



**Australian Government**  

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**Attorney-General's Department**  
  
**National Security**  
**Capability Development Division**

# **NATIONAL SECURITY UPDATES**

## NATIONAL SECURITY UPDATES

# National Security Capability Development News

**The following are extracts / summaries of news items and media releases that may be of interest to the emergency management sector.**

**17 AUGUST 2009**

### **VICTORIAN BUSHFIRES ROYAL COMMISSION INTERIM REPORT**

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Attorney-General, Robert McClelland, and Parliamentary Secretary for Victorian Bushfire Reconstruction, Bill Shorten, welcomed the release of the Victorian Bushfires Royal Commission Interim Report.

The Commission is to be commended for the important work it has undertaken to date.

The Rudd Government has already begun a detailed analysis of the recommendations and will respond in accordance with the timetable set out by the Royal Commission.

The Report's recommendations will also inform the further development of emergency response policy and practice.

One important initiative referred to by the Royal Commission is the development of a telephone based emergency warning system.

The Commonwealth is already assisting the States and Territories to develop a national telephone-based emergency warning system and to conduct research to improve the technology.

The Rudd Government has invested \$15 million to assist the States and Territories to establish a National Emergency Warning System (NEWS) to deliver emergency warnings to landline and mobile telephones.

The national emergency warning system is being developed to be operational by the next bushfire season, in line with the Interim Report's recommendations.

In addition, the Commonwealth has invested \$11.3 million to:

- create a Location-Based Number Store (LBNS) to provide secure access for State and Territory warning systems to telephone numbers based on their billing address; and
- fund collaborative research between the Commonwealth, States and Territories with industry on ways to deliver warning messages to mobile phones based on a handset's physical location, rather than the owners billing address, consistent with the Commission's recommendations.

Other recommendations focus on the potential for Commonwealth agencies to more effectively cooperate with the States and Territories in sharing information and resources to assess fire danger and detect, track and suppress bushfires.

Relevant Commonwealth agencies, including Emergency Management Australia (EMA), will explore ways to ensure that this cooperation is made possible.

The report also recommends the promotion of more effective emergency call service arrangements throughout Australia through the COAG framework.

The Victorian Bushfires Royal Commission will deliver its Final Report on 31 July 2010.

For more information, please visit [www.attorneygeneral.gov.au](http://www.attorneygeneral.gov.au)

## NATIONAL SECURITY UPDATES

**19 AUGUST 2009**

### **PROTECTION FOR FOREIGN EMERGENCY SERVICE PERSONNEL**

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Attorney-General, Robert McClelland, today introduced into the House of Representatives the Foreign States Immunities Amendment Bill 2009.

The Bill will enable civil immunity in Australian courts to be conferred on United States fire fighters helping authorities in Australia prepare for, manage and respond to bushfires.

"This Bill is one way the Australian Government can assist the States and Territories with bushfire prevention and management to enhance the safety and security of all Australians," said Mr McClelland.

The passage of the Bill will facilitate the conclusion of a fire fighter exchange agreement with the United States currently being negotiated by the Victorian Government on behalf of all Australian States and Territories.

The agreement will also provide for Australian fire fighters to enjoy similar protection when operating in the United States.

The immunity would only apply to acts or omissions of foreign personnel in the course of their duties, and would not apply in criminal proceedings.

United States authorities continue to provide critical assistance to Australia in the lead up to and during the annual bushfire season. Since 2003, over 170 fire fighters have been deployed to Australia, including for the horrific Victorian Black Saturday fires in February 2009.

"The Bill also provides a legislative framework for immunity to be conferred on other foreign emergency service personnel where required to help Australian authorities respond to disasters and emergencies."

The protections provided by the proposed amendments will allow both Australia and the United States to be confident in the overseas deployment of their emergency service personnel.

**31 AUGUST 2009**

### **VICTORIAN BUSHFIRES ROYAL COMMISSION INTERIM REPORT**

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The Commonwealth today provided its response to the Interim Report of the 2009 Victorian Bushfires Royal Commission.

The response addresses recommendations of primary relevance to the Commonwealth, with implementation plans for each recommendation as requested by the Commission.

It also outlines actions by the Commonwealth in support of a number of recommendations directed to Victorian Government responsibilities.

The Commission is to be commended for the release of its Interim Report, with a focus on the protection of human life and actions that can be undertaken prior to the next bushfire season.

The Commonwealth will continue to assist Victoria in the provision of a Delivery Report, detailing progress on each recommendation relevant to Commonwealth areas of responsibility and, where appropriate, the outcomes and effectiveness of the response. The Delivery Report is due by 31 March 2010.

The Victorian Bushfires Royal Commission will deliver its Final Report on 31 July 2010.

The Commonwealth will continue to provide all necessary assistance to the Commission in its further deliberations.

## NATIONAL SECURITY UPDATES

**9 OCTOBER 2009**

### **RELEASE OF FLOOD MANAGEMENT MANUALS**

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Attorney-General, Robert McClelland and Federal Member for Page, Janelle Saffin released key emergency management manuals to improve flood preparedness, warnings and emergency response.

"The manuals will assist Australian communities to build their resilience to flooding by providing information and expert advice to a range of relevant agencies and organisations," Mr McClelland said.

The manuals have been developed in conjunction with the Australian Council of State Emergency Services and are part of the Australian Emergency Manual series which are developed to provide information on nationally consistent best practice in emergency management.

The manuals were launched in the Northern New South Wales city of Lismore, which was hit by major floods in May.

"Local residents are unfortunately all too familiar with the tragic consequences of severe flooding. These manuals provide the community with valuable guidance on all stages of flood preparation and response," Ms Saffin said.

Further information can be found on [www.ema.gov.au/publications](http://www.ema.gov.au/publications)

**14 OCTOBER 2009**

### **AUSTRALIA PARTICIPATES IN REGIONAL TSUNAMI EXERCISE**

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Attorney-General, Robert McClelland, welcomed Australia's participation in an international exercise to test response arrangements for tsunami activity in the Indian Ocean.

"The importance of such an exercise is highlighted by the tragic devastation and loss of life experienced in both Sumatra and Samoa in recent weeks," said Mr McClelland.

The exercise, Indian Ocean Wave, was led today by Indonesia and tested the ability to communicate urgent information including the size, intensity and likely land inundation of a simulated tsunami.

The exercise involved emergency services from Western Australia as well as Commonwealth agencies including Emergency Management Australia (EMA), Geoscience Australia and the Bureau of Meteorology who are involved in the Australian Tsunami Warning System (ATWS).

The ATWS is provided through the Joint Australian Tsunami Warning Centre which operates 24-hours a day, seven days a week to detect and verify tsunami threats to Australia as a result of earthquakes.

The ATWS provides a comprehensive warning system capable of delivering timely and effective tsunami warnings to affected populations. It also supports international efforts to establish an Indian Ocean tsunami warning system, and contributes to the facilitation of tsunami warnings for the South-West Pacific.

Indian Ocean Wave coincides with the United Nations International Disaster Reduction Day and follows a similar exercise conducted in June that successfully tested tsunami warning and communication arrangements for countries in the Pacific Ocean.

Eighteen nations participated in the Indian Ocean Wave exercise, including Indonesia, Bangladesh, India, Kenya, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mauritius, Mozambique, Myanmar, Oman, Pakistan, Seychelles, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Tanzania, Timor Leste and Australia.

## NATIONAL SECURITY UPDATES

**20 OCTOBER 2009**

### **COMMONWEALTH ASSISTANCE FOR QUEENSLAND BUSHFIRE VICTIMS**

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Attorney-General, Robert McClelland, today announced that the Commonwealth Government will provide financial assistance to communities affected by recent bushfires in Queensland.

Commonwealth assistance is being provided to the Queensland Government through the Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements (NDRRA).

Funding will include assistance for the restoration of essential public infrastructure and relief operations, as well as personal hardship and distress assistance, including:

- Emergency Assistance Payments of \$170 per person and up to \$780 per family;
- Essential Household Contents Grants of \$1,660 per individual and up to \$4,980 per couple or family;
- Essential Repairs to Housing Grants of up to \$10,250 per individual and up to \$13,800 per couple or family;
- Concessional loans of up to \$250,000 to eligible primary producers that have suffered physical loss as a result of the bushfires; and
- Freight subsidies of up to \$5,000 to assist with the cost of transporting livestock, fodder or water and building or fencing equipment or machinery.

Inquiries in relation to personal hardship and distress assistance should be made to the Queensland Department of Communities on 1800 173 349. Further information can also be found at [www.communities.qld.gov.au](http://www.communities.qld.gov.au)

Inquires in relation to the freight subsidies should be made to the Queensland Department of Primary Industries and Fisheries on 132 523 or by visiting [www.dpi.qld.gov.au](http://www.dpi.qld.gov.au)

Inquiries in relation to the concessional interest rate loans should be made to the Queensland Rural Adjustment Authority on 1800 623 946. Further information can also be found at [www.qraa.qld.gov.au](http://www.qraa.qld.gov.au)

The Commonwealth, through Emergency Management Australia (EMA), will continue to work closely with Queensland authorities, local government and community organisations to ensure that affected communities have all the support they need during this difficult period.

**23 OCTOBER 2009**

### **DISASTER MITIGATION FUNDING FOR TASMANIA**

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Attorney-General, Robert McClelland, and Tasmanian Minister for Police and Emergency Management, Jim Cox, announced that the Commonwealth will invest over \$150,000 to help Tasmania prepare for extreme storm and weather events.

"This is another example of how cooperation between the Commonwealth and the States can improve the resilience of our communities to natural disasters and emergencies," Mr McClelland said.

The project will be led by the Antarctic Climate and Ecosystems Co-operative Research Centre (CRC) and will model storm surges in coastal areas and extreme rain and wind events.

Commonwealth funding will be provided to the Tasmanian State Emergency Service and will complement investments by the Tasmanian Government and the CRC.

"The project will provide fundamental climate data that will inform effective mitigation strategies and measures such as land use planning, building codes, development policies and communication and awareness programs," Mr Cox said.

Commonwealth funding is being provided under the Rudd Government's new Natural Disaster Resilience Program (NDRP) announced in this years Budget.

The NDRP integrates a number of existing emergency management programs in order to improve efficiency and allow States and Territories to focus on high priority risks including disaster mitigation works, supporting volunteers and building effective community partnerships.

Further information on the Natural Disaster Resilience Program can be found at [www.ema.gov.au](http://www.ema.gov.au)

## NATIONAL SECURITY UPDATES

**25 OCTOBER 2009**

### **PRIME MINISTER MEDIA RELEASE**

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The Australian Government will provide \$52 million to enable the rapid deployment of Australian civilians into overseas disaster or conflict zones.

This will enable the Government to send civilians with expert knowledge and abilities into disaster-struck regions or conflict zones with the urgency required in these terrible situations.

This new initiative is expected to have an interim capability by mid-2010, and is expected to be fully operational by early 2011.

The civilian specialists will be deployed across a wide range of roles. For example, they could be used to help:

- \* restore the delivery of essential services like health services infrastructure;
- \* restore essential infrastructure like utilities services, for example electricity and water; and
- \* rebuild core government institutions to deliver good governance in order to support economic and social stability.

The civilian specialists will be deployed to assist in early recovery and reconstruction efforts after initial emergency response operations have concluded.

The Government will create a register of up to 500 Australian specialists who can be deployed overseas at short notice.

These specialists will be chosen for their technical expertise and their ability to work in challenging environments overseas.

They will be drawn from both the public and private sectors.

These civilian specialists will complement rather than replace existing humanitarian response mechanisms and longer-term development assistance.

Deployed civilians may work alongside the Australian military and police where present or in a stand-alone capability. They may work alongside foreign military, United Nations peacekeepers, police and civilian experts from other countries.

Assignments will range from immediate stabilisation and recovery work to longer-term capacity building roles, recognising that the consequences of disasters can be felt for many years after their immediate impact.

A new Office of the Deployable Civilian Capability will be established within the Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID) to implement the initiative. The Office of the Deployable Civilian Capability will also build strategic partnerships with equivalent civilian organisations overseas, including the United States, the United Kingdom and Canada.

Deployed specialists will undertake advisory and capacity building roles at the national, provincial and district levels in countries which require assistance across six key stabilisation and reconstruction sectors:

- \* Security, justice & reconciliation;
- \* Machinery of Government;
- \* Essential Services;
- \* Economic Stability;
- \* Community and Social Capacity Building; and
- \* Operational management.

As we have seen in recent weeks with the disasters in Samoa and Tonga, and in East Asia Summit member nations including Indonesia, Vietnam and the Philippines, countries affected by crises require significant assistance to alleviate human suffering and to begin the process of recovery.

Often this assistance is needed urgently, and requires specialised knowledge and skills. By providing skilled professionals through the DCC, Australia can play a greater role in this process.

For those who would like further information or to register their interest in this initiative, AusAID will provide more details in the near future.

## NATIONAL SECURITY UPDATES

**30 OCTOBER 2009**

### **COMMONWEALTH ASSISTANCE FOR NORTHERN NEW SOUTH WALES FLOOD VICTIMS**

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Attorney-General, Robert McClelland, announced that the Commonwealth Government will provide financial assistance to communities affected by recent flooding in parts of the New South Wales mid-north coast.

Commonwealth assistance is being provided to the New South Wales Government through the Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements (NDRRA) and will apply to natural disaster declared areas, including Bellingen and Nambucca Shires.

Funding will include assistance for the restoration of essential public infrastructure and relief operations, as well as personal hardship and distress assistance, including:

- personal hardship and distress (PHD) grants to low-income earners whose principal residence has been damaged. Enquiries should be directed to the NSW Department of Community Services on 1800 018 444;
- concessional loans of up to \$25,000 for voluntary, non-profit organisations. Enquires should be directed to NSW Treasury on (02) 9228 5198;
- concessional loans of up to \$130,000 for small businesses and primary producers. Enquiries should be directed to the NSW Department of Primary Industries on 1800 678 593;
- road and rail freight subsidies of up to \$15,000 to assist primary producers for the carriage of livestock and fodder. Enquiries should be directed to the NSW Department of Primary Industries office on 1800 814 647.

The Commonwealth, through Emergency Management Australia, will continue to work closely with New South Wales authorities, local government and community organisations to ensure that affected communities have all the support they need during this difficult period.

**8 NOVEMBER 2009**

### **COMMONWEALTH ASSISTANCE FOR NEW SOUTH WALES FLOOD VICTIMS**

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Attorney-General, Robert McClelland, announced that the Commonwealth Government will provide financial assistance to communities affected by recent flooding in parts of the New South Wales mid-north coast.

Commonwealth assistance is being provided to the New South Wales Government through the Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements (NDRRA) and will apply to the natural disaster declared areas of Coffs Harbour, Bellingen, Kempsey and Nambucca regions. This assistance may be extended to other local government areas following a more detailed assessment.

Funding will include assistance for the restoration of essential public infrastructure and relief operations, as well as personal hardship and distress assistance, including:

- personal hardship and distress (PHD) grants to low-income earners whose principal residence has been damaged. Enquiries should be directed to the NSW Department of Community Services on 1800 018 444;
- concessional loans of up to \$25,000 for voluntary, non-profit organisations. Enquires should be directed to NSW Treasury on (02) 9228 5198;
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The Commonwealth, through Emergency Management Australia, will continue to work closely with New South Wales authorities, local government and community organisations to ensure that affected communities have all the support they need during this difficult period.

## NATIONAL SECURITY UPDATES

# National Climate Change Action for Emergency Management

By Louise Mitchell, education manager and facilitator at the Australian Emergency Management Institute, National Security Capability Development Division, Attorney-General's Department.

Viewing emergency management issues through the lens of a changing climate was the challenge put to a workshop held at the Australian Emergency Management Institute in July 2009. The aim of the workshop was to further develop the National Climate Change Action Plan for the emergency management sector. The current predictions for climate change in Australia were presented along with the implications for emergency management. A discussion paper due out in December 2009 will report on some of the strategies that are being considered and implemented in the climate change adaptation space relevant to the emergency management field in Australia.

### Climate Change in Australia

In March 2008, COAG referred to climate change as one of the greatest economic and environmental challenges of our age. The projections for Australia of the impacts of climate change include:

- "an increase in the severity and frequency of many natural disasters such as bushfires, cyclones, hailstorms and floods;
- "insured losses from weather related events totalling billions of dollars. The flow-on effect is a likely increase in premiums for natural disasters increasing under-insurance and putting added burden on governments and communities when disasters occur;
- "temperature rises combined with an ageing population are projected to see 3000-5000 more people die each year from heat-related illnesses by 2050. There are also expected to be around 79000 additional cases of food poisoning per year by 2050 and the threat from vector borne disease, eg Dengue Fever, will increase;
- "drought is likely to become more frequent and has the potential to disrupt electricity generation capacity and affect the reliability of electricity supplies; and,

- "significant coastal erosion and damage to infrastructure as a result of sea-level rises and storm surges. 711 000 addresses and many billions of dollars worth of assets are at risk from rising sea levels and changes in storm surge. By 2100 sandy beaches could have receded by up to 88 metres."

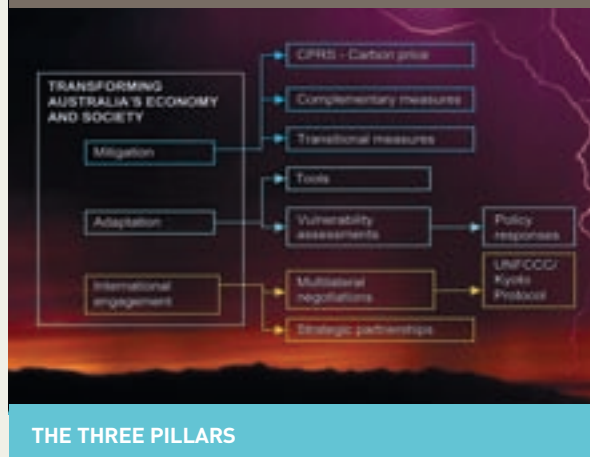
(Department of Climate Change, 2009).

The Australian Government has recognised the need to act on climate change and the Department of Climate Change (DCC) is tackling the issues facing the Australian community along three fronts (Figure 1):

- emissions reduction (climate change mitigation);
- adaptation (including research); and,
- international engagement.

Other government departments, such as Attorney-General's are looking at how the work in on these three fronts fits with their specific areas of interest. The focus of the July 2009 Workshop was climate change adaptation in emergency management.

FIGURE 1. The Australian Government's approach to meeting the challenge of climate change. Department of Climate Change, 2008





# NATIONAL SECURITY UPDATES

The emergency management function will continue to be essential and “emergency management measures based on historic experience will not be adequate in a changing climate. The emergency management sector, including communities, will increasingly need information on emerging climate scenarios to enable climate change to be factored into the management of current and future disaster risks, and to inform preparation and response and recovery efforts. Some impacts from climate change are unavoidable, but implementation of appropriate adaptation strategies will lead to improvements in disaster resilience and reduction in disaster risk” (Attorney-General’s Department, 12 March 2009).

The adaptation agenda is very new in Australia and it has been informed by initial national risk assessments conducted by Department of Climate Change and CSIRO (CSIRO, 2006) and by the Prime Minister’s Science, Engineering and Innovation Council (PMSEIC, 2007). Further research in the Australian context specific to emergency management is planned through the National Adaptation Research Plan (NARP) for Disaster Management and Emergency Services (<http://www.nccarf.edu.au/national-adaptation-research-plan-emergency-management>) which is one of the projects of the National Climate Change Adaptation Research Facility (NCCARF). The NCCARF was established by the Australian government Department of Climate Change in late 2007. It is responsible for leading the Australian research community to generate biophysical, social and economic information needed to manage the effects of climate change. The facility is hosted by Griffith University (and seven others) in partnership with the Queensland Government.

## The Workshop

The background to the July 2009 AGD workshop includes:

- Endorsement of the National Climate Change Adaptation Framework (Department of Climate Change, 2009) , by the Council of Australian Governments in April 2007, providing a basis for action on adaptation to climate change by Australian governments over the period 2007-2012. The Framework outlines the future agenda of collaboration between governments to address key issues on climate change impacts. It includes possible actions to assist the most vulnerable sectors and regions to adapt to the impacts of climate change;
- Agreement in November 2008, by the Ministerial Council for Police and Emergency Management - Emergency Management (MCPPEM-EM) to the development of an action plan, to implement the climate change adaptation strategies for the emergency management sector.

The context of emergency management functions for the purpose of this workshop were necessarily broader than emergency response activity .

Local, State and Territory and Australian Government agencies, NGOs, community and industry representatives came to the workshop to provide input into the Action Plan, including:

Ambulance Victoria	Department of Human Services, Victoria
<b>Attorney General’s Department</b>	<b>Department of Health and Ageing</b>
Australasian Fire and Emergency Service Authorities Council	Geoscience Australia
<b>Australian Council of State Emergency Services</b>	<b>NSW Department of Environment and Climate Change</b>
Australian Red Cross	NSW Fire Brigade
<b>Australian Red Cross Blood Service</b>	<b>NSW State Emergency Management Committee</b>
Bureau of Meteorology	Northern Territory Emergency Service
<b>City of Greater Bendigo, Victoria</b>	<b>Office of the Emergency Services Commissioner, Victoria</b>
Department of Climate Change	SAFECOM, South Australia
<b>Department of Community Safety, Queensland</b>	<b>Tasmania Department of Police and Emergency Management</b>
Department of Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs	WA Fire and Emergency Services Authority

<sup>1</sup>Emergency management functions include disaster mitigation (for example, land-use planning, building codes, building levees), preparedness actions (for example, communications, whole of community and householder education, engagement and action), immediate response and relief activities and immediate and longer term community recovery. Treatment options emerging from the emergency risk management process are another way to conceptualise emergency management functions. These functions are carried out by a wide range of government (local, state and federal), non-government organisations, private industry and individuals and communities working in partnership.

## NATIONAL SECURITY UPDATES

### The Climate Change Action Plan

The workshop participants considered and made suggestions for possible future national action in the following four areas:

Leadership and Coordination;  
Communications;  
Awareness of the Risk Environment; and,  
Reducing Disaster Risk through Appropriate Development in the Built Environment.

Discussion included coordination issues, governance in emergency management, strategic communication at all levels, knowledge management, and the complex issues around land-use planning. Recent initiatives at the jurisdictional and agency level were shared and these will be included in a discussion paper to be released December 2009.

It is important to note that while the workshop focussed on adaptation, the importance of climate change mitigation measures (reducing carbon emissions) for all emergency services and other emergency management related agencies and jurisdictions was also emphasised (as in Thompson, 2008). Climate change mitigation and adaptation should not be seen as dichotomous.

The outcomes of the workshop included:

- progressing integration of the emergency management climate change issues with other climate change activities;
- stakeholder contribution to assist with the development of a proposed Emergency Management National Climate Change Action Plan; and,
- fostering linkages between the emergency management sector and other areas of government and non government sectors responsible for climate change policy, science, response measures and information.

The action plan resulting from the July 2009 workshop and broader jurisdictional consultation will be presented to the MCPPEM-EM members for its approval at its meeting in November 2009. Once endorsed it will be publicly available.

The discussion paper will be available through the EMA website late 2009.

### Conclusion

The Climate Change Action Plan workshop considered the adaptation challenges to emergency management through a lens of increasing risks associated with the effects of climate change. While the projections regarding climate change will not alter emergency management philosophy, they will influence our

response to mitigation, and to continuous improvement in preparedness, response and recovery (including planning, coordination and communication and multi-agency & whole-of-nation responses). Climate change research being conducted will further enable an understanding of the increasing risks to communities which if not mitigated will require significantly greater response and community recovery capability. The management of the risks will require values based community engagement. It will also require political and administrative actions and processes that will enable the engagement (with the various emergency management functions) of many areas of land use planning and mitigation in order to instill awareness and action pertaining to the implications of extreme events.

### References

**Attorney-General's Department**, *Draft AEMC Climate Change Action Plan*, Canberra, 2009.

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**CSIRO**, 2006, *Climate change scenarios for initial assessment of risk in accordance with risk management guidance*.

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**NCCARF**, <http://www.nccarf.edu.au/national-adaptation-research-plan-emergency-management>

**PMSEIC Independent Working Group 2007**, *Climate Change in Australia : Regional Impacts and Adaptation – Managing the Risk for Australia*, Report Prepared for the Prime Minister's Science, Engineering and Innovation Council, Canberra, June 2007.

**Thompson, K.**, 4 February 2008, *Climate change creating major challenges for fire services*, viewed 24 August 2009, <http://www.nswfb.nsw.gov.au/page.php?id=779>

## NATIONAL SECURITY UPDATES

# States and Territories welcome Commonwealth operational briefing prior to bushfire season



**The Hon. Steve Whan, MP NSW Minister for Emergency Services, NSW Minister for Small Business, and NSW Minister for Rural Affairs, Director General Emergency Management Australia (Attorney-General's Department, Mr Tony Pearce and The Hon. Bob Cameron, MP Victorian Minister for Police and Emergency Services, and the Victorian Minister for Corrections.**

In accord with the Commonwealth response to the recommendations of the Victorian Bushfire Royal Commission Interim Report, specifically in relation to Recommendations 11.1 and 11.2 Emergency Management Australia (EMA), a division of the Federal Attorney-General's Department, facilitated an operational pre-season briefing for State and Territory emergency management agencies on the 25th September 2009.

For information References 11.1 and 11.2 are as follows:

Recommendation 11.1 The Commonwealth facilitate discussions between relevant Commonwealth agencies (including Emergency Management Australia, Defence, Defence Imagery Geospatial Organisation and Geoscience Australia) and state and territory fire services to identify ways in which Commonwealth resources might be applied more rapidly and effectively during extremely dangerous bushfires, including investigating the potential for these resources to be used for detecting, tracking and suppressing bushfires.

Recommendation 11.2: The Commonwealth, through Emergency Management Australia, provide briefings at least once a year to state and territory agencies regarding arrangements available (including through Defence) to support jurisdictions during disasters and emergencies, including bushfires. State and territory representatives should advise relevant Ministers and the Chief Officers of emergency services (including fire services) of the outcomes of these briefings.

The aim of this briefing was to facilitate pre-season bushfire and seasonal hazard preparedness and planning discussions between the Commonwealth and States and Territories.

Preparedness discussions focussed on:

- Awareness of Commonwealth support arrangements to jurisdictions and advice for efficient processing of requests for assistance under the Australian Government Disaster Response Plan (Comdisplan) and Defence Aid to Civil Community (DACC) in a timely way that is not encumbered by undue process
- Provision of a comprehensive seasonal outlook in relation to severe fire weather and cyclone activity.
- Australian Government agencies will provide a comprehensive overview of the support and services available to jurisdictions during disasters and emergencies, including bushfires.
- Response arrangements and plans will be reviewed to ensure that they can be immediately activated in the most timely way where required.
- Discussion and reaching agreement on how Australian Government Liaison Officers (from any relevant Commonwealth agency) would/should be embedded into a significantly affected jurisdiction, their roles and responsibilities, trigger mechanisms for their deployment, etc.

The briefing was opened by the Attorney-General and chaired by the Director General EMA.

The briefing included the following presentations:

- Emergency Management Australia - National coordination arrangements and national plans including COMDISPLAN, DACC and the Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements
- Bureau of Meteorology – seasonal weather outlook and support available to jurisdictions
- Geoscience Australia – geospatial and other support available to jurisdictions
- Australian Defence Force – provision of Defence support through the DACC arrangements, requests and tasking arrangements, including a presentation on the capabilities of the Defence Imagery and Geospatial Organisation.
- Centre Link and FaHCSIA will also be in attendance to provide advice on their capabilities.

## NATIONAL SECURITY UPDATES

# ALL ON SHOW AT PARRAMATTA EMERGENCY SERVICES EXPO

Story and photos by David Weir, CALD Coordinator, NSWFB

On Friday 16 October 2009 an Emergency Services Expo was held in Parramatta Park with the NSW Police, Rural Fire Service, State Emergency Service, Ambulance Service of NSW, Red Cross, NSW Fire Brigades and Parramatta Rotary in attendance.

Representatives from the Baulkham Hills/Holroyd Parramatta Migrant Resource Centre, the local council, including Lord Mayor Cllr Paul Garrard, and the Federal Minister for Parramatta Julie Owens also attended with the aim of helping people from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities to understand the role of emergency services in the community, the work they do, and career opportunities.

NSWFB firefighters from 72 Merrylands demonstrated the dangers of kitchen fires, using one of the NSWFB's new kitchen fat fire simulators, while firefighters from 57 Wentworthville delivered the NSWFB's RescuED program, which highlights the importance of road safety with a hard-hitting education session.



The NSW Police Force conducted a demonstration with one of their Police Dog Units

The Emergency Services Expo was attended by approximately 600 people from various CALD backgrounds including Sudanese, Afghan and Syrian, just to name a few, building their capacity to prevent and prepare for emergencies.

This activity was undertaken by ACT's Jurisdictional Community Partnership project, a component of AGD's Inclusive Emergency Management with Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Communities Program.

Further information regarding this program can be provided by contacting AGD's CALD Project Officer on (03) 5421 5295

## NATIONAL SECURITY UPDATES

# WORKING TOGETHER TO MAKE A SAFER COMMUNITY

ACT CALD Conference – Saturday 17th October 2009

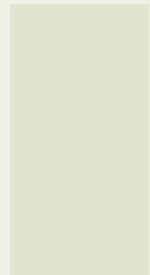
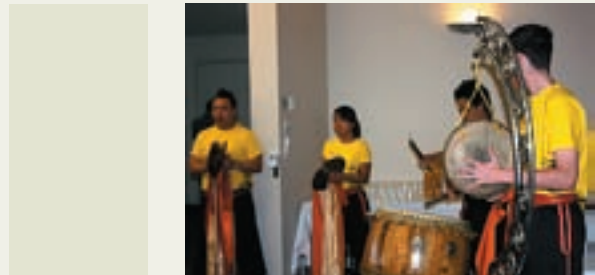
A large gathering of emergency services personnel, CALD community organisation representatives and community members attended a conference on Saturday 17th October organised by ACT's Emergency Services Agency in conjunction with the Australian Federal Police and Office of Multicultural Affairs, Department of Disability Housing and Community Services.

The conference was opened by the Minister for Multicultural Affairs, the Honourable John Hargreaves with various guest speakers from the community and emergency services, sharing information about their previous experience of and the various organisational roles in emergency management. The importance of continuing the vital work of developing relationships and actively involving and partnering with CALD communities and organisations, was a message that resonated throughout the day.

Group discussions explored 5 key areas:

- Building partnerships with multicultural organisations; improving relationships
- Building cultural capabilities in emergency services; what can the services be doing?
- Engaging newly arrived communities; challenges and opportunities
- Engaging faith communities; challenges and opportunities
- Developing effective diversity communication and information resources; are they accessible?

A summary will be developed by ACT Emergency Services Agency's CALD Liaison Officer to further future initiatives for the ACT.



This activity was undertaken by ACT's Jurisdictional Community Partnership project, a component of AGD's Inclusive Emergency Management with Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Communities Program.

Further information regarding this program can be provided by contacting AGD's CALD Project Officer on (03) 5421 5295