

CBR Expert retires from EMA and looks forward to a quieter life

There would be many members of our Australian readership who have spent time at the Emergency Management Institute at Mt Macedon undertaking one of a range of Chemical Biological and Radiological (CBR) training courses. They would be very familiar with Don Patterson, EMA's Assistant Director Specialist Capabilities, who conducted the training with great enthusiasm, imparting his vast reservoir of knowledge to those participating. Don retired from his role in Emergency Management Australia on 11 December 2006 and will undertake a lifestyle change by the coast.

Don joined EMA's civil defence section in 1991, a position that required detailed CBR knowledge which he brought with him from his Army career. He was influential in development of the National Civil Defence Policy and the conduct of the popular, well attended Civil Defence Courses which were held at Mt Macedon until 2001.

After nearly five years in civil defence Don's interests turned to incident management, particularly CBR incidents. He moved to the National Emergency Management Coordination Centre (NEMCC) in 1995 as Assistant Director Emergency Coordination successfully managing the provision of Australian Government support to States and Territories following a number of significant disasters. Don later took over management of the NEMCC while continuing involvement in sponsorship and support of the National Registration and Inquiry System (NRIS) and the Visiting Ships Panel (Nuclear). He established an extensive network of emergency management contacts both nationally and overseas.

In 2003 Don handed over the reins of the NEMCC to concentrate on CBR matters. He established an excellent national and international reputation through detailed involvement in activities such as, chairing the National CBR Working Group; co-chairing the Consequence Management Group, under the AUS/CAN/UK/US Quadrilateral CBR Counter Terrorism and Counter Measures Working Group; his input to the National



Director-General of EMA, Mr Tony Pearce presenting Don Patterson with his commemorative respirator.

Counter Terrorism Plan in the area of consequence management; his activities in identification and addressing of gaps in national CBR capability, including mass fatality management; his detailed input into development of the National CBRN Security Strategy and of course not forgetting his on-going personal involvement with CBR Courses at Mt Macedon. Don's dedicated and passionate contribution to enhancing the national capacity to manage CBR incidents has been a truly outstanding one.

The Director General of EMA, Mr Tony Pearce, hosted a presentation ceremony for Don at an EMA function on 7 December at which he presented Don with a framed, mounted respirator artistically arranged with various EMA insignia representing his 15 years of service.

We wish Don all the very best in his retirement and hope that the skills and knowledge that have been imparted with such commitment and enthusiasm to members of the emergency management community, will continue to flourish and grow.