordinary people doing extraordinary things.

In orange, our women are leading teams, responding to requests for assistance after a storm or natural disaster, at road crashes or searching for a missing person.

NTES would like to acknowledge and celebrate all women who contribute to ensuring the safety of our communities in times of emergency and disaster.

At NTES, everyone belongs, everyone has a role.

Become a Northern Territory Emergency Service volunteer now and click the link <https://bit.ly/3CnPytR>

#BreakTheBias #IWD2022







**Department of Fire and Emergency Services WA**

8 March

As part of #InternationalWomensDay we're celebrating the women within our emergency services family.- One such legendary lady in leadership is Melissa Pexton, State Recovery Controller for Tropical Cyclone Seroja. Melissa, who has been leading the way for individuals, families and communities to be supported since April 2021, has said that it's been inspiring, challenging and a privilege to work in the recovery space. Melissa has also shared that she was incredibly humbled to be invited into a community to share in the best and worst of times as they rebuild and recover. Melissa has diligently worked to achieve a leadership position in emergency services at the same time as advocating, championing and encouraging other women to succeed within the emergency services sector. "Given the diverse roles I have held, I have seen firsthand the valuable contributions women make to the industry. I go out of my way to champion and mentor females in our sector as I was always afforded this opportunity. I know it is a game changer to have someone taking an interest in your ideas and career and I enjoy giving back in this way." Thank you to Melissa and our other female colleagues and volunteers for the contributions you make to our communities and the emergency services. #IWD22 Phoebe Pin, Geraldton Guardian



**Queensland Police Service**

8 March

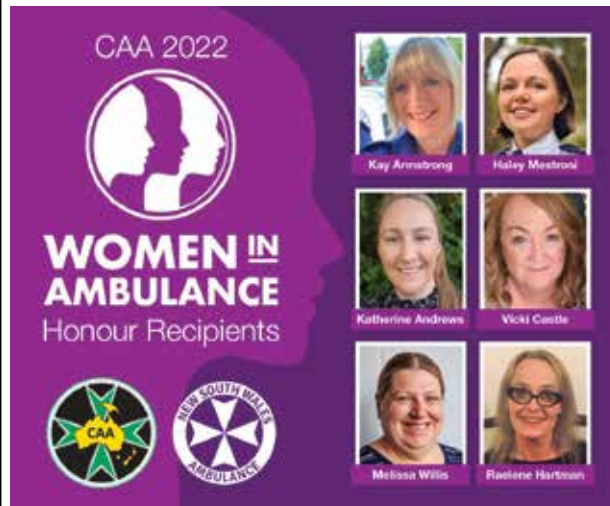
This International Women's Day we are celebrating some incredible women in the QPS



**NSW Ambulance**

8 March

This International Women's Day six women from NSW Ambulance were recognised in the 2022 Council of Ambulance Authorities (CAA) Women in Ambulance awards. Congratulations to Kay Armstrong, Katherine Andrews, Vicki Castle, Melissa Willis, Haley Mestroni and Raelene Hartman. NSW Ambulance has some truly incredible women in its ranks and the experience and leadership this group provides is inspiring. #NSWAmbulance #BreakTheBias



**Tasmania Police**

8 March

It's International Women's Day and we want to recognise all the women in our organisation. We've come a long way since policewomen wore skirts and heels and carried a uniform issued handbag. Now we have women at the forefront of our organisation, leading the way for others to come through the ranks. Policing offers you one job, with many opportunities. If you're ready to find you in blue, apply today! Visit <https://recruitment.police.tas.gov.au/>



# VOLUNTEERS WORK TO SUPPORT FLOOD AFFECTED COMMUNITIES

As Queensland and NSW became severely impacted by floods in late February and into March, emergency services pulled together to help save lives, homes and animals. Other states sent in relief volunteers to help their neighbours. The AIES thanks all of the emergency services personnel and volunteers from the multiple agencies involved in rescue and clean-up activities, and extends its condolences to the families of those who lost their lives during this horrific natural event that has ravaged these communities.

These pictures, and stories, show just some of our heroes at work.

## THIS IS TEAMWORK!

Twenty-five stranded families west of the Hawkesbury River received urgent supplies after storms left them isolated. The community came together to make it happen with Hawkesbury's Helping Hands packing food from their North Richmond depot. Bilpin local Fiona Germaine from Germaine Family Office provided supplies from Woolworths and NSW SES Hawkesbury Unit ensured the goods made their way to local families.



## DON'T FORGET THE CATTLE!

SA State Emergency Service sent 16 staff and volunteers to support various parts of the NSW community including swift water rescue technicians to transport feed for cattle stranded on high ground.



## IT TAKES A VILLAGE!

SES NSW thanks Tasmania SES, WA State Emergency Service and Victoria State Emergency Service who all kindly provided staff and volunteers to help the flood-ridden region. Pictured: SES Victoria volunteers departing for Grafton (NSW) to relieve local crews as part of a general rescue taskforce.

Above photos courtesy of <https://www.facebook.com/NSW.SES>







### HELP NEARBY

Queensland Police set up a mobile help facility for local Oxley residents needing flood assistance.

Photos courtesy of  
<https://www.facebook.com/QueenslandPolice>



### POME-RAIN-IAN

QLD Police rescued a 50-year-old woman, her three dogs and cat after she became isolated after rapidly rising floodwater inundated her South Maclean home.

### FROM FIRE TO FLOOD

Queensland fires responded to more than 650 water rescues over a fortnight with highly-skilled swift water technicians enduring dangerous conditions to help save others.

Photo courtesy of  
[www.facebook.com/QldFireandEmergencyServices](http://www.facebook.com/QldFireandEmergencyServices)



### AMBOS ALWAYS THERE

NSW Ambulance paramedics continued to be there for communities in northern NSW and across the state as the devastating flood emergency unfolded.

Photo courtesy of  
<https://www.facebook.com/NSWAmbulance>

# TASMANIA BROADCASTERS VOLUNTEER EMERGENCY SERVICE AWARDS PRESENTATIONS 2021

Proudly supported and coordinated by the AIES Tasmanian Division

By Ron Jones, LFAIES

*AIES Tasmanian Division President*

The Tasmania Broadcasters Radio Network comprised of eight radio stations around Tasmania - 7XS on the west coast, 7BU-7AD and SeaFM on the north-west coast, LAFM-Chillifm and 7SD in the north and north-east with 7HOFM in Hobart (south).

The Volunteer Emergency Services Awards is divided into each of these regions every year. Winners are automatically nominated for the AIES Tasmanian Division PJ Parssey Memorial Award, which has been running for over 30 years.

The West Coast 7XS Volunteer Emergency Service Award winner was Vicki McKenzie of Zeehan.

Vickie is a Volunteer Ambulance Officer based in Zeehan for over 10 years.

Vickie goes above and beyond the call of duty and has earned the name of Florence Nightingale of the Zeehan and West Coast communities. Vickie will drop whatever she is doing to assist people even if she is not rostered on.

The 7HOFM Southern Region winner of the Volunteer Emergency Service Award was Christine Boonstra, a Volunteer Regional Coordinator of the Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) and Volunteer Ambulance Officer for over eight years who responds to incidents in the South Arm area, south of Hobart.

Christine's responsibilities include managing the volunteers, coordinating rosters, managing training, vehicle and equipment upkeep as well as responding to calls day and night often arriving well before paramedic help arrives from outer Hobart.



*(L-R) 7AD/7BU/SeaFM award presentation night with Felix Ellis MP, award winner Leonie Turner and AIES (Tasmanian Division) Ron Jones.*



*Award winner Leonie Turner with 7AD radio announcers.*

The 7HOFM Radio Station Manager, Greg Scealy, was presented an AIES Certificate of Appreciation for supporting the awards for 10 years.

The 7AD/7BU/SeaFM north-west region winner of the Volunteer Emergency Service Award was Leonie Turner (Shelly) from the Volunteer Marine Rescue, Ulverstone. Leonie joined in 2003 and participated in all areas of the organisation. Leonie became the first female on a rescue crew and pushed for more female recognition within the service. In 2016 Leonie became the first female Commander of a Volunteer Marine Rescue Unit in Tasmania and used her skills to help develop the Power Boat licensing courses with MAST.

She is also an integral part of providing administrative and training support within the Volunteer Marine Rescue Units in Tasmania.

Finally, the LAFM/Chillifm/7SD Volunteer Emergency Service Award. As a part of the radio station celebrating its 10 years of support of our emergency service volunteers, two awards were presented.

The first was a community award to the 100+ SES and Tasmania Fire Service volunteers who supported and conducted quarantine home compliance checks of COVID-19 positive cases, close contacts of positive covid cases as well as state arrivals. All members were presented a Certificate of Appreciation on behalf of the radio station and the





(L-R) 7XS Announcer Cameron Skirving, VESA winner Vickie McKenzie, 7XS Manager Justine Kerr, AIES (Tasmanian Division) President Ron Jones and West Coast Mayor Shane Pitt.



(L-R) AIES (Tasmanian Division) President Ron Jones, VESA winner Vickie McKenzie with husband Felix Ellis MP



LAFM awards night. Pictured: Tasmanian State Emergency Service Covid Response Team.



LAFM awards night. Pictured: Tasmania Fire Service Covid Response Team.



LAFM awards night. Pictured: Joe Bodis with members of Ambulance Tasmania and LAFM/Chilli staff member Marie and Station Manager Natalie Castle.

Tasmanian AIES. This was followed by a barbecue supported by the emergency services. I arrived early for this presentation after being told there were 100 certificates to sign. Had a good case of writer's cramp at the end.

The second winner was Joe Bodis for his 23+ years volunteering with Ambulance Tasmania as well as 17 years with the Tasmanian Fire Service and 20 years with the State Emergency Service. Joe is passionate about helping others and has displayed courage, honour and loyalty to his service and his community and family. His passion has led to influencing his daughter to become a registered nurse.

Congratulations to all our award winners. ●



(L-R) 7HOFM Manager Greg Scealy with our Certificate of Appreciation winner Christine Boonstra and AIES (Tasmanian Division) Ron Jones.



LAFM awards night. Pictured: AIES (Tasmanian Division) President Ron Jones signs 100+ Certificates of Appreciation.





# TASMANIAN PJ PARSSEY MEMORIAL AWARD & RSL TASMANIA EMERGENCY SERVICE AWARDS

By Ron Jones, LFAIES

*AIES Tasmanian Division President*

The 2021 AGM and awards presentation night was held again at the Claremont RSL and well fed by the RSL's Women's Auxiliary with their classic home-style meals.

Tasmanian RSL CEO Noeleen Lincoln and President Robert Dick presented the RSL Emergency Service Awards. Nominees included:

**Laurence Cowle** – a 45+ year volunteer with Tasmania Fire Service. Laurence started his volunteer career at Buckland Fire Brigade where he reached the rank of Brigade Chief before moving to join the Orford Brigade where he filled various roles including the Permit Officer for over 30 years.

**Mike Barranger** – a 44+ year volunteer and paramedic with Ambulance Tasmania. He started as a volunteer and after two years trained as an Intensive Care Paramedic stationed around the north of Tasmania. Mike was a member of various community groups.

**Tony King** – a 33+ volunteer with the Penguin Fire Brigade. He worked his way up to Brigade Chief and was later appointed Leven Group Officer. Tony has also been OH&S & Permit Officer as well as Chair of the Fire Management Committee.

After being presented their personnel awards, Laurence Cowle was announced winner of the RSL Tasmania Emergency Service Worker of the Year.

On this night, the PJ Parssey Award was also presented.

Nominees included the regional award winners (see previous page): Joe Bodis (Ambulance Tasmania Volunteer), Leonie Turner (Volunteer Marine Rescue), Christine Boonstra



(L- R) Front row PJ Parssey award nominees Christine Boonstra, Vicki McKenzie, Leonie Turner (winner) and Joe Bodis. (L-R) Back Row AIES Tasmanian Committee Members David Paton, Ron Jones (President) and Peter Gear.



Tony King with his presentation at the Penguin Fire Station.



(L-R) Mike Barranger, CEO RSL Tasmania Noeleen Lincoln, President RSL Tasmania Robert Dick and RSL Emergency Service Award Winner Laurence Cowle.



Deputy Director of Tasmania SES Leon Alfy Smith was presented with an AIES Challenge Coin and the Tasmanian Special PLUG Award.



Governance and Risk Manager at the Australian Antarctic Division Martin Boyle received a Challenge Coin from Tasmania Division President Ron Jones for his 2021 webinar where he described challenges of managing emergencies in very isolated locations with limited resources.

(Ambulance Tasmania Volunteer) and Vickie McKenzie (Ambulance Tasmania Volunteer).

Betty Parssey announced the 2021 winner of the AIES Tasmania PJ Parssey Memorial Award – Leonie Turner from

the Ulverstone Volunteer Marine Rescue. Congratulations Leonie.

Thanks must go to all involved who made this night a great success and to our hosts, the Claremont RSL and the Ladies Auxiliary. ●



# TO SERVE AND PROTECT

## Bringing diversity to Australia's emergency services

This is part II of Ms Prentice's research paper. Part I was published in this journal's Spring edition (October 2021).

By **Trish Prentice**

*Head Researcher, Scanlon Foundation Research Institution*

### DOES DIVERSITY MATTER?

Emergency service organisations are grappling with Australia's cultural and religious diversity. Strategic thinking about how to draw on this human capital and how such engagement can lead to better outcomes in emergencies is underway. Yet there has been some resistance to change.

A program initiated some years ago highlights some of these barriers.

In 2000, the Fire and Emergency Services Authority of Western Australia (FESA) decided to host a series of workshops for staff on understanding Islam. One local unit wanted to talk to new arrivals from Somalia, Sudan, Iraq and Afghanistan about emergency services and hazards but were unsure how to go about it without being "clumsy."<sup>xvii</sup> Unit members, wanting to build relationships with Muslim community leaders to deliver safety messages, decided to circulate an expression of interest to gauge how many staff might attend professional development to improve their understanding of Islam. The organisers didn't expect the backlash. Emails challenged the need for the activity, since 'standard operating procedures' (SOPs) were applied equally to all people, irrespective of nationality, race or religious beliefs.<sup>xviii</sup> Other staff said, "Why do I need to know anything about someone's religious beliefs? I am saving lives – I treat everyone the same." Another said, "Firefighters deal with all people equally. Nationality, race or religious beliefs do not affect our SOP's...all the public we come into contact with deserve to be, and in fact are, treated the same."<sup>xix</sup>

The question of when and how cultural diversity or difference might play a role in emergency service work is controversial. Some believe it plays little role because individuals are treated equally in an emergency – preserving life takes precedence above all other considerations. Others believe cultural considerations

should be taken into account in an emergency response. One of these is Jared Taylor, Executive Director of the Queensland State Emergency Service Volunteer Association and a long-serving Queensland SES volunteer:

*We are all people and all need to be treated equally but because of differences in culture, our diversity and our individuality, we need to be able to adapt. We need to be able to treat our cultures slightly differently, because they are all different.*

*As an example of this, in some cultures it is not appropriate for men to be left alone with women. Whether we agree or disagree with that is not for us to determine. But to be able to reach those parts of our community we need to have an understanding of that because at the end of the day we still want these people to receive help and to get on the flood boat and be evacuated.*

*There are some communities that are very focused on their elderly and their wellbeing. We need to have systems and processes in place that allow us to understand that and to assist those cultures.*

*Likewise, language is also important. We don't all speak English. We need to be able to adapt to differences so we can provide assistance. We can't expect in a time of crisis for everyone to all of a sudden speak the same language, that's not a reality.*

*We are all unique, we are all diverse, we are all individuals, and in order to reach individuals we have to adapt accordingly.*

Some volunteers can cite times when the cultural capital they brought to an emergency situation did affect the outcome. Ahmad can recall two call-outs where his Sri Lankan cultural background helped. One was a car accident involving Sri Lankans. Ahmad says they were immediately drawn to him: "They started speaking in Sinhalese and asking me

questions." The other was a house fire involving a Sri Lankan family. The family felt comfortable speaking to him and through their conversation, Ahmad was able to convey information back to the fire captain. Similarly, Vivek says people who share his Indian background feel able to approach him easily and to ask him questions.

Whether cultural capital might lead to better emergency service outcomes is intrinsically linked to the question of what level of diversity should be present in the emergency service volunteer ranks. If diversity can or does make a difference, it must exist amongst those who are active in an emergency.

The volunteers agree. Jing says, "Australia has people from lots of different backgrounds so it's good for organisations to have people working there from different backgrounds... They can understand patient needs better."

For some cultural groups, seeing someone visibly 'like them' in the emergency services doesn't just help smooth their interactions or make communication easier. Some communities face big barriers to engaging with emergency service workers. Zulfi says: "In the Afghan community, if someone sees a cop they get scared. They think something is wrong. But when they see me it's a different story."

Chevra Hatzolah, an emergency response team for Melbourne's Jewish Holocaust survivors, was established for this reason. Many elderly members of the Jewish community were reluctant to seek medical help because of a residual fear of people in uniform. Established in 1994, the team, predominantly operated by volunteers, still meets the "cultural, religious and emotional needs" of Melbourne's Jewish community.<sup>xx</sup> Yet given growing demand for paramedic services, Chevra Hatzolah serves all people in its catchment area in partnership with Ambulance Victoria.





## COMPETING PRIORITIES

Another debate within emergency services turns on whether seeking greater diversity in the volunteer ranks is the most important need at the moment. Given declining volunteer numbers, should organisations focus on recruiting diversity or on bolstering volunteer numbers in general?

Barb believes it's not a person's background that should determine whether they are chosen:

*It always strikes me that if the person standing before you has something to give, is suitable and is willing and is a good fit in terms of the culture, then go for it. It doesn't matter if you are blue, green or purple, or if you believe this, that or another thing, or if you eat snails for breakfast. If you can give something and it fits, and if the thing you are trying to fit into is comfortable and good, then what is stopping you?*

A strong advocate for volunteering, Barb believes a person's motivation is the crucial factor:

*Everyone can do a little bit and every little bit counts. I don't think an individual can change the world but an individual can add a drop of water and if enough drops of water fall, then something happens.*

While Jing acknowledges the value of diversity, like Barb, she believes it shouldn't be the first priority:

*People have skills, regardless of their cultural background. If they want to help and have the skills to help, then it is good to have the person in the organisation. It doesn't matter which culture a person comes from.*

Mohammad agrees: "Volunteering should be open to everyone. We don't need to categorise. We need to be open. There should be more campaigning to encourage people in general to volunteer."

## CHALLENGES

Organisations face further challenges in increasing the diversity of their volunteers. They need to have the right environment to foster inclusion. Serving staff and volunteers may need training to expand their understanding of relevant cultural norms or potential barriers to inclusion. There needs to be a welcoming culture<sup>xxi</sup> so that volunteers feel accepted and part of the organisation. The additional support that volunteers from diverse cultural backgrounds may need will take time and resources from organisations that are already stretched. Razi explains this dilemma:

*Inclusivity is great for the community, but not everyone is capable of fostering that inclusion. There needs to be a process or strategy to achieve it. Then you need to hold the volunteers' hands and tell them what to do. You need to communicate and support them step by step. LSV has developed a mentoring system for this. A lot of organisations struggle because they assume. Assumptions can ruin the process and the strategy and cause it to fail. For example, setting a meeting at 5pm and emailing recruits to invite them. They may not necessarily understand the message and if they do, they might forget. So you need to give them a call – a month before, a week before, a day before. You need to explain your obligations and theirs again and again so it's in their mind.*

*There are always 5 or 10 per cent of recruits who are not motivated or as organised as they should be, and they don't stay. But you've tried your best. You know you've held their hands and taken them through every step necessary. The investment in volunteers will take multiple years.*

*The achievement is not only how long you can keep them in the club but the invaluable settlement outcomes they achieve along the way.*

Organisations also need to be aware that volunteers from culturally diverse backgrounds have a range of different reasons for pursuing voluntary work. Some seek to serve the community; others hope to gain particular skills, or to get a head start in their vocation or to expand their social circle. Still, others are motivated by altruistic, cultural or religious values that put the service of others first. Understanding what draws volunteers to an organisation is important for meeting their needs and will contribute to their effectiveness and retention. From his time at LSV, Ramzi knows this to be true:

*Just volunteering is not enough. People want to develop through the process – English skills, lifesaving skills, learning the culture. These give people things to look forward to, to aim for.*

Lack of confidence in spoken or written English may mean the application process for volunteers needs to be adapted. Many may never have experienced a group interview and might need support to understand how to navigate its dynamics or how to show their strengths and capabilities amongst others. There may be confusion about how a person's visa status may impact their ability to volunteer, and the hours they can commit to the organisation. There may also be different cultural understandings about how volunteering works. Mohammad says this was a hurdle for him: "The biggest challenge was understanding what volunteering means. It means not being paid. That was a challenge."

## LOOKING FORWARD

Emergency service organisations looking to recruit more religiously or culturally diverse volunteers might do best to start with the cultural capital that already exists within the organisation. If volunteers know no one else from their cultural background in the organisation, it could be a missed opportunity. Each volunteer brings social, educational or professional networks that could facilitate broader recruitment. Could their story be used to encourage others from a similar cultural background to join? Word of mouth is a powerful medium.



<sup>xxii</sup> Hearing about an organisation from a friend, relative or another social contact is often perceived as a “more credible and trustworthy source of information” than a brochure or poster.<sup>xxiii</sup> Current volunteers may have knowledge or experience about how to engage their community. An “understanding of values, community structures and... pathways for communication”<sup>xxiv</sup> can all be drawn on to encourage further volunteering within their communities.

It is clear there is significant interest among international students in emergency service volunteering. A number of these volunteers first came to Australia as students and became volunteers in an attempt to acculturate and gain practical and vocational skills. How could this interest be tapped into to encourage more to become involved?

For volunteers like Razi, cultural diversity is crucial for emergency service work. “People from different backgrounds can bring brilliant ideas. Having diversity complements the organisation. It also provides an outlet for engagement in the community.” Others agree. They argue that emergency service organisations that do not engage are missing out on the benefits of “innovation and productivity” that diversity brings. Homogeneity fails to take into account the “breadth of capability, knowledge and perspective

that exists within the community.”<sup>xxv</sup>

In the face of disasters and emergencies, communities need to band together, then work together towards recovery. Emergency Management Victoria says the emergency management sector can “lead and encourage this cohesion, through embracing diversity within its own organisations, openly reaching out to diverse groups in the community, delivering services that meet the needs of the whole community, and positively influencing change more broadly.”<sup>xxvi</sup> By becoming more inclusive and diverse, emergency management organisations will strengthen their connection to the communities they serve.<sup>xxvii</sup>

These volunteers provide powerful examples of how individuals from different backgrounds can work together. Through their service, they are not only making a tangible contribution to Australia but paving the way for others from culturally or religiously diverse backgrounds to get involved in emergency service volunteering. While emergency service organisations face genuine challenges as they seek to become more representative, the benefits of tapping into Australia’s cultural resources will set them up to meet Australia’s emergency and disaster response needs into the future.

There is clear interest in emergency

service volunteering amongst individuals from culturally and religiously diverse backgrounds. Those already involved in service are a testimony to this.

As Mohammad says:

*We are proud to serve and protect.* ●



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Scanlon Foundation Research Institute would like to thank the participants in this study who were interviewed in 2021 by the author and who consented to share their experiences.



## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Trish Prentice is a researcher with a particular interest in social cohesion and religious communities. She has worked in Australia and overseas in the government, academic and not-for profit sectors, including in Cairo, Egypt, working for an organisation specialising in Arab-West Understanding and in Geneva, Switzerland, for a human rights advocacy group. Trish has managed research projects in Indonesia, Singapore and Pakistan and written on various topics, including Islamophobia and Australian values from an Islamic perspective. Trish joined the Scanlon Foundation Research Institute in 2020.

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# FIRE MANAGEMENT IN AUSTRALIA HAS REACHED A CROSSROADS AND 'BUSINESS AS USUAL' WON'T CUT IT

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## THE CONVERSATION

<https://theconversation.com/fire-management-in-australia-has-reached-a-crossroads-and-business-as-usual-wont-cut-it-174696>

**T**he current wet conditions delivered by La Niña may have caused widespread flooding, but they've also provided a reprieve from the threat of bushfires in southeastern Australia. This is an ideal time to consider how we prepare for the next bushfire season.

Dry conditions will eventually return, as will fire. So, two years on from the catastrophic Black Summer fires, is Australia better equipped for a future of extreme fire seasons?

In our recent synthesis on the Black Summer fires, we argue climate change is exceeding the capacity of our ecological and social systems to adapt. The paper is based on a series of reports we, and other experts from the NSW Bushfire Risk Management Research Hub, were commissioned to produce for the NSW government's bushfire inquiry.

Fire management in Australia has reached a crossroads, and "business as usual" won't cut it. In this era of mega-fires, diverse strategies are urgently needed so we can safely live with fire.

## DOES PRESCRIBED BURNING WORK?

Various government inquiries following the Black Summer fires of 2019-20 produced wide-ranging recommendations for how to prepare and respond to bushfires. Similar inquiries have been held since 1939 after previous bushfires.

Typically, these inquiries led to major changes to policy and funding. But almost universally, this was followed by a gradual complacency and failure to put policies into practice.

If any fire season can provide the catalyst for sustained changes to fire management, it is Black Summer. So, what have we learnt from that disaster and are we now better prepared?

To answer the first question, we turn to our analyses for the NSW Bushfire Inquiry.

Following the Black Summer fires, debate emerged about whether hazard reduction burning by fire authorities ahead of the fire season had been sufficient, or whether excessive



“fuel loads” – such as dead leaves, bark and shrubs – had been allowed to accumulate.

We found no evidence the fires were driven by above-average fuel loads stemming from a lack of planned burning. In fact, hazard reduction burns conducted in the years leading up to the Black Summer fires effectively reduced the probability of high severity fire, and reduced the number of houses destroyed by fire.

Instead, we found the fires were primarily driven by record-breaking fuel dryness and extreme weather conditions. These conditions were due to natural climate variability, but made worse by climate change. Most fires were sparked by lightning, and very few were thought to be the result of arson.

These extreme weather conditions meant the effectiveness of prescribed burns was reduced – particularly when an area had not burned for more than five years.

All this means that hazard reduction burning in NSW is generally effective, however in the face of worsening climate change new policy responses are needed.

## DIVERSE AND UNEXPECTED IMPACTS

As the Black Summer fires raged, loss of life and property most commonly occurred in regional areas while metropolitan areas were heavily affected by smoke. Smoke exposure from the disaster led to an estimated 429 deaths.

Socially disadvantaged and Indigenous populations were disproportionately affected by the fires, including by loss of income, homes and infrastructure, as well as emotional trauma. Our analyses found 38 per cent of fire-affected areas were among the most disadvantaged, while just 10 per cent were among the least disadvantaged.

We also found some areas with relatively large Indigenous populations were fire-affected. For example, four fire-affected areas had Indigenous populations greater than 20 per cent including the Grafton, Eurobodalla Hinterland, Armidale and Kempsey regions.

The Black Summer fires burnt an unprecedentedly large area – half of all wet sclerophyll forests and over a third of rainforest vegetation types in NSW.

Importantly, for 257 plant species, the historical intervals between fires across their range were likely too short to allow effective regeneration. Similarly, many vegetation communities were left vulnerable to too-frequent fire, which may result in biodiversity decline, particularly as the climate changes.

## LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

So following Black Summer, how do we ensure Australia is better equipped for a future of extreme fire seasons?

As a first step, we must act on both the knowledge gained from government inquiries into the disaster, and the recommendations handed down. Importantly, long-term funding commitments are required to support bushfire management, research and innovation.

Governments have already increased investment in fire-suppression resources such as water-bombing aircraft. There’s also been increased investment in fire management such as improving fire trails and employing additional hazard reduction crews, as well as new allocations for research funding.

But alongside this, we also need investment in community-led solutions and involvement in bushfire planning and operations. This includes strong engagement between fire authorities and residents in developing strategies for hazard reduction burning, and providing greater support for people to manage fuels on private land. Support should also be available to people who decide to relocate away from high bushfire risk areas.

The Black Summer fires led to significant interest in a revival of Indigenous cultural burning – a practice that brings multiple benefits to people and environment. However, non-Indigenous land managers should not treat cultural burning as simply another hazard reduction technique, but part of a broader practice of Aboriginal-led cultural land management.

This requires structural and procedural changes in non-Indigenous land management, as well as secure, adequate and ongoing funding opportunities. Greater engagement and partnership with Aboriginal communities at all levels of fire and land management is also needed.

Under climate change, living with fire will require a multitude of new solutions and approaches. If we want to be prepared for the next major fire season, we must keep planning and investing in fire management and research – even during wet years such as this one. ●

*Ross Bradstock, Owen Price, David Bowman, Vanessa Cavanagh, David Keith, Matthias Boer, Hamish Clarke, Trent Penman, Josh Whittaker and many others contributed to the research upon which this article is based.*

## DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

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**Mark Ooi** receives funding from the Australian Research Council and the Commonwealth Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment. He is a member of the NSW Bushfire Risk Management Research Hub, which is supported by funds from the NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment.



# AV'S FIXED-WING FLEET SOARS TO NEW HEIGHTS

Ambulance Victoria's (AV) fixed-wing aircraft are undergoing a major upgrade to become the most innovative fleet in the country.

Story courtesy of **Ambulance Victoria**

**T**wo Beechcraft 260s and two Beechcraft 360s along with pilots and maintenance crews will be provided by Rex (Regional Express) subsidiary Pel-Air Aviation Pty Ltd, with the first patients to be transported in 2024.

The state-of-the-art aircraft will feature the latest technology and provide additional comfort, safety and care for patients and flight paramedics.

Each plane will be fitted with the high-tech Stryker stretcher loading system, meaning a faster and smoother ride for patients and less risk of injury for paramedics and flight crews.

In 2021, Ambulance Victoria's air ambulance helicopters were fitted with this innovative loading system,

which has already reduced patient transfer time by up to 20 minutes.

Ambulance Victoria CEO Professor Tony Walker said AV was proud to be leading the way when it comes to using innovative technology to improve patients' experience.

"Our air ambulances provide a vital link between rural communities and metropolitan health services and we are committed to providing the best care for our patients, no matter where they live," Professor Walker said.

"With this state-of-the-art technology, our patients will benefit from a reduction in transfer time between road ambulances and the aircraft, which in turn helps get our crews back on the road faster."

Ambulance Victoria will also work with Pel-Air to develop an Australian-first pilot fatigue monitoring system in the cockpit, reinforcing AV's continuous focus on safety development.

Two of the aircraft will operate around the clock, 365 days a year, and one aircraft will be used during peak times from Monday to Friday.

The fleet will transport patients throughout Victoria, Tasmania, South Australia and into southern New South Wales.

In 2020/21, AV's fixed wing fleet transported 5,065 patients – with most of those trips from regional Victoria to Melbourne. ●





# FIRST HYDROGEN POWERED VEHICLE JOINS QPS FLEET

The Queensland Police Service (QPS) has welcomed the first fuel cell propelled police vehicle in the southern hemisphere to our growing fleet.

Story courtesy of **Queensland Police**

The hydrogen powered vehicle will be used by Queensland Police officers assigned to the North Brisbane Domestic and Family Violence Vulnerable Persons Unit.

Deputy Commissioner Doug Smith said the trial of the hydrogen-powered police vehicle is another example of the way QPS is paving the way of a modern policing service.

"This vehicle will be trialled for a period before evaluation, providing a valuable resource to this important unit," Deputy Commissioner Smith said.

"Joining our diverse fleet of existing modes of transport, we look forward to further opportunities to ensure our service is future-fit."

The Nexo joins 13 Mitsubishi EVs now being used by police for general duties, traffic enforcement and investigations. ●



# MERCHANDISE

The AIES now has polo shirts and caps available for purchase. Pictures of the shirts and caps are shown below.

## To make an order:

- Complete and return this order form to the following email address: treasurer@aies.net.au
- or post to A149 Sydney South NSW 1235
- or by telephoning 0418 726 224 (after business hours)

Inquiries are to be directed to treasurer@aies.net.au or by telephoning 0418 726 224.

**Allow 4-5 weeks for delivery as some sizes may not be in stock.**

**Invoice for payment will be issued once goods are in stock.**

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**\$40** each  
including postage & handling fee



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**\$12.50** each  
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## 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 Australasia, 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 Australasia-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  
Annual Subscription: \$60.00  
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Note: Institute Fees may be tax deductible.

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There are four classes of membership:  
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## ELIGIBILITY

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

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Our members come from  
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