

EMA Research & Innovation Program

The EMA Research and Innovation Program aims to facilitate the capture and transfer of innovative practice and disaster research outcomes across the sector.

For more information please contact Sue Collins 02 6256 4614 or Mike Tarrant 03 5421 5219, or email projects@ema.gov.au

The Emergo Train System—will it work in Australia?

How can a hospital or health service test its procedures for major incidents, involving multiple casualties, without closing the front doors of hospital emergency departments during a testing exercise?

This real dilemma for hospital managers has led to a pilot study to test the effectiveness of the European Emergo Train of training and testing hospital staff and procedures following a mass casualty event in Australian conditions. The study was sponsored jointly by Emergency Management Australia (EMA), under its Research and Innovation Projects Program, and the Department of Health, Western Australia.

The Emergo Train was initially developed 17 years ago by the Centre for Research and Education in Disaster Medicine (KMC) at the University of Linköping, Sweden,

and has since been adopted in many countries. An educational tool for training and testing preparedness for major accidents and disasters, the system uses the principle of 'learning by doing' (Lennquist, 2003). It involves magnetic symbols representing patients, staff and resources; movable markers indicating priority and treatment; and a large patient bank with various injuries. A protocol has been developed to identify time taken for various clinical interventions and likely outcomes. Its major focus is on real time management of an incident.

Magnetic boards are used to illustrate the geographic area, resources for transportation, the hospitals and departments involved, and the scene in large-scale magnification. Patient symbols are placed, or delivered to the scene

in real time. The system is not dependent on any specific doctrine or way of working, but can be used in any organisation and with any methodology or procedures.

The authors undertook an Emergo Train Senior Instructor course in Sweden in October 2004, and visited the Centre for Disaster Management at Coventry University, which has extensive experience in using the System within British hospitals.

The Emergo Train purchased was amended to reflect Australian conditions and systems before testing commenced. After a familiarisation exercise at Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital in Perth, two further exercises were held in Western Australia in March and April 2005. The first was held at the 130-bed Bunbury Regional Hospital involving a two-bus



A "patient" arrives to the operating theatre and "staff" are being allocated to perform the surgery.



Ambulance and hospital staff working in the casualty clearing post.

crash. The second was centred at Royal Perth Hospital (an 855-bed tertiary hospital) and involved a rail bridge collapse with 116 casualties. The exercises, which included pre-hospital and hospital management with ambulance and hospital staff participation, tested a range of incident scene and hospital management aspects, including:

- triage and evacuation at the site;
- triage, clinical and resource management, plus transportation triage, at a casualty clearing post;
- ambulance resource management;
- triage, clinical and resource management at an emergency department, theatre and intensive care unit; and
- overall hospital management of the incident, including bed management.

All participants responded to the evaluation questionnaire, stating they strongly agreed (61 per cent) or agreed (39 per cent) that the exercise was personally beneficial for them. Eighty-seven per cent stated they felt more confident in their response to a disaster situation and the same number also indicated that aspects of their health service plan could be improved. The remaining 13 per cent indicated there were possible improvements to their plans.

Ninety-seven per cent of the participants indicated they either strongly agreed (55 per cent) or agreed (42 per cent) that the Emergo Train was an effective way to conduct a testing and training exercise. One hundred per cent of respondents indicated they would recommend a colleague to participate in a similar exercise and that the exercise should be repeated in one to two years time, with many suggesting the exercise should be held even twice a year.

One emergency department director stated he had been involved in many different types of exercises, but felt this "...was the best one yet." A trauma surgeon suggested that more of this type of exercise was needed for the whole of hospital approach. Comments made during the evaluations and debriefs provided suggestions on how to further improve the conduct of the exercises.

While such exercises can be resource intensive, through participation by players and exercise control staff, the benefit to testing procedures and to training of staff (without the expense of a field exercise) can be highly valuable.

Following the success of the pilot study, an exercise program is now being developed with a number of hospitals throughout Western Australia. Additionally, ways are being examined into how the Emergo Train can be used at departmental level, rather than

for whole-of-hospital as occurred in these exercises, as well as other scenarios such as chemical, biological and radiological, bombs and blasts, and burns incidents.

A "show and tell" demonstration and workshop was held in June 2005 at the EMA Institute involving the authors, EMA and representatives from Townsville Hospital (who also have been using Emergo Train), to discuss possible national implementation strategies. Following the demonstration, which was viewed by representatives from the Victorian Department of Human Services, an exercise was successfully held at The Alfred Hospital, Melbourne. At the completion of this exercise, the authors, with assistance from a recently qualified senior instructor from South Australia Ambulance Service, were asked to hold eight further exercises in Victoria to assist hospitals in their preparation for the Commonwealth Games in March 2006.

In February/March 2006 the Swedish owners of Emergo Train will be holding a Senior Instructor's course at the EMA Institute as part of a national implementation of the system within Australia.

References

Lenquist S. The Emergo Train System for Training and Testing Disaster Preparedness: 15 Years of Experience. *International Journal of Disaster Medicine* 2003; May: 13–22.

Authors

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EM Update

Emergency Management Australia provides national leadership in the development of measures to reduce risk to communities and manage the consequences of disasters. EM Update provides current information on activities and issues in the emergency management environment across EMA and State and Territory jurisdictions.

AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY EMERGENCY SERVICES AUTHORITY

ACT residents better prepared for emergencies

ACT residents are better prepared for emergencies following the distribution of a new all hazards publication. *Emergencies and the National Capital – A residents guide* was delivered to every household across the Territory throughout November. The guide is the brainchild of the ACT Emergency Services Authority (ESA) and follows the production of a bushfire specific booklet 12 months earlier.

“*Emergencies and the National Capital – A residents guide* is the next natural progression for the ESA and the people of the ACT,” ESA Commissioner Peter Dunn said. “When we looked at the advice provided for various specific emergencies we found a large part of it was the same no matter what the situation. So we came up with the concept of a guide with a generic all hazards approach,” he said.

In particular there is a three page home emergency plan which households can fill out. This includes checklists for home prevention and preparedness activities, and a home emergency kit. The guide contains advice on what to do if disaster strikes and where to access information updates highlighting the Memorandum of Understanding the ESA has with local media outlets.

The new *ACT All Hazards Warning System* is also detailed in the 16-page publication. “The *All Hazards Warning System* was introduced in the ACT in October 2005 as a way to alert residents to the threat of or the occurrence of major emergencies,” Commissioner Dunn said. “The ESA used the system for the first time when the ACT was struck by damaging storms in November. We issued a BLUE warning for a possible threat and a YELLOW warning for likely impact prior to and as the bad

weather hit. This was followed by a RED warning meaning immediate impact and later on a GREEN warning to initiate recovery,” he said.

“We’ve issued a BLUE warning on a number of occasions since then as well for other forecast storms and when issuing total fire bans for the ACT.

“The resident’s guide is a key tool to educating Canberrans about the warning system and actions they should take. We were able to road test the draft contents with community representatives before signoff, which provided highly valuable feedback which we incorporated in the final version,” he said.

The ESA has moved to ensure ACT residents with special needs can access the guide. “We have produced the guide in large font and Braille formats as well as an audio CD version,” Commissioner Dunn said.

Contents of the guide include:

- ACT All Hazards Warning System;
- ACT Evacuation Strategy;
- Your Home Emergency Plan;
- Bushfires;
- Storms and Floods;
- Home Fire Safety;
- Calling an Ambulance;
- If Disaster Strikes; and
- Emergency Information.

Copies of the *Emergencies and the National Capital – A residents guide* can be downloaded in normal or large print formats from the ESA website www.esa.act.gov.au. Hard copies can be obtained by contacting Community Education Officer Alice Tan Phone: 02 6207 8696.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Working Together to Manage Emergencies

The Australian Government policy initiative, *Working Together to Manage Emergencies*, announced in September 2004, recognises the need to develop self-reliance at both the community and local government levels. It builds national preparedness for disasters of all types by providing practical support and recognition. The initiative comprises two funding programs:

- the *Local Grants Scheme* (LGS), to assist local councils to fund and develop emergency risk initiatives, security upgrades around critical infrastructure and provide training for staff; and
- the *National Emergency Volunteer Support Fund* (NEVSF), offering funding to emergency management volunteer organisations to boost recruitment, retention, skills and training.

On 8 December 2005, the Attorney-General, The Hon Philip Ruddock MP, announced the funding of more than 400 projects, valued at \$14 million through the LGS and NEVSF in financial year 2005/06.

Projects funded through the LGS include assessment of risks to critical infrastructure, emergency risk management planning, community safety publications, and disaster exercises. Projects funded through the NEVSF include public education programs, volunteer recruitment campaigns, establishment and upgrade of sheds and facilities, and volunteer training.

In announcing the successful projects, Mr Ruddock commended all applicants for their commitment to improving community safety and wished the recipients of funding every success with their projects. Applications for funding in 2006/07 closes on 3 March 2006.

A complete list of successful projects under both programs is available on the EMA website at www.ema.gov.au/communitydevelopment

Emergo Train

Emergo Train is a major incident simulation system, developed in Sweden for the health service. The simple system is a variation of a functional exercise and provides a unique opportunity for those involved in planning or managing major incidents to develop their management and decision-making skills in a relatively comfortable environment. The pressures and emotions generated by working with 'real' resources in a real-time situation are simulated using radio and other communication methods as in an actual emergency situation. It allows meaningful exercises to be conducted without disruption to normal services.

The system can be tailored for use by a variety of industries including emergency management planning, hospital and health, Chemical Biological Radiological (CBR), ambulance, police and fire personnel. It is used extensively throughout the European and United Kingdom health care systems.

The system does not require sophisticated equipment. It is based on the use of magnetic symbols on whiteboards to represent patients, staff and resources. Movable markers indicate priorities and treatment regimens. The use of a "delay board" ensures that predetermined, accurately validated times are adhered to and that, with careful monitoring from the instructors, the age-old exercise cliché of events happening "notionally" (or in impossibly short time intervals) are precluded.

Emergo Train is being used initially, and very successfully, to simulate hospital mass casualty situations. Performance indicators are provided for each patient in the system. If stated measures are not performed within defined timeframes there is a risk of the patients suffering an 'unfavourable' outcome.

EMA is co-ordinating a national effort towards embracing this exciting system and two courses were conducted at EMA Mt. Macedon, in February.

*For further information contact Colin Fiford
Phone: 03 5421 5290; email: colin.fiford@ema.gov.au*

Risk Based Land Use Planning Course

EMA is conducting three courses in 2006 to assist participants in practically applying the risk management framework to land use planning activities. The first course is programmed for the week starting 29 May at EMA Mt. Macedon.

There have been a number of significant developments with this course, which focuses on the practical application of risk based land use principles. The course now attracts Planning Institute of Australia Continuing Professional Development points and by May it will be a nationally accredited and recognised short course.

For more information about this course and other courses that EMA offer please refer to www.ema.gov.au

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT *continued*

EMA Library

ALIES (Australasian Libraries in the Emergency Sector) has long played an important role for EMA as a key information network. ALIES has also recently undertaken work in information management in the wider Australian emergency management context. The annual workshop for ALIES members will be held at EMA Mt. Macedon, April 9-13 2006. Representatives from 35 emergency management related agencies from all States, Territories, the Australian Government and New Zealand will meet to discuss, plan and implement strategies for information sharing across the sector and internationally. The theme this year is "Disasters, terrorism, corruption, crime...a librarian's role in uncertain times".

EMA Library staff continue to provide a high level of support to the emergency management sector by supporting EMA course participants, providing an online information service, welcoming researchers and ensuring the library collection reflects client information requirements. Visit our web pages at www.ema.gov.au/library.

*For further information contact Linda Hansen
Phone: 03 5421 5246; email: linda.hansen@ema.gov.au*

Australian Tsunami Warning System

Following the Indian Ocean tsunami on 26 December 2004, the Australian Government agreed to fund the development of an Australian Tsunami Warning System (ATWS). Implementation of the ATWS is being managed jointly by EMA, the Bureau of Meteorology and Geoscience Australia. It will be one of the first Indian Ocean regional warning systems, and will join a network of planned national systems which collectively form the Indian Ocean Tsunami Warning System. It will also integrate with the existing Pacific Tsunami Warning System to facilitate warnings to the South-West Pacific Region.

EMA has responsibility within the ATWS program for the implementation of community awareness and preparedness, and education and training programs in partnership with Australian States, Territories, local governments and industry. These critical elements of the ATWS will be developed and implemented by EMA over the next four years. At the same time, Geoscience Australia (GA) and the Bureau of Meteorology will be enhancing Australia's seismic and sea-level monitoring capability.

EMA is in the final stages of establishing its implementation team, and has facilitated the creation of an Australian Emergency Management Committee Tsunami Working Group (ATWG). The ATWG met for the first time in Perth between 30 November and 2 December 2005, and will be the focal point for engagement between the Australian Government, State, Territory and local governments in the process of delivering ATWS-related community outcomes.

*For further information contact Mark Sullivan
Phone: 02 6256 4693; email: mark.sullivan@ema.gov.au*

Safer Communities Awards 2005

Each year Emergency Management Australia hosts the national Safer Communities Awards to recognise projects judged innovative and which demonstrate best practice in emergency management.

The 2005 Awards attracted 63 entries at State and Territory level with 32 category winners going on to the national finals. They were judged by a national panel and awards presented by the Attorney-General Hon Philip Ruddock MP, in Parliament House, Canberra on 2 December 2005.

A booklet describing all the award winners and commended entries can be found on the EMA website at www.ema.gov.au.

A new category for projects of national significance was created for the 2005 Awards. Geoscience Australia received this award with a combination of three entries. The projects were:

1. Collaborative 100K Mapping Pilot for Emergency Management, developed by GA in response to concerns of emergency managers on the lack of updated and suitable topographic information for use in emergency planning and response;
2. Cities Project Perth, a natural hazard risk assessment study by GA and collaborators across three levels of government; and
3. Scenario Modelling for the Assessment of National Catastrophic Disaster Capability, developed by GA to the benefit of many other emergency management related agencies across Australia.

*For further information contact Simon Costello
Phone: 02 6249 9665; email simon.costello@ga.gov.au*

PLANNING & COORDINATION

In early 2005 Planning & Coordination (P&C) Group was formed to manage an increase in offshore emergency responses and highly specialised domestic events. The group design is deliberately flexible and interlinked to provide a strong framework to support a trained surge staffing capacity to manage the workload in the event of a large scale emergency.

The P&C Group responsibilities encompass management of international engagement activities including offshore capacity building projects, training and development, and contingency and emergency planning. The National Emergency Management Coordination Centre (NEMCC) monitors current and emerging risks, using a whole-of-government, multi-agency and all-hazards approach, engaging in information management and dissemination, with a 24 hour duty officer system and the ability to set up the operations centre on demand.

Under this new framework, P&C Group had a busy 2005. Following the Indian Ocean tsunami, an earthquake on Nias Island in Indonesia killed up to 2000 people, and an Australian Navy Sea Hawk helicopter crash claimed nine Navy personnel. In July P&C closely monitored the London terrorist bombing, and in August, the NEMCC was activated for a third time when peat fires in Sumatra ran out of control. The Australian contingent, led by an NEMCC staff member, had only just returned from Sumatra when the US and Caribbean were devastated by *Hurricane Katrina*,

followed by *Rita*. The Australian Government offered assistance to the US, and P&C provided support to the three-person team which went to the area, and made preparations for the possibility of sending a larger contingent. The NEMCC was activated for a fifth time in October for the Bali terrorist attack bombing—where 22 people lost their lives, four of whom were Australian. The P&C Group assisted in such tasks as repatriation of the deceased. In the same month, more than 73 000 people died when an earthquake hit Pakistan. All of these events had P&C either activated or on high alert, testing arrangements and protocols to the limit. To ensure these arrangements covered every contingency, two major training exercises were run through the year: *Exercise Mercury*, a multi-jurisdictional exercise on counter terrorism; and *Exercise Eleusis*, testing Avian Influenza preparedness.

While the operational side of P&C Group was running at high speed, the International Engagement arm had an equally busy and productive year, with offshore capacity building projects in full swing. The year's end saw a formalised Solomon Islands project, and a signed record of understanding for an Indonesian project targeting emergency services development.

For further information contact Matt Smith Phone: 02 6256 4627; email: matthew.smith@ema.gov.au
To contact the NEMCC, please phone 02 6256 4644

Addendum

In the August 2005 issue of the *Australian Journal of Emergency Management* an article on page 15 by John Pisaniello and Jennifer McKay entitled *The need for private dam safety assurance policy – demonstrative case studies 10 years later* contained an omission. The paper in its review of how dam safety is managed in Australia is in fact referring accurately to mainland Australia only.

The authors and the Journal wish to thank both Max Giblin and Alistair Brooks from the Department of Primary Industries, Water and Environment in

Tasmania for bringing to their attention that Tasmania recently implemented policy on private dam safety which effectively deals with all the issues raised as barriers to achieving private dam safety programs in other states. The current policy being implemented in Tasmania under the *Water Management (Safety of Dams) Regulations 2003* encompasses all dams, large and small, private and public, low and greater hazard, and is based on the various guidelines published by the Australian National Committee on Large Dams.

The authors believe that the Tasmanian policy provides a model approach to private dam safety assurance that warrants further discussion. A follow-up paper will soon be published in this journal to be authored collaboratively by John Pisaniello, Jennifer McKay, Max Giblin and Alistair Brooks, which will present further empirical evidence of the extent of the problem on mainland Australia, and showcase the Tasmanian policy as a possible solution.

CONFERENCE DIARY

Conference details are sourced from the EMA website.
For more information about these and future conferences, visit www.ema.gov.au

2006 INTERNATIONAL

30 March – 2 April

Location Omaha, Nebraska
Title 2006 Annual Meeting of the Midwest Sociological Society
Details This annual conference will include a session on "Innovations in Disaster Theory, Research, and Practice."
Enquiries Peter Adler or Patti Adler, University of Colorado, 327 UCB, Boulder, CO 80309
 email: socyprof@hotmail.com
 web: <http://www.themss.org/meetings.html>

31 March – 4 April

Location Denver, Colorado
Title ASPA 2006 The Sky's the Limit: Idealism and Innovation in Public Service
Details This annual conference of the ASPA features professional development workshops, education sessions, and panel discussions for practitioners and academics. Training sessions will address issues such as ethics, human resources, women's issues in public administration, leadership, and performance measurement, while panel discussions cover topics, such as homeland security, transportation, privatization, and internationalism and global government.
Enquiries Patricia Yearwood, 1301 Pennsylvania Avenue NW, Suite 840, Washington, DC 20004
 tel: (02) 585-4309
 email: pyearwood@aspanet.org
 web: http://www.aspanet.org/scriptcontent/index_aspaconference.cfm

2–6 April

Location Seattle, Washington
Title Symposium on the Application of Geophysics to Engineering and Environmental Problems 19th Annual Meeting
Details The theme of this year's conference is "Geophysical Applications for Environmental and Engineering Hazards – Advances and Constraints." The program consists of keynote lectures, technical sessions, exhibits, and special events that will provide participants the opportunity to learn about recent developments in near surface geophysics. Special sessions include Geophysics in Land Use and Management, Geophysical Monitoring of Landslide Hazards, and Seismic Landstreamers.
Enquires: web: <http://www.eegs.org/sageep/>

2–7 April

Location Vienna, Austria
Title European Geosciences Union General Assembly 2006
Details This conference will bring together geoscientists from Europe and all over the world to present work and discuss ideas in all disciplines of the earth, planetary, and space sciences.
Enquiries Copernicus Meeting Office, Max-Planck-Strasse 13, 37191 Katlenburg-Lindau, Germany
 tel: +49-5556-1440
 email: egu.meetings@copernicus.org
 web: <http://meetings.copernicus.org/egu2006/>

7–9 April

Location Phoenix, Arizona
Title 7th Biennial Fire Service Women's Leadership Training Seminar
Details This event is hosted by the Phoenix Fire Department and supported by a local committee of urban and wildland fire personnel. The seminar will include workshops and training sessions aimed at making participants better fire service leaders.
Enquiries Women in the Fire Service, Inc. (WFSI), PO Box 5446, Madison, WI 53705
 tel: (608) 233-4768
 email: info@wfsi.org
 web: <http://www.wfsi.org/>

10–14 April

Location Orlando, Florida
Title 2006 National Hurricane Conference
Details The primary goal of the conference is to improve hurricane preparedness, response, recovery, and mitigation in order to save lives and property in the United States and the tropical islands of the Caribbean and the Pacific. The conference serves as a national forum for federal, state, and local officials to exchange ideas and recommend new policies to improve emergency management.
Enquiries National Hurricane Conference, 2952\ Wellington Circle, Tallahassee, FL 32309
 tel: (850) 906-9224
 email: mail@hurricanemeeting.com
 web: <http://www.hurricanemeeting.com/>

18–22 April

Location San Francisco, California
Title 100th Anniversary Earthquake Conference Commemorating the 1906 San Francisco Earthquake
Details The 100th anniversary of San Francisco's 1906 Earthquake provides a valuable opportunity to learn from the past, assess the present, and prepare for the future. : Earthquake Engineering Research Institute (EERI) AND Seismological Society of America (SSA) are joining with Disaster Resistant California to focus on how communities can manage their risk through science, public policy, emergency response, and business continuity.
Enquiries web: <http://www.1906eqconf.org/>

20–21 April

Location Miami, Florida
Title 17th Global Warming International Conference and Expo
Details A sampling of the session topics at this conference include the following: Sustainable Environment and Health for the 21st Century, Remote Sensing and Global Surveillance, Water Resources Management, Extreme Events and Impacts Assessment, and Global Warming and the Oceans.
Enquiries email: gw17@globalwarming.net
web: <http://globalwarming.net/>

23–27 April

Location Honolulu, Hawaii
Title RIMS 2006: Expanding the Power of Risk Management
Details This conference will provide an opportunity for risk managers and insurance professionals to expand their knowledge and network with industry experts. The conference will focus on enterprise risk management as well as address strategic, business, financial, and operational risk.
Enquiries Risk Insurance and Management Society, Inc. (RIMS), 1065 Avenue of the Americas, 13th Floor, New York, NY 10018
tel: (212) 286-9292
web: <http://www.RIMS.org/2006honolulu>

25–27 April

Location Pasadena, California
Title 9th Wildland Fire Safety Summit
Details Participants in this summit will include firefighters, prescribed burners, land managers, fire chiefs, agency administrators, fire researchers, public officials, and others. Presentations will be on the topics of liability and legal implications; fire weather; making firefighters safer; safety in the wildland-urban interface; policy, practices, and procedures; case studies and lessons learned; and international wildland fire safety.
Enquiries Dick Mangan
tel: (406) 543-0013
email: blackbull@bigsky.net

2–4 May

Location Grand Rapids, Michigan
Title 2006 Great Lakes Homeland Security Training Conference and Expo
Details This conference will bring together over 1,500 public officials, education representatives, and emergency responders from various disciplines looking for the tools needed to detect, prevent, and protect their communities from terrorist attacks.
Enquiries Colleen Mohr
tel: (517) 336-6464
email: mohrc@michigan.gov
web: http://www.michigan.gov/msp/0,1607,7-123-1593_3507-118227--,00.html

8–10 May

Location Houston, Texas
Title GIS and Water Resources IV
Details This conference focuses on innovation and application of geographic information systems (GIS) to water resources. Companies, government agencies, and nonprofit organizations involved in all facets of water resources are encouraged to attend. A special category has been added to the call for papers addressing topics related to the effects of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, including the role of GIS in dealing with the after-effects of such catastrophes and in planning for future severe weather events. Abstracts can be submitted for this category until January 16, 2006.
Enquiries Patricia A. Reid, American Water Resources Association (AWRA), PO Box 1626, Middleburg, VA 20118
tel: (540) 687-8390
email: pat@awra.org
web: <http://www.awra.org/meetings/Houston2006/index.html>

9–12 May

Location May Ottawa, Ontario
Title Climate Change Technology Conference
Details The theme of this conference is "Engineering Challenges and Solutions in the 21st Century." The purpose of the conference is to stimulate awareness and action for solutions that mitigate or adapt to climate change. In addition to potential technical solutions, the conference will address associated social and environmental consequences.
Enquiries Engineering Institute of Canada (EIC) Climate Change Conference, 1895 William Hodgins Lane, Carp, Ontario, Canada, K0A 1L0
tel: (613) 839-1108
email: EICCC2006@ieee.org
web: <http://www.ccc2006.ca/eng/>

14–17 May

Location St. Pete Beach, Florida
Title The Coastal Society's 20th Biennial Conference
Details The theme of the 2006 conference will be "Charting a New Course: Shaping Solutions for the Coast." Conference attendees will include scientists, policy makers, coastal managers, and the public, and it will be organized into tracks on innovative solutions for the following: Land Use Challenges, Governing Ocean Use Conflicts, Effective Integration of Science, Changing Behaviors: Professionals and the Public, and Mitigating Coastal Natural Hazards.
Enquiries Judy Tucker, PO Box 25408, Alexandria, VA 22313-5408
 tel: (703) 933-1599
 email: coastalsoc@aol.com
 web: <http://www.thecoastalsociety.org/conference/tcs20/>

14–17 May

Location Newark, New Jersey
Title ISCRAM 06: Information Systems for Crisis Response and Management Conference
Details The theme of this conference is information systems as the integration medium for the "lifecycle of emergency preparedness and response" (planning, training, mitigation, detection, alerting, response, recovery, and assessment). The deadline for paper submission is January 12, 2006.
Enquiries Murray Turoff (New Jersey Institute of Technology) or Bartel Van de Walle (Tilburg University)
 e-mail: turoff@njit.edu; bartel@uvt.nl
 web: <http://www.iscram.org/>

17–19 May

Location Florence, Italy
Title 3rd i-Rec International Conference on Postdisaster Reconstruction: Meeting Stakeholder Interests
Details This conference will focus on the development of effective and sustainable postdisaster reconstruction strategies and will be a forum for sharing research work and experience from the field on practical issues in affected areas. The i-Rec conferences bring together professionals and practitioners from various fields such as housing, reconstruction, civil engineering, international development, humanitarian aid, architecture, urban planning, and environmental studies.
Enquiries Cassidy Johnson
 email: cassidy.johnson@sympatico.ca
 web: <http://www.grif.umontreal.ca/pages/irechomepage.html>

21–24 May

Location Baton Rouge, Louisiana
Title American Institute of Hydrology Annual Meeting and International Conference: Challenges in Coastal Hydrology and Water Quality
Details This conference will provide an international forum for the dissemination and exchange of information in coastal hydrology, hydraulics, and water quality. The conference will stimulate interdisciplinary research, education, management, and policy making from physical, biogeochemical, and socioeconomic perspectives related to complex environmental systems in coastal regions.
Enquiries American Institute of Hydrology, 300 Village Green Circle, Suite 201, Smyrna, GA 30080
 tel: (770) 384-1634
 email: aihydro@aol.com
 web: <http://www.aihydro.org/conference.htm>

21–24 May

Location Long Beach, California
Title 5th University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA) Conference on Public Health and Disasters
Details This conference is designed for public health professionals as well as individuals and organizations from both the public and private sectors involved in emergency public health preparedness and response. The diverse topics will be relevant to public health and medical practitioners, emergency medical services professionals, researchers, and managers involved in the wide range of emergency public health issues resulting from natural and human-induced disasters.
Enquiries UCLA Center for Public Health and Disasters, 1145 Gayley Avenue, Suite 304, Los Angeles, CA 90024
 tel: (310) 794-0864
 email: cphdr@ucla.edu
 web: <http://www.cphd.ucla.edu/conferenceframe.htm>

22–24 May

Location Boston, Massachusetts
Title Risk Communication Challenge: Proven Strategies for Effective Risk Communication DETAILS
Enquiries Harvard School of Public Health, Center for Continuing Professional Education, CCPE – Department A, 677 Huntington Avenue, Boston, MA 02115
 tel: (617) 384-8692
 email: contedu@hsph.harvard.edu
 web: <http://www.hsph.harvard.edu/ccpe/programs/RCC.shtml>

23–25 May

Location Honolulu, Hawaii
Title Third Tsunami Symposium
Details The Tsunami Society publishes "The Science of Tsunami Hazards" journal and conducts a Tsunami Symposium every three years. Abstracts of papers for presentation must be submitted by February 1, 2006.
Enquiries Barbara Keating
 tel: (808) 956-8143
 email: Keating@soest.hawaii.edu
 web: <http://www.sthjjournal.org/>

23–25 May

Location Las Vegas, Nevada
Title CPM 2006 West Conference and Exhibition DETAILS
Enquiries CPM 2006 West, WPC Expositions, 20 Commerce Street, Suite 2013, Flemington, NJ 08822
 tel: (908) 788 0343
 email: CPMEvents@WitterPublishing.com
 web: <http://www.contingencyplanning.com/events/west/>

23–26 May

Location Seoul, South Korea
Title TIEMS 13th Annual Conference 2006
Details This year's conference will include sessions on emergency management training and education, priorities for humanitarian aid, natural hazards, business continuity, and many others.
Enquiries Young-Jai Lee or TIEMS, PO Box 1462, 8021 Zuerich, Switzerland;
 email: yjlee@dgu.edu
 web: <http://www.tiems.org/index.php>

23–26 May

Location Stavanger, Norway
Title IAIA '06: Power, Poverty, and Sustainability 2006 - The Role of Impact Assessment
Details Participants in this event will discuss how the various instruments of impact assessment - environmental impact assessment, strategic environmental assessment, sustainability assessment, health impact assessment, and social impact assessment can contribute in assisting developers, decision-makers, development cooperation providers, and the public to integrate environmental, social, and other concerns in a variety of fields.
Enquiries IAIA, 1330 23rd Street South, Suite C Fargo, ND USA 58103
 tel: (701) 297-7908
 email: info@iaia.org
 web: <http://www.iaia.org>

31 May–3 June

Location Arlington, Virginia
Title National Conference on Animals in Disaster 2006: Learning from Katrina - A Commitment to the Future
Details The fourth biennial National Conference on Animals in Disaster will be dedicated to the lessons of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. Participants will work to secure the improvements made in the disaster planning and response process and to re-create and reinvigorate approaches currently in process that will help in future preparedness and response efforts. Leaders from government, nonprofit and voluntary organizations, and the business community will all participate.
Enquiries Humane Society of the United States, 2100 L Street NW, Washington, DC 20037
 tel: (02) 452-1100
 web: <http://www.hsus.org/NCAD06>

4–7 June

Location New Orleans, Louisiana
Title 2006 National Main Street Conference
Details This conference focuses on commercial district revitalization and showcases projects and strategies used by small and rural towns, suburban-ring communities, large and mid-sized cities, and urban neighborhood business districts to revitalize their commercial districts. A major conference theme will be opportunities related to crisis management and disaster recovery for historic sites and commercial districts. The 2006 conference will also offer an opportunity to demonstrate how preservation-based revitalization can be used to rebuild the Gulf Coast region after the devastation of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita.
Enquiries National Trust for Historic Preservation, 1785 Massachusetts Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20036
 tel: (202) 588-6219
 email: msconference@nthp.org
 web: <http://conference.mainstreet.org/>

4–8 June

Location Orlando, Florida
Title NFPA World Safety Conference & Expo
Details This meeting is directed at fire and life safety professionals and offers professional development opportunities, educational tracks focused on timely issues, and an exposition featuring industry suppliers. For more information, contact ROC Exhibitions, 1963 University Lane, Lisle, IL 60532
 tel: (630) 271-8210
 email: info@rocexhibitions.com
 web: <http://www.nfpa.org/categoryListWSCE.asp?categoryID=1059>

5-7 June

Location Rhodes, Greece

Title Coastal Environment 2006: Sixth International Conference on Environmental Problems in Coastal Regions Including Oil and Chemical Spill Studies

Details Coastal Environment 2006 will address problems related to the monitoring, analysis, and modeling of coastal regions including sea, land, and air phenomena. The conference will gather researchers, engineers, and professionals involved in the field of coastal environmental quality.

Enquiries Charlotte Bartlett, Coastal Environment 2006, Wessex Institute of Technology Ashurst Lodge, Ashurst, Southampton, SO40 7AA UK
tel: +44 (0) 238 029 3223
email: cbartlett@wessex.ac.uk
web: <http://www.wessex.ac.uk/conferences/2006/coast06/>

7-9 June

Location Rhodes, Greece

Title Debris Flow 2006: First International Conference on Monitoring, Simulation, Prevention, and Remediation of Dense and Debris Flows

Details This meeting will study the fundamental mechanical principles as well as rheological properties and phenomenological aspects of debris flows. Particular attention will be given to modeling techniques and case studies. The conference will also address the problem of debris flow disaster mitigation using structural and nonstructural measures.

Enquiries Katie Banham, Debris Flow 2006, Wessex Institute of Technology, Ashurst Lodge, Ashurst, Southampton, SO40 7AA, UK
tel: 44 (0) 238 029 3223
email: kbanham@wessex.ac.uk
web: <http://www.wessex.ac.uk/conferences/2006/debris06/>

Enquiries ASFPM, 2809 Fish Hatchery Road, Madison, WI 53713
tel: (608) 274-0123
email: asfpm@floods.org
web: <http://www.floods.org/Conferences,%20Calendar/albuquerque.asp>

14-16 June

Location Delft, The Netherlands

Title Ethical Aspects of Risk Conference

Details This conference will bring together moral philosophers, sociologists, psychologists, and engineers to reflect on the ethical issues concerning "acceptable risk." Cost-benefit analysis, the role of emotions, and the role of the public will all be discussed.

Enquiries Department of Philosophy, Faculty of Technology, Policy, and Management, Jaffalaan 5, 2628 BX Delft, The Netherlands
tel: 0031-(0)15-2783887
email: ethicsrisk@tbm.tudelft.nl
web: <http://www.ethicsrisk.tbm.tudelft.nl/>

18-21 June

Location Lillehammer, Norway

Title Geohazards: Technical, Economical, and Social Risk Evaluation

Details The objective of this conference is to provide a roundtable for engineers, geoscientists, social scientists, public authorities, and insurance companies to discuss the human, environmental, and economic consequences of geohazards.

Enquiries Engineering Conferences International, 6 Metro Tech Center, Brooklyn, NY 11201
tel: (718) 260-3743
email: info@eci.poly.edu
web: <http://www.engconfintl.org/6ag.html>

18-21 June

Location Toronto, Canada

Title 16th World Conference on Disaster Management - Emergency Management and Business Continuity Working Together

Details This premier event will feature over 80 Educational Sessions on pandemic planning, lessons learned from Hurricane Katrina, COOP, standards, risk management, data forensics, crisis communications, ICS/IMS, interoperability, public alerting systems, public/private partnerships, plus much more.

Enquiries web: <http://www.wcdm.org>

2006 AUSTRALIA

6-9 June

Location Brisbane, Australia

Title Australasian Bushfire Conference 2006

Details This conference will provide a forum to share new ideas on the complex issues of bushfire management, encourage communication between agencies and groups involved in bushfire management, build upon the lessons learned in previous bushfire campaigns, and facilitate a new understanding of the role of fire in the landscape. Topics will cover fire management in wildland-urban interface, development controls, bushfires in a changing climate, fuels management, community involvement and participation in fire management, fire ecology, remote sensing, mapping, and maintaining the balance between protection and conservation.

Enquiries ICMS Pty Ltd, 88 Merivale Street, South Bank, Queensland 4101, Australia
tel: +61 7 3844 1138
email: bushfire2006@icms.com.au
web: <http://www.bushfire2006.com/>



AJEM now indexed by AGIS

The Australian Journal of Emergency Management is now selectively indexed by the Commonwealth Attorney-General's Information Service (AGIS), available through *Informit* (<http://www.informit.com.au/>).

AGIS, produced by the Lionel Murphy Library of the Attorney-General's Department, is a comprehensive indexing and abstracting service. Over 120 law journals from the Australian, New Zealand and Asian Pacific regions are comprehensively indexed.

Informit is a source of online Australasian scholarly research published by RMIT Publishing. The *Informit* range of online products includes a comprehensive set of indexes to government and scholarly publications including the *Informit Plus Text* databases.

AGIS Plus Text is a full text online database which provides access to articles from over 100 legal journals. Selected articles from AJEM are now included in this service.

Subject coverage includes all aspects of law including administrative law, banking, companies and securities, constitutional law, copyright law, criminal law, emergency management law, environmental law, family law, human rights, international law, legal aid, and trade practices.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Dear Mr Templeman,

I wish to commend you and your staff for producing an excellent thought-provoking magazine.

I found the November, 2005 edition to be one of your best. With your permission I would like to comment on some of the articles.

They should be heroes

Like Dianne I hate the word "hero". As a person who has been involved in Emergency Management for 40 years, I totally agree with her. Over the years I have on occasions expressed my annoyance at Police, SES and Fire Fighters who see themselves as heroes yet not acknowledging the hard work of Support Personnel. Even among the emergency response agencies there is a tendency to only acknowledge the person who "does the deed", for example to save the house from burning, finding the missing person etc. What about the other often large number of people involved in the incident? Speaking from experience for each time I have been classified as being a "hero" I would have worked just as hard if not harder hundreds of times supporting the rest of the team.

What about those who spend a large percentage of their lives doing preventative work such as property inspection, preparing emergency plans or training, or being on standby etc? Then there are people who no matter what time, day or night, you can call upon to assist. These are the real heroes of society.

Australian Rural Fire Services Recognition and Service Awards for Volunteers

First of all I agree with the views expressed by Jim and Mary. This issue goes across all agencies. I fought for years to get the present five and 10 year medals presented to volunteer Bush Fire Fighters in Western Australia. I have seen cases where people have said they only plan, due to personal problems, to do one more year service to get a medal. Once they get it with associated acknowledgement of peers and community, they have given many more years of service.

However, besides the medals there are other ways acknowledgement can be given to volunteers. For example after a major incident and/or on annual bases a barbeque or some other type of public reception. Letters of thanks for services for even short periods of service are important and have on occasions seen such people return to emergency services.

Letters of thanks to members of the public are also good public relations and a recruiting tool. As a young District Police Officer in the 1960s in a high crime rate area I learned the value of giving letters of thanks to those who helped during emergencies.

When arriving at an emergency I was guaranteed there would be a "crim" there ready to give me a hard time. My response would be to give them a job to do such as crowd control, traffic control, helping with

first aid etc. After the incident I would arrange for a letter of thanks signed by the Commissioner of Police to be sent to the helper. This drew some interesting results. Despite generations of hating people in uniform they found it difficult to hate a person who had shown them respect and appreciation. The major side effects were a decrease in crime, and far less aggression shown to me.

I have also found that giving people affected by a disaster a job to do, followed by a letter of thanks is an effective tool in assisting them recover from the incident.

The bottom line is a simple "thank you" goes a long way when dealing with all volunteers.

Developing an effective emergency management partnerships

I am extremely glad to see agencies are becoming more accepting of this concept. It is only common sense. It still annoys me to know that some agencies still have officers who will not seek help from or want to work with other organisations.

Efficiency and in turn the community are the losers in such cases.

Yours faithfully

Ray Sousa
*Ranger and Emergency Services
Coordinator*

5 January 2006

interesting websites



New Website for the Australian Emergency Management Volunteer Forum (AEMVF)

<http://www.aemvf.org.au>

A new and professional website for the AEMVF was recently launched. It has been made possible due to funding received through the Program *Working Together to Manage Emergencies*, and assistance from Surf Lifesaving, one of the member organisations of the AEMVF. The website provides the Forum with the visibility it needs to better serve the volunteer emergency management sector. It contains useful information for volunteers and their organisations alike. We invite all interested volunteers to check it out regularly.



Center for Research on the Epidemiology of Disasters

<http://www.cred.be/>

The Center for Research on the Epidemiology of Disasters, is a World Health Organization Collaborating Centre with a special focus on public health, epidemiology, structural and socio-economic aspects. CRED promotes research, training, and information dissemination on disasters. The website includes an international disasters database providing information on disasters and their human and economic impact, categorised by the country and type of disaster. The database includes country profiles, disaster profiles and lists, and searching capabilities.



Cyclone Testing Station

<http://www.eng.jcu.edu.au/csts/>

Since 1977 the Cyclone Testing Station has been researching, testing and advising industry and governments on building practices to minimise loss and suffering as a result of severe wind events. The website includes information about ongoing projects, information bulletins, a newsletter, and animations explaining severe wind damage.

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