

# The Australian Journal of Emergency Management



The Australian Journal of Emergency Management is published by the Australian Emergency Management Institute, Mt Macedon, Victoria, Australia. Funding for publication is provided by Emergency Management Australia. The journal's circulation is 5100 copies, distributed without charge to subscribers throughout Australia. It is also sent to people throughout the world.

The journal endeavours to provide an information sharing forum for all those involved in emergency management. Contributions relating to Australian and international emergency activities, articles identifying and discussing issues, policies, planning or procedural concerns, research reports and any other information relevant to the emergency and disaster management community are welcome.

The aim of this publication is the exchange of information and views across the Australian emergency management community, therefore, the views expressed in this journal should not be taken to be the views of Emergency Management Australia.

This journal incorporates a review process. Three levels of review—refereeing, editorial board review and editing—are conducted. Material submitted for publication should be on disk and reach the Editor by the following dates: Summer – October 15th; Autumn – January 15th; Winter – April 15th; Spring – July 15th. The editorial committee reserves the right to determine the suitability of all material submitted and where necessary to edit submissions.

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ISSN 1324 1540

## Editorial

# Perspectives on Emergency Management

In March an inaugural meeting was held in New Zealand of selected representatives from USA, NZ and Australia to consider the future of emergency management in the next decade. The 'Impact 2010' conference, which was a far-sighted initiative of the United States of America and New Zealand, was attended by 55 delegates.

Australia was represented by a member of each State and Territory emergency management committee, the Bureau of Meteorology, the Australian Geographical Survey Organisation, the Insurance Council of Australia, the Natural Hazards Centre of Macquarie University and EMA.

In each of the three main sessions, one country took the lead with a keynote paper and other countries provided supporting papers. Major themes were the *Philosophy of Emergency Management* (NZ), *Developing the Necessary Tools* (USA) and *Developing the Necessary Skills* (Australia). The papers were challenging and those from Australia resulted from national collaboration between EMA and State and Territory emergency management committees.

The expectations of the Australian delegation were that:

- we would learn from each other of activities that are being done better elsewhere
- we would achieve consensus among key Australian emergency management players of priority directions to be pursued
- we would explore ways in which to motivate governments to be as serious

about disaster mitigation as they are about response capabilities

- we would identify means of changing community attitudes and behaviour about the risks they face
- we would look to the coming decade to see how we can organise and provide emergency management information to those who need it and in the form required
- we would have time to get to know each other better and to be in 'receive' as well as 'send' mode.

In one way or another, these expectations were met. The Australian delegation was certainly challenged. However, we recognised that while we in Australia have no monopoly on good ideas, we can undoubtedly hold our own internationally. The directed, yet free-flowing, activity enabled us to shape our views and reassess priorities. We came away with a determination to continue to develop and refine our approaches as part of the national emergency management committee system and in more informal situations.

The wide representation at the meeting reinforced that emergency management is not the exclusive domain of practitioners. Saving life and property and protecting the environment is a whole-of-government, whole-of-community function. The significant challenge for the next decade in Australia is for emergency managers to ensure that there is broader ownership within both governments and the community.

Alan Hodges, Director General, EMA

## National studies program

EMA is involved in the development of prevention, preparedness, response and recovery strategies for all hazards that pose a significant risk to Australian communities.

EMA sponsors a national studies program consisting of workshops, seminars and study periods conducted annually at the Australian Emergency Management Institute at Mt. Macedon, Victoria. The program addresses multi-disciplinary aspects of emergency management to enhance capabilities or to further community understanding.

Each event may be attended by up to 50 people. EMA will fund travel for participants within Australia, administration of the event and accommodation

for participants at the Institute, to a limit of \$20,000 per event.

Nominations are invited for topics to be considered during the period of July 2000–June 2001. Submissions must identify the type of event proposed, its aims and outcomes, the target audience, and how the event will strengthen emergency management capabilities. Preference will be given to multi-disciplinary topics. Proposals for jointly-funded events may also be viewed favourably.

Application forms and selection criteria are obtainable from the Director, Australian Emergency Management Institute, Mt Macedon Vic 3441, tel: (03) 5421 5100, fax: (03) 5421 5272.