

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

Terrorism and Pandemic Influenza — Population risk management and health behaviour determinants

A brief summary of the project

1. This project aims to pilot, field test and establish a survey module (SAFE - Secure against fear exposure):
 - i) to provide the basis for surveillance of perceptions of community and personal risk;
 - ii) to determine associated emotional, behavioural and mental health effects and factors contributing to adverse affective, behavioural and mental health outcomes, as well as coping and resilience functions and strategies;
 - iii) to examine these factors in relation to potential terrorist attacks in Australia; and
 - iv) to examine these factors in relation to potential pandemic influenza in Australia.
2. To conduct a community survey to determine risk perception trends and related psychosocial effects with specific elements including:
 - i) perceptions regarding potential terrorist attack including the development of 'risk adverse' behaviours;
 - ii) Current knowledge of general influenza transmission; and
 - iii) Knowledge of and attitudes towards pandemic influenza threat, risk and safety, prevention and health protective behaviours.
3. To develop a brief version of the SAFE module for rapid deployment in the event of an actual terrorist event or pandemic influenza.

Modelling community resilience: A multi-level approach to assessment and capacity building

A brief summary of the project

This project will develop a parsimonious set of individual, community and societal predictors of adaptive capacity (resilience). By using generic predictors, the model will be capable of assessing resilience in different communities and across all hazards. This will allow a common measurement framework to be used locally, regionally and nationally and facilitate the development of a capacity for comparison across areas and regions. In addition to identifying issues to be addressed by risk communication programs, the research will identify guidelines for developing program content. The model can serve as a decision support tool that can provide as additional evidence-based input into the risk assessment process, particularly with regard to assessing how risk (with regard to estimating the capacity of a community to adapt to hazard consequences) is distributed (locally, regionally, nationally). A capability to assess those community dynamics that represent good predictors can contribute to the cost-effectiveness of emergency management planning. For example, the assessment framework can identify community strengths and weaknesses and allow limited resources to be directed to only those areas that require development. The assessment framework that the model affords also provides a systematic basis for evaluating intervention and monitoring change in levels of resilience and its distribution. The model framework can also inform response and recovery planning (e.g., identifying areas of greater susceptibility of loss and low adaptive capacity).

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.

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Graduate Certificate in Emergency Management

The first cohort of the nationally recognised EMA Graduate Certificate in Emergency Management graduated in June following a seminar at which candidates presented their final research projects. The projects varied across the broad spectrum of emergency management and were of a very high standard.

The program is delivered in partnership with the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology. Graduates have the opportunity to access Masters Programs in a range of disciplines. Visit www.ema.gov.au for details of the EMA Graduate Certificate in Emergency Management.

EmergoTrain

EmergoTrain is a major incident simulation system, created in Sweden for the health service. It enables health services to develop their mass casualty management by practising with in a real-time situation. Current (or indicative) bed occupancy might be incorporated at exercise start. Normal services are not disrupted.

Magnetic symbols are used to represent patients, staff and resources. Movable markers indicate priorities and treatment regimens. In the Australian version, use of a "delay board" ensures that predetermined, accurately validated times are adhered to, so that, with careful monitoring from the instructors, realism is assured.

EMA is supporting a national effort towards embracing this system. 42 senior instructors were qualified at two programs conducted in Feb/Mar 2006, at the EMA Institute, Mount Macedon. Participants were drawn mainly from States which provided the 'seeding' finance, Victoria and New South Wales.

This training, and the associated national endorsement, will provide Australian hospitals with an effective training and validation mechanism for their emergency departments, operating theatres, ICUs and ECCs in the management of a mass casualty event. The process also effectively includes pre-hospital elements, by incorporating those procedures and management practices in the early stages of the exercise.

Before the Commonwealth games, Victoria (in conjunction with WA, SA and QLD) conducted a 'surge' exercise involving 1200 victims over 4 major Victorian hospitals. This was the largest EmergoTrain exercise ever held. Victoria is now leading the way, planning to conduct 11 exercises in the second half of 2006. The Victorian Department of Human Services has engaged a senior policy advisor for 12 months to establish the exercise program and to ensure that the sector is adequately exercised in coping with a mass casualty event. NSW will also be establishing an exercise calendar.

For further information, contact Colin Fiford
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Inclusive Emergency Management with Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) Communities

Following on from the review of the Guidelines for Emergency Management in CALD Communities, EMA is in the process of developing and delivering targeted training. This training is intended to increase the engagement between CALD communities and the emergency management sector.

In this context EMA is conducting a program consisting of two workshops in which participants will be required to attend both workshops and to commit to completing a work project in the weeks between the workshops. This program is aimed at personnel who are members of local or regional/district emergency management planning committees in areas where there are high levels of CALD representation.

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Another initiative is the development of learning materials for integrating multicultural awareness components within five existing EMA programs. These programs are: Emergency Management for Local Government; Undertake Emergency Planning; Context of Recovery Management; Course in Evacuation and Recovery Centres; and Emergency Coordination Centre Management.

For further information contact Judy Parker
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School Education

Earlier this year EMA commissioned Curriculum Corporation to conduct a national audit, of State and Territory primary and secondary school curricula and commercial resources, to identify strategies to better integrate all hazards and emergency preparedness education into the school curriculum. This audit has now been completed and the final report delivered to EMA.

Some of the key finding (in brief) from a curriculum perspective include;

- All jurisdictions have natural disasters well entrenched and explicit within the curriculum. However the main emphases are on where, what, how and why of disasters, mainly natural;
- With some exceptions, curriculum guidelines in general do not emphasise issues to do with planning, prevention, preparedness, and recovery following a disaster; and

- There is a trend towards a 'post' disaster approach, in which many schools conduct a special study following an event.

From a resource perspective, recommendations focused on making links specifically to State and Territory curricula and ensuring resources were relevant to children through; real-life case studies, investigation of realistic but hypothetical scenarios such as What would you do if ...?, role-playing scenarios, simulations and use of dramatisation and practical action-research activities within communities.

This report gives a clear understanding of the hazards and emergency preparedness needs in the Australian education system and is seen as a vital step in preventing the duplication of resources and provides direction for EMA's and other emergency management sector organisations efforts in this area.

A meeting of State and Territory Education Department officials and EM personnel will be convened later this year to table this report and develop an action plan.

For further information contact Melanie Ashby

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The school education website can be viewed at www.ema.gov.au/schools

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Attorney-General announces successful grant recipients under the Working together to Manage Emergencies initiative

The Attorney-General, The Hon Philip Ruddock MP, has announced details of 365 projects, valued at \$13.1 million to be funded in 2006/07 through the Local Grants Scheme (LGS) and National Emergency Volunteer Support Fund (NEVSF).

The two programs were developed in September 2004 as part of the 'Working Together to Manage Emergencies' initiative which recognised the need to develop self-reliance at both the community and local government levels. The initiative provides funding to support local governments, communities and volunteer

organisations to develop strategies to improve community safety and to improve recruitment, retention and training for volunteers involved in emergency management.

Successful projects for 2006/07 ranged in value from under \$1,000 for the purchase of Tabards for use in an Emergency Operations Centre to \$360,000 for the development of the Australian Disaster Information Network (AusDIN) web portal, a cross jurisdictional national project that provides ready access to a wealth of emergency management related information.

Each state and territory convened a Selection Committee to prioritise all applications for funding received from local government areas, Indigenous

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

communities and volunteer agencies within the jurisdiction. This ensured that only those projects that were consistent with the emergency management priorities of the state or territory were successful.

The projects supported in 2006/07 provide a balance across rural and urban areas, and offer assistance to remote communities, Indigenous communities and capital cities taking account of the risks and vulnerabilities facing people living in those communities. The successful projects provide assistance to the full range of volunteer organisations active in the emergency management sector and support their endeavours to build safer sustainable communities.

The funding allocated to local governments and volunteer emergency management agencies will assist them to further develop their capability to undertake their responsibilities. The funding breakdown by individual jurisdictions as announced by Mr Ruddock was:

Jurisdiction	Total
NSW	\$3.2 million
Victoria	\$2.1 million
Queensland	\$2.7 million
SA	\$1.2 million
WA	\$2.2 million
Tasmania	\$0.5 million
NT	\$0.5 million
ACT	\$0.2 million
National Projects	\$0.5 million.

National projects are those assessed as having significant benefit across all states and territories.

Applications for funding under the two programs in financial year 2007/08 will be called for in mid-December 2006, with a closing date of 2 March 2007. It is expected that guidelines and application forms will be available on the Emergency Management Australia website at www.ema.gov.au/communitydevelopment from mid-December.

interesting websites



www.fema.gov/kids

This innovative and colourful site is the brainchild of the US Federal Emergency Management Agency and aims to teach children how to prepare for disasters and prevent disaster damage.

Introduced by Herman, the spokesperson for the site, it makes learning fun through features such as cartoon character graphics, games, stories, information and even an opt-in 'become a Disaster Action Kid' program. In a cute little story, Herman even endeavours to find a disaster proof shell.

The site also contains on-line resources for parents and teachers such as curriculum items and safety information that can be used in the classroom or at home.



www.abc.net.au/newinventors/txt/s1493127.htm

This page is more of a new and interesting item, images of which can be viewed on the ABC New Inventors' website. The website showcases a Year 12 student, Katya Heise, who recently designed and made 'Bed+Aid' as part of her Design & Technology subject.

Initially Katya designed general purpose furniture made from cardboard, then the Boxing Day tragedy (the tsunami) occurred and she saw the need for a much more efficient method of dispatching aid. Katya set about designing Bed+Aid, a product that can be immediately transported to disaster struck areas to supply all the basic needs of people in an emergency situation; such as, clothes, food, water, first aid, a bed and bedding, while the more permanent clinics and refuge areas are being established.



