

# EMPA 2013 conference: high-profile, international experts interact with em communicators

For its 7th annual conference, Emergency Media & Public Affairs (EMPA) continued to 'punch above its weight' with a program heavy with keynote speakers and innovative presentations.

EMPA is the only organisation in the world which is exclusively for emergency public information and warnings practitioners. It has established a professional accreditation program, and awarded its latest accreditations to Sam Colwell (FRNSW) and Heidi Groom (NSWSES) during the conference.

Held in Brisbane on 2-4 June, EMPA 2013 was opened by Assistant Commissioner Alistair Dawson of QPS, followed by the international keynote by Bob Jensen, Deputy Asst Secretary for Public Affairs at Department of Homeland Security, Washington DC.

Other keynote addresses were by Mark Croweller, Director-General of EMA and Craig Lapsley, Victoria's Fire Services Commissioner. Croweller impressed how public information has become the 'new capability' in emergency management. Craig Lapsley introduced

the Public Information Master Class by pointing out that community information and warnings are second only to 'preservation of life' on the list of strategic priorities.

EMPA's 'Greatest Hits' was an innovative afternoon of vignettes from some of the best presenters at previous EMPA conferences. The enthusiastic, fast-talking 13 speakers, some via video, summarised in seven minutes, their subjects and what developments have been made since their first presentation. Delegates were given an expert overview of how public information and warnings have evolved.

At the conference dinner, EMPA founding directors, Alastair Wilson (ex AGD) and Peter Rekers (Crisis Ready QLD) hosted the popular 'Disastrous Trivia Quiz' which was convincingly won by the NSW Rural Fire Service group.

EMPA 2014 will be held in Canberra in 1-3 June, and a committee has been formed to launch an inaugural New Zealand EMPA in Auckland in 2014 as well.



Victorian Fire Services Commissioner, Craig Lapsley addresses EMPA's 7th conference.

## EMPA communication research survey closes 31 August

Communication is at the heart of good emergency management. Please complete this survey to help us design research projects that meet real communication needs. EMPA will team with academics in the field to design specific, tailored research projects relating to communication. The survey gives you and your organisation the opportunity to specify the research that would help you to improve communication, before, during and/or after a disaster. It's easy, free and will take only about 15 minutes to complete:

[www.surveymonkey.com/s/9JBZJXX](http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/9JBZJXX).

# EMPA June 2014 Canberra

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



Networking is a key aspect of the conference which brings together much of the emergency communications profession.



This 'wall art', produced during the conference 'Greatest Hits' session graphically depicts seven years of progress in emergency communication.