

Workshops were popular, with EMPA leading a session developing a model for the public information function in cross-jurisdictional deployments.

Mike Daniels of The Behaviour Architects also ran a mini-workshop on behavioural challenges during the main conference sessions. He tackled the plight of many community engagement workers who may successfully change attitudes but fail to change behaviour.

Rebecca Riggs of Highground Communication finished the event by collating all the knowledge shared and putting empathetic storytelling into practice.

The 10th annual EMPA Conference, held in Sydney on 4-6 June 2017, was attended by 80 crisis and emergency communicators from Australia and New Zealand. Themed 'Communicating to Influence Behaviour in Emergencies', the conference presented a combination of eclectic and practical presentations that provoked vigorous discussion and deep reflection in equal measure.

In August, EMPA crossed the Tasman to stage its 4th New Zealand conference in Wellington. It was attended by a record 150 delegates from police, fire and rescue, local and national government as well as aviation, insurance and primary industries.

EMPA in New Zealand featured keynote talks by Chris Webb, former head of media at Scotland Yard; Sarah Stuart-Black, Director of Civil Defence Emergency Management; Mayor Justin Lester, Wellington City Council and Rosemarie North, International Red Cross, Geneva.

EMPA also presented its inaugural New Zealand Awards for Excellence. In the four categories, the winners were:

- Emergency Communication: Kaikoura EOC PIM team
- Readiness and Resilience: Wellington Regional Emergency Management Office
- Readiness and Resilience: Emergency Management Bay of Plenty
- Media Coverage: Chris Lynch - Newstalk ZB
- Innovation in Public Communications: Brian FM

The next EMPA conferences are in Melbourne in June 2018 and Wellington in August 2018.

EMPA is the only organisation in the world for communications practitioners, media and researchers, focused on encouraging best practice in emergency communications.

The Sydney EMPA Conference was sponsored by Emergency Management Australia and NSW Rural Fire Service.

EMPA New Zealand was sponsored by Auckland Council, Ministry for Civil Defence and Emergency, Ministry of Health, Ministry for Primary Industries, New Zealand Police, Maritime New Zealand and Wellington City Council.

AJEM peer review of research

Peer reviewers for the AJEM number just over 150 and represent 99 different institutions covering universities, government and non-government organisations, private practices and research institutions. Reviewers are predominately from Australia and New Zealand but the AJEM's growing international influence means we now have reviewers from Canada, Indonesia, Taiwan, United States, United Kingdom, Switzerland and Germany.

Every AJEM research paper completes a double-blind peer review process involving one and perhaps two rounds of review. Less 'academic' papers also complete a content peer review by a single reviewer. AJEM peer reviewers play a quintessential role in upholding the quality of AJEM published articles and the relevance of material for readers.

Some peer reviewers have been with the AJEM since its early days and have been pillars of expertise and great supporters as authors and reviewers. Over recent years,

the changing nature of natural hazard occurrences, emergency and disaster management and the growing importance of all areas of resilience has meant AJEM peer reviewers come from a wider range of expertise. Now, new 'waves' of authors are turning to AJEM to publish their research.

The AJEM was first published in 1986 and, looking back at its 31 years of published research and information, the AJEM has positioned Australia as a very active hub of emergency management action with strong international links; such is the depth and breadth of subject matter and topics covered.

Visit the AJEM's new website and online catalogue at the Australian Disaster Resilience Knowledge Hub: www.knowledge.aidr.org.au/collections/australian-journal-of-emergency-management.