

Urban Search and Rescue

The National Urban Search and Rescue Steering Committee met in Canberra in July to progress the development of the national USAR capability. One of the key outcomes was the formation of working groups to develop a communications strategy and to identify issues and recommend strategies for developing protocols for the acceptance of international assistance into Australia following a disaster and for deploying Australian resources to international incidents.

The committee also met with representatives of the Australasian Fire Authorities Council (AFAC) Senior Level USAR Steering Committee to discuss strategies for ensuring a cohesive approach between the two groups.

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Exercise Northern Shield 2000

Defence's Darwin based Headquarters Northern Command (HQNORCOM) recently conducted a tabletop/telephone exercise, Exercise Northern Shield 2000. The principal aim of the exercise was to practice the Australian Defence Force and civilian agencies at local, State/Territory and Commonwealth level in coordination of all aspects of the management of an emergency which transgressed State/Territory borders across the top end of Australia.

The exercise scenario involved the suspected malicious introduction into Australia of an exotic animal disease which had spread across WA, NT and QLD, within the NORCOM area of operations. There was good participation in the exercise by State and Territory and Commonwealth emergency management and agricultural agencies.

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CBR consequence management

Over the past 18 months EMA has been instrumental in assisting States and Territories to develop capabilities for dealing with potential Chemical, Biological and Radiological (CBR) incidents. While the threat to Australia from the deliberate use of CBR materials is considered to be very low, the consequences of such an event could be severe with the potential for significant loss of life.

EMA involvement has included the conduct of training and awareness activities and assisting Olympic Venue States in reviewing their consequence management arrangements.

One of the most successful activities has been the development and delivery of three courses at the Australian Emergency Management Institute on the Management of Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Incendiary and Explosive (CBRIE) Incidents. EMA will continue to conduct an annual CBRIE course to ensure the maintenance of the skills and knowledge to enable emergency services personnel to make informed decisions on CBR.

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Reception Operations

Activations of the draft Commonwealth Government Plan for the Reception of Australian Citizens and Other Approved Persons Evacuated from Overseas (COMRECEPLAN) for the reception of the Kosovo Displaced Persons in Sydney, the East Timorese Internally Displaced Persons in Darwin and, more recently, the Solomon Island Evacuees in Cairns, Townsville and Brisbane have validated the plan while identifying a number of issues requiring resolution.

EMA will host a workshop at the Australian Emergency Management Institute (AEMI) on 24-25 October 2000 aimed at reviewing the plan and obtaining stakeholder agreement-in-principle before formal endorsement is sought from the National Emergency Management Committee.

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Asia-Pacific Disaster Information Working Group Meeting

EMA hosted the inaugural Asia-Pacific Disaster Information Regional Working Group Meeting from 16-18 August 2000. Representatives from the following organisations participated in the meeting: Ministry of Science and Technology, China; Asian Disaster Reduction Center; Asian Disaster Preparedness Center; New Zealand Ministry of Emergency Management; South Pacific Applied Geoscience Commission; Pacific Disaster

Center; Center of Excellence in Disaster Management and Humanitarian Affairs; Australian Geological Survey Organisation; and Emergency Management Australia.

Delegates agreed that the aim of the Asia-Pacific Regional Working Group of Global Disaster Information Network (GDIN) is to improve the range of products and information available to emergency managers from international resources. This will be done by:

- increasing awareness of existing disaster information management capabilities and activities
- fostering development of national and other disaster information networks
- facilitating collaboration on projects of mutual benefit
- promoting sharing of information for disaster management.

The Working Group's immediate priorities are to conduct a disaster information management simulation exercise in 2001 and to survey existing disaster management information capabilities and resources in the region. The next meeting of the Working Group will be held on 20 March 2001 in Canberra in conjunction with the GDIN 2001 Conference. Membership of the Working Group is open to participants of GDIN and any other interested countries, and public and private organisations.

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EMA Projects Program for financial year 2000-2001

The Emergency Management Australia Projects Program provides funding for projects which improve Australia's capabilities for preventing or dealing with natural or technological hazards and disasters. The program attracted over 140 applications from a wide range of individuals and organisations. EMA is pleased to announce that the following 16 projects were approved for funding in the 2000-2001 Financial Year.

- Emergency risk management for remote communities focusing on Aboriginal communities in the Pilbara Kimberley (01/2000).
Ms Moya Newman, Senior Community Liaison Officer, Kimberley/Pilbara, Western Australia State Emergency Service
- Exploring the wellbeing of both volunteer and career based emergency service workers from two fire service organisations (02/2000).
Ms Robyn Betts, Clinical Program Director, Victoria State Emergency Service
- Recovery awareness and education in South Australia (03/2000)
South Australian State Disaster Recovery Committee C/- Jill Coombe, Department of Human Service (Family and Youth Services)
- Design and distribution of 'Building for Nature' (04/2000)
Alan Grinsell-Jones, Master Builders Australia, ACT

- Production and distribution of a handbook 'Rotary and Disaster Support Guidelines' (05/2000)
Mr Alan Sampson, Rotary District 9600, Queensland
- Development of a community education program on cyclone-resistant buildings targeting building trades through TAFE and high schools (06/2000)
Dr Mahen Mahendran, Associate Professor of Civil Engineering & Director of Physical Infrastructure Centre, School of Civil Engineering, Queensland University of Technology
- Community participation model for flood monitoring, awareness and response in rural areas (07/2000)
Mr Wayne Gilmour, Floodplain Manager, West Gippsland Catchment Management Authority, Victoria
- Nature Acts: Severe storms and earthquakes (08/2000)
Denise Miles, Geography Teachers' Association of Victoria
- Australian Red Cross Emergency and Disaster Services Handbook 2000 (09/2000)
Margaret Golack, Executive Officer, Disaster Services, Australian Red Cross, ACT
- Fire safety education for ethnic communities using the Iraqi community of the Goulburn Valley as a model (10/2000)
Alex Caughey, Community Education Coordinator, Country Fire Authority, Goulburn Murray Area, Victoria
- Role of Local Government in Emergency Management (11/2000)
Mr Brian Clancey, Director, Legislation and Environment, Local Government Association of South Australia
- More than a Band-Aid: The development of strategies to improve recruitment, retention, training and support to Volunteer Ambulance Officers (12/2000),
Associate Professor Judi Walker, Department of Rural Health, University of Tasmania
- Flood risk assessment for caravan parks in NSW (13/2000)
Dr Stephen Yeo, Department of Physical Geography, Division of Environmental and Life Sciences, Macquarie University
- Risk preparedness strategy for Australia's cultural heritage (14/2000)
Robyn Riddett, Conservation Architect, Melbourne, Victoria
- Development of guidelines for assessment of personal and community resilience and vulnerability by Local Government, agencies and communities' (15/2000)
Dr Graham Marsh, School of Social Science and Planning, Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology; Mr Philip Buckle, State Emergency Recovery Unit, Department of Human Services; and Rev Sydney Smale, Statewide Recovery Coordinator, Victorian Council of Churches
- Development of a framework for supporting the local agricultural community in times of significant disease outbreak (16/2000)
Sandice McAuley and Jenny Branton, Safer Murrindindi Steering Group, Murrindindi Shire Council, Victoria

What's on at AEMI

EMA Website Update

Regular visitors to our website would have noticed some image changes lately. A different look and a streamlining process has set the pace for the web team to continue with the development and constant update of information for the emergency community.

Included in our website now is a section dedicated to teachers and students. 'Disaster in Education in Schools' provides some interesting facts and figures to help students with assignments, some lesson plans for teachers and some dramatic images of disasters to help illustrate your presentations.

Main topics on our site:

- About EMA
- Current Activities
- Community Information
- Virtual Library
- EMA Media Releases
- Education, Training and Research
- Disaster Education in Schools
- Conference Centre

Visit: www.ema.gov.au

All comments and suggestions are gratefully received and should be addressed to either:

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EMA National Studies Program for 2001-2002

EMA sponsors the EMA National Studies Program which sponsors activities such as workshops, seminars and study periods. The program addresses multi-disciplinary aspects of emergency management in order to enhance capabilities and/or further community understanding.

Proposals will be sought in February 2001 for topics to be considered for the 2001-2002 National Studies Program.

Further information and the submission proforma will be then available on the EMA Internet site, at www.ema.gov.au

Certificates for AEMI Courses

Since 1997 AEMI has conducted accredited courses and has issued certificates of attainment for successful completion of one or more assessment tasks. A number of these certificates state that the certificate is valid for a

particular time period. This time period is not required as the certificate is valid for an indefinite period.

Anyone who has one of these certificates and who would like the certificate reissued should contact:

Trish Power

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AEMI Staff

Two long term Senior Education Officers have taken leave for 13 month periods from the beginning of September 2000. Merrick Chatfield has been seconded to the Asian Disaster Preparedness Centre in Bangkok and Nicholas Kanarev is doing his Bar Readers Course to become a Barrister at Law and will be reading for 6 months. Louise Mitchell will be acting in one of the positions and the other position has been advertised.

Emergency management officers' Professional Development Program Foundation course

The Foundation course of the Professional Development Program for newly appointed Emergency Management Officers was run at AEMI for the first time from 27th August to 3 September, 2000. Participants who attended this course found it to be a very positive learning experience that provided an introduction to the role of the Emergency Manager and the underpinning knowledge and skills required to undertake that role. Successive courses in the program will build on these foundations.

The course addressed individual skills and knowledge in the areas of personal effectiveness and the emergency management environment in which EMOs work. These topics were consolidated through the use of simulations to provide a learning experience in effective EM. In essence, participants learnt EM related knowledge and skills, while also looking at their work with others and reflecting upon their own performance.

Topics covered in this course included:

- *Personal effectiveness:* establishing and maintaining contacts and networks, marketing, facilitation techniques, leadership, political awareness, problem solving, public speaking, and dealing with different social groups such as volunteers and culturally diverse communities.
- *Effective emergency management:* concepts and principles of emergency management, EM arrangements, EM planning, and operational management.

The Foundation Course is the first of the three courses in the program. It will be followed by an ERM and Planning Course in February 2001, and an Operational Management Course in July/August 2001. The participants from

the Foundation Course will attend all three courses (the first delivery of this Program) as a group. The program is scheduled to be run again with the Foundation Course set for 15 – 27 April 2001.

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Public Safety Training Package

The Public Safety Training Package has been endorsed by the National Training Framework Committee. Currently the training package comprises of competency standards, assessment guidelines and qualifications for the Emergency Management, Police and State/Territory Emergency Services sectors. It is anticipated that the training package will be expanded to include Defence, Fire, Australian Search and Rescue, Workcover Field Officers and Sherriffs.

For further information contact:

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EMA publication news

Hazards, Disasters And Survival

VHS video tape

total viewing time: 90 minutes (6 x 15 minutes)

The Hazards, Disasters and Survival disaster education television series, comprising six programs, was produced by the Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC) with assistance from Emergency Management Australia (EMA) and each State and Territory. Videotapes of the series have now been produced for use in classrooms, homes, displays and presentations.

Each 15-minute program features interviews with emergency managers and people who have survived natural hazards and disasters. Australian news footage, and practical advice on how to prepare for natural hazards. Hazards covered are: severe storm; flood; bushfire; cyclone; earthquake and landslide; and heatwave.

The series which began screening nationally in October 1988 has been broadcast eight times at early morning and mid-morning timeslots as part of the ABC's Lifelong Learning and School Education series. An ABC survey indicated that 143,000 school students viewed the first series. Additional screenings have been programmed in the second half of 2000.

Lesson plans to support the use of the videos in the classroom have been developed and can be downloaded from the EMA website or purchased from the Geography Teachers' Association of Victoria, Inc.

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