

# EMA's Graduate Certificate in Emergency Management

In November 2008, EMA held its last graduation for the currently accredited Graduate Certificate in Emergency Management. The Graduate Certificate was first offered in May 2004 and 68 students have graduated to date.

This qualification was specifically designed to provide training for people working in the emergency management sector who required professional development at postgraduate level. Students examined their management skills especially managing relationships within the multi-agency context; were engaged in debate in relation to emergency management theory and practice; contributed to and analysed innovation and change in emergency management; and contributed to the national emergency management research agenda from a practice base.

The Certificate comprised of four modules: Current issues and trends in emergency management, Relationships management in an emergency management context, Research methods and a Research project.

## Equitability in the provision by States and Territories of personal hardship and distress assistance

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All the States/Territories of Australia have arrangements that provide financial support to individuals and families, who have been impacted by disasters and critical events. These funds are known as Disaster Relief Assistance Schemes. While each State and Territory has its own criteria for assessing which individual or family is eligible for assistance, the financial arrangements for the distribution of Personal Hardship and Distress Assistance (within the Disaster Relief Assistance Scheme), vary between each State/Territory. These variations in assistance measures can impact on the ability of individuals and families to recover from a disaster event, dependant on the amount of assistance provided by each State/Territory.

A proportion of the Disaster Relief Assistance Scheme Funds, come directly from the States/Territories, but can, in significant natural disaster events, be supplemented by Commonwealth Funds, supplied under the National Disaster Relief Arrangements. This work shows that there does exist differing levels of assistance between States/Territories in the provision of Personal Hardship and Distress (PH&D) Assistance despite recommendations by COAG in 2001 to:

*Ensure equitable assistance and support to individuals and communities affected by comparable natural disasters across Australia.*

(COAG, 2004 p. viii)

Up to date information was obtained from each State/Territory on the current assistance rates, and any issues relating to the distribution of PH&D funds for 2008. Using the case study of a disaster impacted family, whose circumstances were transposed to each State/Territory, outcomes were obtained that clarified the assistance given to the family, as well as the consequences of residing in differing States/Territories in Australia. Only one State was able to meet the needs of the family enabling them to return to their home, following the disaster event described. The findings of this work show that there does not exist equitable assistance and support to individuals and families affected by comparable natural disaster in the States/Territories of Australia. While assistance remains available for assessed families in all of the States/Territories of Australia, the only consistent application of funds being provided to victims of a disaster event, are those provided by the Federal Government under the Australian Government Disaster Recovery Payment (AGDRP). In all, the assistance measures provided by the States/Territories remain "ad hoc and disparate" (COAG, 2004 p. viii).

**To obtain a copy of the full report please contact:**

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## Fatigue Management in the Emergency Management Context

**Manager General Emergencies Preparedness & Response and Deputy NSW Drought Coordinator and Deputy NSW Locust Commissioner Emergencies, Weeds & Pest Animals Branch NSW Department of Primary Industries**

In this project fatigue management has been evaluated in the emergency management context, particularly in relation to New South Wales Department of Primary Industries (NSW DPI) emergency management activities. Fatigue is a significant problem in emergencies, and particularly long time frame emergencies like animal and plant pest and disease emergencies. However, much of the fatigue management research has been undertaken in areas other than emergency management, so it is not well known how well this fits into the emergency management context. To investigate this issue, fatigue management policies were accessed directly from

emergency agencies across Australia. In the absence of sufficient of these, the focus was broadened to include other related industries whose guidelines were accessed from the web. A content analysis was undertaken to review the documents. The research revealed that the complex interactions between fatigue issues are not well understood and that fatigue management has been developed in other fields and not tested for its appropriateness in the complex emergency management context. This study showed that a flexible risk management approach, rather than prescriptive management approach, is most appropriate to the often complex, multi-agency, long time framed emergencies that NSW DPI manages. The scarcity of information in the emergency management context highlights the need for future studies in better determining interrelationships and interactions between fatigue factors and testing fatigue management systems in emergencies to evaluate their effectiveness in the emergency management context.

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# INTERESTING WEBSITES:

NATIONAL RESOURCE CENTER ON ADVANCING EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS FOR CULTURALLY DIVERSE COMMUNITIES

[www.diversitypreparedness.org](http://www.diversitypreparedness.org)

This website of the National Resource Center in the US serves as a central clearinghouse of resources and an information exchange portal to facilitate communication, networking and collaboration to improve preparedness, build resilience and eliminate disparities for culturally diverse communities across all phases of an emergency.

It is intended for a broad audience including individuals, communities, government, emergency planners, emergency managers, first responders, health care providers, public health professionals, researchers, businesses and policymakers interested in preparedness for diverse populations.

### The site currently includes:

- A catalog of annotated and cross-referenced resources, programs and projects by a range of topics, languages, and communities.
- Links to full-text sources, including peer-reviewed journal articles, training and education content, resource guides, measurement and evaluation tools, translated materials and other publications.
- Links to federal, state and local government, as well as private sector, academic and community-based programs and websites devoted to preparing culturally diverse populations for emergencies.
- A database of translated materials cataloged by multiple languages and cultural communities.
- Powerful search options, including a keyword search, advanced search and browse function.



- An option to submit resources as well as information on new and emerging programs related to preparedness of culturally diverse communities.
- A monthly e-newsletter featuring the latest publications, resources and events as well as promising practices, success stories, lessons learned, innovations, and policies.

The Center also has plans for an online discussion forum for the exchange of ideas and information, including experiences, lessons learned, promising practices and strategies, success stories, new resources, innovations, policies, and events. It also is in the throes of developing an online member directory of experts and professionals working to integrate culturally diverse communities across into preparedness planning and action.