

The Comcover Awards for Excellence in Risk Management 2008



L – R: Gordon Cheyne, Dr Neil Williams, Len Hatch, Gary Foley, Rick Bailey, Carl Muller, Anthony Baldwin, Craig Tigwell, Ray Canteford, Prue Harley and Mark Sullivan.

On Friday 7 November the winners of the 2008 Comcover Awards for Excellence in Risk Management were announced at the National Convention Centre in Canberra. The Australian Tsunami Warning System project, developed in partnership between The Bureau of Meteorology (The Bureau), Geoscience Australia (GA) and Emergency Management Australia (EMA), were awarded 'Highly Commended' in the Risk Initiative category.

The awards are based on the demonstration of true leadership in the field of risk management, and highlight the substantial ongoing benefits of risk management in achieving the current and future outcomes of Australian Government agencies. They recognise exceptional and inspiring examples of risk management and demonstrate how essential risk management is to the success of Australian Government agencies.

The nominations received in this year's program indicate that agencies are demonstrating a greater focus on the accountability and responsibility for managing risk with governance structures for the managing of risk more apparent in agencies. The regular monitoring and review of agencies' risk systems and processes indicate a cycle of continuous improvement where risk management frameworks and programs are reviewed and updated regularly.

As a direct result of the December 26 2004 Tsunami, the Government pledged \$68.9million over four years to establish a national tsunami warning system,

to be jointly managed by the Bureau, GA and EMA. This initiative provides an around-the-clock tsunami monitoring and analysis capacity for Australia, integrated into our well-established hazard warning and emergency management arrangements throughout the Australian States and Territories.

In presenting the award to The Bureau, GA and EMA, it was found that the project objectives were clearly articulated and the implementation strategy plan formed the foundation of the project's risk management plan and risk register. Comcover also noted that "there was clear evidence of how risk management was used to monitor implementation challenges and how staff from the operational to executive levels of each of the three agencies was engaged in the risk process."

Risk management was used to monitor implementation challenges and the risk process. The experience that the three agencies gained has assisted in gaining and developing high levels of risk management expertise, whilst supporting the Government in meeting its commitment to establish a tsunami warnings system in Australia as well as supporting the development of tsunami warnings for the international community.

Director General at EMA goes on to say "this is but another example of the great work conducted by our organisation and more broadly to meeting our mission of contributing to 'Safer, Sustainable Communities'".