

# NOTES FROM

## Australian Emergency Management Institute

In September 2012, AEMI hosted a number of master classes in Mt Macedon, Canberra and at the Sydney Opera House. The master classes – short bursts of intensive theory and practice, focused on a specific aspect of emergency management – were facilitated by internationally-renowned experts in the fields of crisis management, business continuity and organisational resilience.

### PREVENTING CHAOS IN A CRISIS: LESSONS FROM THE PAST, IDEAS FOR THE FUTURE

#### Peter Power

Peter Power is a recent member of United Kingdom Crisis Management Steering Group and former member of New Scotland Yard's forward planning area, where he was seconded to the anti-terrorist branch. Over two days, the masterclass participants considered trends in crisis management and outcomes from previous disasters. The participants focused on the collaboration of public/private stakeholders in crisis management and the obstacles that can break down effective crisis leadership.

### IS BCM A DEAD-END? THE 21ST CENTURY APPROACH TO MANAGING IN UNCERTAINTY

#### Nathaniel Forbes and Scot Phelps

Nathaniel Forbes, Director, Forbes Calamity Prevention, Singapore, and Scot Phelps, Professor of Disaster Science at the US Emergency Management Academy, facilitated a workshop on organisational resilience. Through a series of stimulating, challenging and interactive sessions, participants explored how the modern, strategic leader can position their organisation to best address the unforeseen, thus turning threats into opportunities. The day examined the convergence of emergency, crisis, and business continuity management from a structural and theoretical perspective through to the implications of this for risk and governance.

### MANAGING IN UNCERTAINTY – WHY TRADITIONAL APPROACHES AREN'T WORKING EXECUTIVE LEVEL 2 PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

#### Peter Power, Nathaniel Forbes and Scot Phelps

Peter Power, Nathaniel Forbes and Scot Phelps each spoke at the National Security College, Canberra, to a wide range of executive level officers from national

security agencies at Federal and State levels. Discussion reflected the keen level of interest in the topic, especially as attendees were in the final stages of their professional development program and had been studying aspects of success and failure in crisis management and leadership. The three international speakers were joined by Michael Jerks from the Attorney-General's Department Critical Infrastructure and Protective Security Policy Branch who provided a comprehensive overview of various approaches to organisational resilience.

### CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S ROUND TABLE DISCUSSION

The Secretary of the Attorney-General's Department, Roger Wilkins AO invited a number of CEOs to attend the Sydney Opera House Board Room to hear Peter Power, Nathaniel Forbes and Scot Phelps present their perspectives on organisational resilience and the policy approaches and strategies being undertaken. Twenty-three CEOs or their nominated representatives attended the three-hour round table discussion. Scot Phelps' presentation in accord with the Australian *National Strategy for Disaster Resilience*, focused on the need to learn from the past and to create an air of optimism. His other key messages were around the importance of understanding public expectations, learning by doing, exercising, and just-in-time training.

Nathaniel Forbes provided three sometimes confronting case studies on international, cross-border industrial activity. These studies graphically highlighted the imperative to understand the context in which companies operate. He emphasised that resilience is not built solely through assurance measures, but by ensuring staff welfare and morale is of primary concern. The right leader is in a position to lead the organisation through crisis and that over reliance on 'the plan' is foolhardy.

# THE FIELD

## forums, workshops and master class activities

### ENGAGING FOR ENGAGEMENT: EM=COMMUNITY<sup>2</sup>

The National Disaster Resilience Community Engagement Framework (Framework), due for completion in mid-2013, will be a key guiding document to assist Australians understand risk and make decisions as part of communicating the *National Strategy for Disaster Resilience*. The Framework is being developed by the Australia–New Zealand Emergency Management Committee’s Community Engagement Sub-Committee (ANZEMC- CESC) as requested by the Standing Council for Police and Emergency Management (SCPEM).

With stakeholder and community engagement being an important part of the development of the Framework, ANZEMC-CESC, in collaboration with the Australian Emergency Management Institute (AEMI) and the International Association of Public Participation (IAP2) Australasia, held a national workshop in September 2012 at AEMI’s premises in Mount Macedon, entitled ‘EM=Community<sup>2</sup>’.

The main purpose of the EM=Community<sup>2</sup> workshop was to review IAP2’s Spectrum of Public Participation - a widely recognised tool for community engagement - and tailor it specifically for application in an emergency management context, with the resulting adapted spectrum to be incorporated into the Framework.

IAP2 is an international association of members who seek to promote and improve the practice of public participation in relation to individuals, governments, institutions, and other entities that affect the public interest in nations throughout the world. In the Australasia region, the term community engagement is more frequently used to refer to public participation. IAP2’s Public Participation Spectrum is designed to assist with the selection of the level of participation that defines the public’s role in any community engagement program. The Spectrum is widely used in Australia and internationally, and is quoted in many community engagement manuals. It is used in the curriculum of some courses run AEMI.

However, it has been acknowledged by EM practitioners as well as AEMI educators and IAP2 Australasia themselves that the spectrum has some limitations in its application within the EM sector. Specifically, the

traditional ‘command and control’ focus of response agencies has meant that while these agencies work well at the ‘inform’ end of the spectrum, difficulties arise at the ‘empower’ stage, particularly for agencies who are legally mandated to enforce.

The workshop attracted approximately 40 high-level specialists in emergency management and/or community engagement from across Australia. Guest speakers were Alison Cottrell from the University of Queensland, who spoke about top-down and bottom-up approaches to community engagement, Anne Leadbeater from Murrindindi Shire Council, who spoke about empowering communities through capacity and resilience, and Dare Kavanagh from the NSW Land and Housing Corporation, who presented a case study in adaptation and use of the IAP2 spectrum.

Workshop participants were given the opportunity to discuss their issues with the structure and layout of the spectrum as a group, and suggest solutions for adaptation. Although the timeframe was tight and expectations were high, the group did manage to put together a revised version of the Spectrum that addressed many, if not all, issues faced by EM practitioners in the community engagement field by the end of the workshop.

Many workshop participants continued to provide input via the consultation process for the Framework, which closed in November 2012.