DISASTER PSYCHOLOGY
A DUAL PERSPECTIVE PART 2
REACTION OF EMERGENCY SERVICE PERSONNEL TO TRAUMA

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WEB REGISTRATION
The new Website has been registered and is http://www.aies.net.au

WEBSITE CONTENT
The new Website has sections for each State as well as National
Areas. If you have ideas for State Division content, please contact
your State registrar, for National content, email web@aies.net.au.
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prior to web publication to ensure it meets required guidelines.

OFFICIAL JOURNAL OF THE AUSTRALIAN INSTITUTE OF EMERGENCY SERVICES

Autumn08 • National Emergency Response

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We all deal with stress in different ways.
In the various fields of the emergency
sevices, we are all exposed to many
different factors that can induce stress
and have a deep pyschological effect on
our lives. See our feature story on page 10.
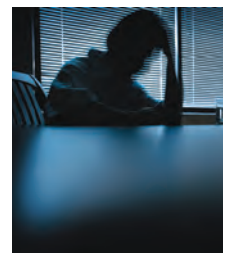
FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

Maurice**Massie**

QPM, LFAIES,
National President

NER MAGAZINE AND CALENDAR

I would like to welcome our new Editor, Geoff Webb to the Editorial team and trust and hope that we have a long and fruitful association with him. I would also like to congratulate him, our publishers and the rest of the team on producing an excellent publication in the form of our Summer Edition.

The articles chosen I thought were excellent and the format and layout produced an excellent result.

Once again, thanks to those members and others who contributed by providing interesting articles for the publication.

Distributed with the Summer Edition, was our inaugural Institute Calendar. The aim of this production is to raise the profile of the Institute. I would be interested to hear from members, through their Divisional Boards, as to their thoughts on the calendar. This feedback is important to us. We have already received some comments which the Council will take into account when deciding whether or not to repeat this production, and if so, how it can be better formatted.

Bearing in mind that this calendar was produced and distributed by our publishers Countrywide Media, at no cost to the Institute, so a repeat production would need to be negotiated with them.

GENERAL COUNCIL MEETING

The General Council Meeting of the Institute as well as the Annual General Meeting of the Institute, will be held in Brisbane on Monday 21 April 2008. Members who have matters they wish to be raised at the General Council Meeting, should communicate them to their Divisional Boards for presentation by their State delegate at the Council Meeting.

AIES ANNUAL PEN PRIZE

As was determined at the General Council Meeting in Hobart in April 2007, a prize for the best article submitted by a member for inclusion in our AIES Journal, was agreed to. The prize for this award will be in the form of a suitably inscribed Parker Pen and the winner of this prize will be decided at our General Council meeting in Brisbane.

State delegates to the meeting will be required to vote on the award so that a winner can be determined. Going by the quality of the articles published in the last twelve months, this adjudication will be a difficult task.

MEETING OF STATE REGISTRARS – AIES

As further determined at the 2007 General Council meeting, a meeting of State Registrars will take place in Brisbane at 2pm on Sunday 20 April 2008. The venue for this meeting will be the Diana Plaza Hotel at 12 Annerley Road, Woolloongabba.

The meeting will be chaired by our National General Secretary/Registrar, Bob Maul. This should prove to be a very worthwhile exercise and will enable Registrars to have the benefit of the National Gen. Secretary/Registrars' expertise in order to enable State Registrars to better carry out their responsibilities and to meet their obligations to the Institute and our corporate commitments to the Australian Securities and Industrial Commission.

The meeting will be an excellent forum for Registrars to discuss matters of mutual concern and raise issues that can be brought before the General Council at their meeting on the following day.

'CLOSE TO HOME'

Whilst one has heard of the disastrous floods and storms that have occurred in Queensland and NSW, I was subject to my own little 'emergency' which occurred on Friday 25 January 2008.

Whilst other areas of Australia had received high

rainfalls, Tasmania and in particular the southern, eastern and central part of the State has suffered severe drought conditions which has made for a serious fire danger situation. Some person/persons unknown in their moronic state, decided that the conditions on Friday 25 January were ideal for them to satisfy their devious cravings and subsequently, went on a rampage lighting no less than 17 fires in the Howrah/Rokeby/Cambridge and Acton Park areas. I happen to live on 5 acres in the Acton Park area, and unfortunately, have neighbours on either side of me that obviously have had no previous experience with bushfires, thus their properties are overgrown with a build-up of flammable fuel by way of dead vegetation and grasses. It was one of these neighbours properties that the aforementioned moron or morons decided was a good target to satisfy their lust. Consequently, a fire on that property quickly took hold and presented a real danger to not only their home, but ours as well.

A call to the 000 number resulted in a very quick response by the Tasmanian Fire Service, who were very quickly on the scene. At the time of their arrival, I with garden hose was attempting to douse some of the spot fires that were occurring on the front of my property and to save some of the garden shrubbery from being engulfed. Because our property was very defendable

against fire and our neighbours not, one of the Fire units came through our front gate and across our garden area to access the fire on the neighbouring property. In so doing, the unit demolished two of the established trees I was endeavouring to save. So much for my individual effort!! The build-up of flammable material on my neighbour's property was such that a fire fighting unit remained on site for some 4 hours extinguishing the fire which affected no more than half an acre. Not withstanding, the Fire Service did an excellent job in controlling this fire and the other fires that had been lit that day, and I am happy to report that there was no loss of property apart from some damage to fences.

AUSTRALIA DAY AWARDS

My congratulations to Roger Brown on his receiving the Emergency Services Medal in the Australia Day Honours list.

Roger is a Fellow of the Institute and a stalwart of the Tasmanian Division. He is a very active member of the State Emergency Services, which he fits in with running his own plumbing business. Roger is a very worthy recipient of this Award.

I would also like to take this opportunity to pass on my congratulations to any other member/s of the Institute who may have received an award in the Australia Day Honours List. ●

So how do you make sure this valuable asset can be protected?

What are you doing to protect your ability to earn a wage in the future? Staying fit and healthy? Exercising and eating well? Checked that your insurance cover will be enough to look after you if something happens?

Statistically there is a good chance the "something" will happen! A working person between the age of 20 and 50 has a one in three chance of being off work for at least three months due to a disability (Insured Lives IAD89-93 Table. Institute of Actuaries).

Insurance provided through super funds is often an economical and convenient way to financially protect yourself. It's economical because super funds purchase insurance on behalf of many members, so the premium rates can be more competitive. And it's convenient because it is generally easier to apply, and insurance premiums are automatically deducted from your super account.

A better insurance deal for First State Super members

First State Super has looked at the insurance needs of members and the need to financially protect members if they become disabled and common problems members experience when applying for insurance. As a result, First State Super has revamped its insurance arrangements to provided access to greater levels of insurance cover at attractive rates.

From 1 December 2007 members can access a range of competitive and flexible insurance features. Across the board there has been an increase of **between 5% and 64%** in Death and Total and Permanent Disablement (TPD) insurance cover, depending on employer insurance category and age. This cover now **continues to age 70** (it was age 65).

Most employer-sponsored members of First State Super (generally, those working in the public sector) are provided with automatic basic cover for death and TPD insurance. This level of basic cover has increased from **one** unit of cover to **three** units of cover (conditions apply), and accordingly, the premium went from $5 each month to $15 each month.

Let's look at the improvements in action

For someone whose employer category is Emergency Services

Insurance before 1 December 2007 Automatic death & TPD cover at age 45 at 1 Basic unit	
Amount of cover	17,600
Cost per month	$5
Insurance from 1 December 2007 Automatic death & TPD cover at age 45 at 3 Basic units	
Amount of cover	$78,000
Cost per month	$15

Increase in automatic cover of $60,400 for an extra $10 per month

No hassle special offers

Fantastic offers are available to many existing members and new employees as they join First State Super. Employer-sponsored members can apply for a **Start Up Bonus unit** of cover, giving a maximum of 4 basic cover units, and/or **Start Up Bonus income protection** cover up to a maximum amount depending on their employer's insurance rating. Conditions apply and you will have to provide a small amount of information about your health.

New members who are employees of emergency services rated employers have the option to apply for an income protection benefit of up to $3,000 per month (equal to 75% of a $48,000 annual salary or 50% of a $72,000 annual salary) with only having to supply a small amount of information about their health.

There's even something for those working in a low risk job but with a high risk employer. Say if you're an administration person working in an office environment you may be pleased to hear that you can apply to have your additional insurance (new and/ or existing) assessed at occupational rates. And if you earn over $80,000 a year you can apply for a Basic Plus rating to apply to **all your insurance**, including income protection.

For more information contact First State Super Customer Service on **1300 650 873** or visit **www.firststatesuper.com.au**

Insurance 01_08

www.firststatesuper.com.au

NOTICE OF ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS 2008

All members of the Australian Institute of Emergency Services are hereby notified and reminded that Annual Subscriptions for the various categories of membership of the Australian Institute of Emergency Services for the year 2008 are now due and payable.

Payment is as follows:

Members/Associates	**$30 pa**
Fellows	**$40 pa**
Corporations	**$250 pa**

The annual subscription rate for the Institute's journal is $30 pa for those organisations or individuals who are not accredited members.

Payment should be paid to the State Registrars of the Institute whose addresses are detailed on the last page of this magazine.

By Order of the Board

Robert A Maul
General Registrar/Secretary

ERRATA IN VOL 21 #1

A typo occurred in Vol 21 Number 1 on page 1 and 12. The AMSA Aviation Search and Rescue Officer was incorrectly labelled as Karl Webb, it should be Wayne White. We apologise for this error.
Geoff Webb, Editor.

AIES POLO SHIRTS NOW AVAILABLE
ONLY $38.50 INCLUDING POSTAGE!

The ACT Division of the AIES is pleased to provide members with the opportunity to purchase Institute Polo Shirts at a discounted rate.

STYLE	Mens and Ladies Short Sleeve Polo Shirt
FABRIC	210gsm 65/35 Poly/Combed Cotton Pique
COLOUR	Black, Navy, Light Blue, Maroon, Royal Blue, Purple, Bone
LOGO	Left Hand Front - as shown below
SIZES	XS to 5XL 49.50cm (XS) to 73cm (5XL)
COST	$38.50 (including postage)

For more information on colours and styles please contact:

Phil Gaden
Email: registrar.act@aies.net.au
Phone: 0413137761

High quality embroidered logo on left chest.

ADULTS	S	M	L	XL	2XL	3XL	4XL	5XL
CHEST	55	57.5	60	62.5	65	67.5	70	72.5
CB LENGTH	64	66	68	70	72	74	76	78
LADIES	8	10	12	14	16	18	20	
BUST	47	49	51	53	55	57	59	
CB LENGTH	60	62	64	66	68	70	72	

Sizing Chart: Adults = Mens

✂

Registrar, AIES PO Box 504 Civic Square, ACT

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COLOUR	SIZE	QTY	COST PER SHIRT	$ TOTAL
			$38.50	
			$38.50	
			$38.50	

Name: _____

Delivery Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Payment by cheque or money order or transfer to BSB 641 800 ACC #200467683
Reference: (Your Surname) SHIRT *Please contact Phil by email if using funds transfer to pay for your order.

PATHFINDER IN IRAQ

Here some amazing photos from Iraq. This is one of the new "hardened" MRAP vehicles that was hit by a 500lb bomb (IED). The vehicle was totally destroyed, but everyone in the vehicle walked away. Note the unusual construction of the bottom of the hardened Pathfinder APC; the bottom looks like the hull of a ship. The blast picked up the truck and turned it around! The driver got some broken ribs (see the photo of the steering wheel), but that's it. Everyone walked away from a 500lb explosion directly beneath their vehicle.

DETECTION OF DISTRESS BEACONS TO CHANGE IN 2009

From its inception in 1982 the distress beacon alerting and location system known as Cospas-Sarsat has contributed to the rescue of over 20,531 people in more than 5,752 distress situations.

John**Rice,** MAIES

President, ACT Division
Senior Search and Rescue Officer,
Australian Search and Rescue (AusSSAR) Emergency Response,
Australian Maritime Safety Authority

In 2005 alone, the System provided information that was used to rescue 1,666 people in 435 distress situations[1]. The locations of these events are depicted on the map below.
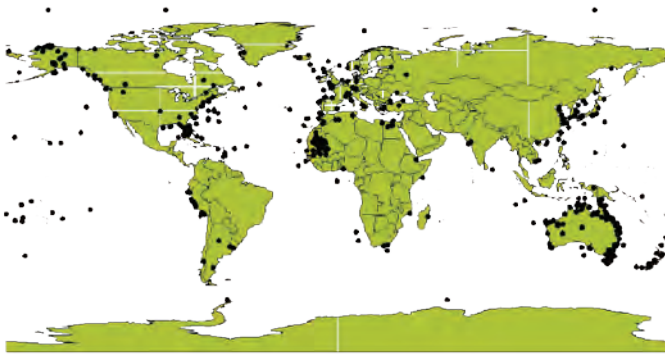
In Australia, The Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA) operates the Cospas-Sarsat System from the National Search and Rescue Coordination Centre (RCC Australia), located in Canberra.

Over the period 1 October 1989 to 31 December 2006, RCC Australia responded to 66,726 beacon alerts that were involved in the saving of 4,618 lives. Details of these detections are outlined in the following table.

121.5 / 243 MHz BEACONS			
Real distress	**Non-distress**	**Unknown source**	**TOTAL**
1,859	4,894	54,660	61,413

406 MHz BEACONS			
Real distress	**Non-distress**	**Unknown source**	**TOTAL**
145	2,799	2,369	5,313

Satellite Detections 1 October 1989 to 31 December 2006
(Australian Maritime Safety Authority)

SYSTEM CONCEPT

The Cospas-Sarsat System involves the activation of one of three types of distress beacons to alert search and rescue authorities via orbiting satellites to a distress situation.

These beacons - known as Emergency Position Indicating Radio Bacons (EPIRBS) used by mariners, Emergency Location Transmitters (ELTs) used in aircraft and Personal Locator Beacons (PLBs) used by bushwalkers, hikers and people in remote areas - when activated transmit a distress signal that is relayed to search and rescue authorities world-wide via two complementary satellite systems orbiting the earth.

The satellites operating in low earth orbit (LEO) at an altitude of 700 kilometres and 1000 kilometres, and geostationary earth orbit (GEO) satellites at an altitude of 36,000 kilometres, provide the system with near global coverage.

In the 25 years since their introduction, the use of distress beacons has become common in the community.

COSPAS-SARSAT TO DISCONTINUE PROCESSING OF 121.5/243MHZ BEACONS

Although designed for different applications, all of the Cospas-Sarsat beacons transmit on either the analogue frequencies of 121.5/243 MHz or 406 MHz, the digital frequency the satellite system was designed for.

The digital 406 MHz beacons offer many advantages over the analogue 121.5/243 MHz beacons. A 406 MHz beacon's position will be relayed more quickly, with greater accuracy and reliability to search and rescue authorities enabling them to better establish the location and nature of distress.

Average location accuracy for 121.5/243 MHz beacons = 25 kilometres radius
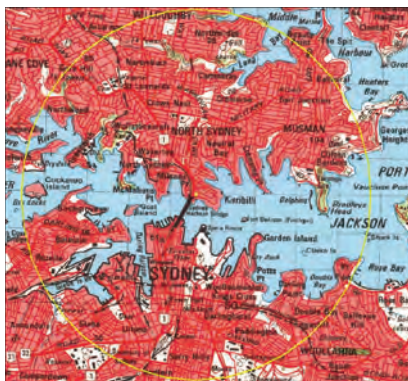
Average location accuracy for 406MHz beacons = 5 kilometre radius

A part of the beacon's signal, 406 MHz beacons transmit a 30 bit hexadecimal string that is recorded with beacon registrations held by search and rescue authorities. These beacon registrations further aid in the identification of the owner of the beacon and emergency points of contact. This is not possible with the analogue beacons.

With 121.5 MHz beacons, worldwide statistics show that only one alert out of every 50 alerts is a genuine distress situation. This has significant resource implications for all search and rescue authorities. With 406MHz, false alerts have been considerably reduced (about one alert in 17 is genuine) and when properly registered can normally be resolved with a telephone call to the beacon owner.

406 MHZ WITH GPS

Due to the large number of inadvertent or false alerts received on the 121.5/243 MHz frequency, the Cospas-Sarsat Organisation will discontinue processing of these signals on the 1st February 2009.

This has significant ramifications for people currently using the older distress beacons operating on this frequency and will require them to update to a 406 MHz beacon.

NOW IS THE TIME TO UPDATE TO 406 MHZ

As the 1st February 2009 fast approaches, beacon

"With 121.5 MHz beacons, worldwide statistics show that only one alert out of every 50 alerts is a genuine distress situation...With 406MHz, false alerts have been considerably reduced (about one alert in 17 is genuine) and when properly registered can normally be resolved with a telephone call to the beacon owner."

owners and users should have already begun to replace their 121.5/243 MHz beacons with the 406 MHz beacons. A good time to make this change is when the battery on your current beacon requires changing. Typically, batteries have to be replaced every five years.

Old beacons should have the battery disconnected and be disposed of as required by your local environmental agency. Don't just throw them in the rubbish or you might find the local emergency services spending many hours digging through your garbage. ●

FOOTNOTES
[1] www.cospas-sarsat.org

DISASTER PSYCHOLOGY – A DUAL PERSPECTIVE PART 2

Grant**Coultman-Smith,** MAIES

VA, MEmergMgt, BSocSc, Dip Bus

This article is continued from the Summer 07/08 edition of National Emergency Response.

PART 2

REACTION OF EMERGENCY SERVICE PERSONNEL TO TRAUMA

"It is said that whatever doesn't kill you, serves to make you strong. If this were the case, Emergency Service Workers would be superheroes. It may sound stupid and vehemently denied by some, but that is exactly the public perception. We do not feel. We are expected to do our job no matter what the circumstances. We are expected to sift through the mangled bodies of adults and children without hesitation or thought for our own personal safety. We do not show weakness. We only display strength and fortitude. We are the buffer between the people and disaster. The thin blue line. God help us if we fail or make a mistake. Human frailty is a luxury we can ill afford."

If this appears to be overly dramatic and unrealistic, think about it for a moment and you will agree with its thrust. This perception of the emergency service professional is a huge responsibility for anyone to bear. It is the mere fact that he/she is a professional that this attitude can inflict the exact same belief in his/her invulnerability and can engender and proliferate this exact attitude amongst emergency personnel. This in itself makes the possibility of being vulnerable a frightening possibility and one to be denied. To seek counselling after a traumatic incident has been, in the past and is still, seen by some, as a sign of weakness amongst one's peers. Even where counselling is now compulsory (members of the police force after a shooting incident), the attitude is, "Told them nothing, I wouldn't have gone if I didn't have to." It is our very

work, many people welcome the opportunity to participate in it. (Moran 1995)

Surprisingly, there is little systematic information available on the personality characteristics of emergency workers other than that revealed in anecdotal reports or reflected in organisational "culture". In the past, a high level of stoicism was the expected primary characteristic, but recently it has been suggested that this may be a narrow and inappropriate opinion. The following, are regarded as positive characteristics although not all emergency workers will demonstrate all discussed.

ALTRUISM: It is often expected that at least part of the reason that emergency workers participate in their role is a desire to help others. This is commonly the case with volunteer workers but can also be noted amongst professionals. Despite arguments that no behaviour is truly altruistic, that we only do what we do to gain pleasure, there does exist pure altruism. It is true that emergency workers gaining a feeling of personal pleasure and achievement at being able to help others, does not mean that altruism is a selfish act. (Moran 1995)

ADVENTURE, EXCITEMENT SEEKING: As a combat veteran, I joined the Victoria Police Force as I believed it gave me that feeling of risk I needed to feel alive. It also removed me from the humdrum of a 9 to 5 existence and gave me the opportunity to use my organisational and command skills in emergency situations. The main reason that emergency service workers love "The Job" so much is the fact that no one knows what they will have to face around the corner. That feeling of uncertainty and risk can engender excitement and a feeling of anticipation. (Moran 1995)

HUMOUR: Humour is a recognised coping mechanism and emergency workers are recognised as having a good, if not decidedly sick, sense of humour. It is my belief that: "Life is too serious to take seriously. You must be crazy to stay sane. If you stop laughing you start screaming." This humorous outlook, especially at the scenes of critical and emergency situations can be seen, by outsiders, as unfeeling and heartless but in fact demonstrates a high awareness of the seriousness of the situation. (Moran & Massam 1997)

Where children are involved as victims, however, there is no humour. Where children are concerned, all I have ever seen are tears. (A Firefighter friend [fellow Vietnam Veteran] and myself attended the suicide of a 16-year-old girl, having both attended 6 similar incidents in the previous month. We both had teenage daughters and once the incident had been dealt with, simply looked at each other then embraced in tears. We'd had enough! Neither of us could see any humour in this situation.) Although excessive or hysterical humour can be a cause for grave concern, humour is a beneficial

strength and professionalism that is our greatest enemy in the fight against stress-related illness and yet it is the very attitude we need to retain our sanity. In fact, we thrive on it. (Lunn 2002, Moran 1995, Patterson 2001)

The following is a combination of my own personal experience of the effects of stress and trauma and those encountered in co-workers in my capacity as a soldier, police sergeant and first-line supervisor supported by the studies and papers referred to in this paper.

THE PSYCHOLOGICAL BENEFITS OF EMERGENCY WORK

Recently, awareness has increased of the effects, both immediate and residual, of post-traumatic stress experienced by emergency workers resulting from exposure to extreme situations. This awareness and recognition is definitely a positive step in the treatment of such stress. Despite the inherent risks of emergency

coping mechanism that prevents emergency workers being overwhelmed by tragedy and able to do their job effectively. (Moran 1995, Moran & Massam 1997)

POSITIVE REACTIONS AFTER A MAJOR INCIDENT:
Positive reactions after a major incident are common but less frequently discussed than negative reactions in a formal context. These are often by-passed or ignored because now the focus is on the symptoms manifested post trauma. Debriefing also focuses on the negative aspects and therefore it is felt to be inappropriate to mention anything positive. The overriding consideration and the inanimate need for "political correctness" being to focus on the negative aside, many people do feel good after the successful handling of a major incident and it is appropriate to acknowledge this and them. These positive feelings are as follows:

EXHILARATION: Emergency workers often report coming off duty almost on a "high" of exhilaration. They may be fatigued but need time to wind down. There is a strong physiological component to this reaction, which reflects increased sympathetic nervous system activity, for example increased adrenalin levels and racing heart. There is also a psychological component and the high level of alertness and activity is often in itself pleasurably exciting. (Hodgkinson and Stewart 1991)

A SENSE OF ACHIEVEMENT: One of the most powerful positive feelings that emergency workers report is the sense of achievement or feeling good about being of assistance (altruism). In one study, over 90% of a large sample reported this. (Moran 1995) It has also been my experience, that this is indeed the case and definitely contributes to the reduction of adverse reaction to stress. In fact, it is extremely important to engender the feeling of achievement no matter what the results of the situation are. Despite everything, a feeling of achievement amongst the emergency workers is essential, not only for their psychological well-being, but in order to gain positive practical lessons from the incident.

A LOVE OF LIFE AND COLLEAGUES: The concept of mateship is an integral part of Australia's self-image and is exemplified in situations of extreme stress with people working together, the strong helping the weak, against an external force and facing overwhelming odds. It is the trust and bond between soldiers in the same section (squad) who watch each other's back. It is also the feeling between emergency workers after a major incident. It is the bond of success gained, risks shared and survival. It manifests itself in an increased love of life and a strong sense of "family" and a recognition that "only those who have faced death can really appreciate life." It is the knowledge that no matter what, your life is in good hands. (Patterson 2001)

This feeling of "oneness" has recently been the subject of derision and fear in the case of the Victoria

Police, referred to as "police culture" and something to be eradicated. God help us all if this feeling of brotherhood should disappear. For once gone from the police force, the other emergency services will follow. It is something to be nurtured, not destroyed. The sanity of the emergency worker is at stake if he/she does not have the closeness of 'family' within which to be supported and nurtured.

SENSE OF CONTROL: Arguably, one of the greatest stressors in the human experience is lack of control over one's destiny. In the Emergency Service environment, the sense of control is somewhat enhanced, especially when the effects of an incident are minimised or contained. Many emergency workers have experienced this increased sense of control as a positive feeling. In the context of my role as an emergency service professional and supervisor, the feeling of control is one I relish and goes hand-in-glove with the feeling of achievement and a job well done. (Moran 1995)

There is no direct evidence that the aforementioned psychological benefits lead to enhanced physical well-being in the context of the emergency worker. However, in health psychology generally there is a growing body of anecdotal evidence that psychological factors such as positive attitude, mood, brotherhood and sense of control are directly associated with improved psychological well-being.

Despite the aforementioned positive aspects of working in a stressful environment, as a team, the potential for post-traumatic stress following an emergency incident cannot be dismissed. Those positive aspects, must be recognised as offsetting the more traumatic effects but cannot be seen as long-term prevention strategies. They can, however, be utilised to better understand and recognise the onset of post-traumatic stress symptoms in emergency workers and therefore facilitate earlier treatment and relief thereof. It must also be emphasised, through on-going training, that to attend counselling is not an admission of frailty or insanity but simply another form of debriefing and another tool to enable the emergency worker to better deal with the natural pressures of "THE JOB" and therefore become both more effective and more professional. (Moran 1995)

It must be recognised that although I have concentrated on the positive aspects of stress in the emergency services, members do suffer from post-traumatic incident stress disorders which left unrecognised can cause the "Pile-Up" effect and seriously affect their family, friends, workmates and efficiency. Some never recover, but most respond to careful counselling either by psychological professionals or mainly, their colleagues. (Mitchell & Bray 1990)

Individuals react differently to stress and various stressors. It must be also recognised that individuals often react differently to post-incident trauma counselling. A formal structure can adversely effect emergency workers as it can be seen to be imposing a requirement to speak only of negativity whilst refusing to recognise the positive aspects of the incident. Dwelling upon the negative feelings can often be counter-productive and cause some individuals to believe that they are being blamed for the event rather than congratulated for a 'job well done'. Often the individual is not given the benefit of the doubt and assumptions are made that only intervention 'experts' can solve problems with trauma, therefore failing to recognise that individuals both have the right and the ability to utilise their own personal coping mechanisms. (Violanti 2001) Acceptance of individual differences in reactions to traumatic stress may assist in the formulation of training and post-incident debriefing procedures. This will also raise acceptance of the procedure amongst emergency workers. (Moran 1998, Patterson 2001)

While debriefing has been generally reported as helpful, there appears to be no correlation to the overall rate of recovery. In fact, there would appear to be a trend toward a lower recovery rate amongst those who have attended formal debriefing sessions. Furthermore, it was generally found that there was no relationship between the reported degree of helpfulness of debriefing and the actual onset (or lack thereof) of symptoms of post-trauma and other detrimental psychological effects. (Kenardy 1998, Orner et al. 2003)

CONCLUSION

It can therefore be deduced that exposure to stress, risk and danger is a two-edged sword. On one hand, it enhances awareness and feelings of achievement, control and a zest for life not normally experienced. On the other hand, overexposure can lead to a build-up of personality stressors which unless released can lead to long-term or even permanent psychological damage affecting work, family and personal relationships. In addition, the value of discipline cannot be discounted. Victims, who are members of a disciplined organisation, fare far better than those from the general population, as do their families.

Personally, I am a great believer in the 'informal' debriefing, where the team gets together, has a few drinks, a few laughs, shares their experiences and winds down. I have found this to be extremely effective, but recognise that this can be ably supported by counselling from professionals in the field. Used in conjunction, I have no doubt that the onset of stress-related illness both among the emergency services and victims of trauma would noticeably decrease. I equate it to the difference

between myself, as a professional soldier and a National Serviceman (Conscript/draftee) both having returned from Vietnam. On one hand, we professionals could submerge ourselves in our peers, over a few drinks, share our experiences and even cry on each other's shoulders. Sharing the experience does tend to diminish the trauma. There being no formal counselling structure, we simply debriefed ourselves and we are still doing it. On the other hand, the National Serviceman, was thrust back into society and simply told to get on with it, without the benefit of the support of his peers. He had no one to talk to. There was no form of counselling available. Of the Vietnam Veterans who have either gone "Troppo" or committed suicide, the ratio is approximately 3 to 1 in favour (or otherwise) of the National Serviceman (This is anecdotal evidence as no official study of the specific criteria has been conducted and is in direct contrast to the findings of a survey of British Gulf War [1st] veterans, in 1994, that found there was no marked difference between those that had been debriefed and those who hadn't [Kenardy 1998]). Sadly, the advent of 'political correctness' in Australian society has made the practice of drinking with one's peers, socially unacceptable.

It is therefore essential that there be a network combining peer support and professional counselling readily available for both civilian victims and emergency workers exposed to extreme trauma. Yet the beneficial effects of stress must be recognised and utilised as a yardstick to assess the onset of stress related effects amongst victims and professionals alike. It must also be recognised that the value of the 'unofficial' debrief with one's peers, in my belief, supported by experience, cannot be undervalued. I believe that it is possibly of far greater value than formal intervention, in the coping with stress and trauma within the Emergency Services 'family'. I believe that the 'formal' post-incident debriefing be available but on a voluntary basis only (It is recognised that in the case of a police incident [shooting etc] that a formal structure must be adhered to in the interests of transparency and the conservation of evidence). Far more emphasis must be placed on the undeniable benefits of peer support and the 'unofficial' debriefing. ●

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ASSESSMENT OF DISASTER RISK MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES AND TOOLS

Alan Holley, FAIES

President, NSW Division

The International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives facilitated a workshop on 22-23 January 2007 in Freiburg, Germany, and brought together four local government decision-makers and five international experts with long-standing experience in disaster risk management. The workshop was funded by the German Technical Cooperation (GTZ) and designed to assess the usability of existing disaster risk management (DRM) tools for local governments.

ICLEI

The International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives was founded in 1990. The council was established when more than 200 local governments from 43 countries convened at an inaugural conference, the World Congress of Local Governments for a Sustainable Future, at the United Nations in New York. ICLEI—Local Governments for Sustainability is an international association of local governments and national and regional local government organisations that have made a commitment to sustainable development. More than 475 cities, towns, counties, and their associations worldwide comprise ICLEI's growing membership. ICLEI works with these and hundreds of other local governments through international performance-based, results-oriented campaigns and programs. ICLEI provide technical consulting, training, and information services to build capacity, share knowledge, and support local government in the implementation of sustainable development at the local level. Through its Resilient Communities and Cities Initiative, it aims to help its members reduce their vulnerability to extreme events and anticipate and respond creatively to economic, social, and environmental change in order to increase their long-term sustainability.

ICLEI's Resilient Communities & Cities Initiative is aimed at mainstreaming disaster resilience in the planning and decision-making processes of local governments. For almost 15 years, ICLEI has initiated and supported the Local Agenda 21 global movement, and it is with this background that it is promoting participatory municipal resilience planning and management.

ICLEI's goal is for local governments (including ICLEI's over 500 municipal Members) to work with their local communities and stakeholders to develop and implement Local Resilience Agendas. In this way, communities will be able to reduce their vulnerability to extreme events and anticipate and respond creatively to economic, social, and environmental change in order to increase their long-term sustainability.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

Because of global environmental and socioeconomic processes such as rapid urban growth, climate change, and the expansion of industrial production, cities and communities around the world are increasingly at risk of experiencing natural, industrial or social disasters. Due to global climate change, areas that were previously considered at relatively low risk of natural disasters may now and in the future face previously unknown disaster risks, such as extreme temperatures, droughts or floods. Often, natural disasters incur secondary industrial disasters. This continuously changing nature of disaster risk challenges not only emergency response managers and their teams at the local level, but also has the potential to threaten sustainable urban development.

ACTION AT THE LOCAL LEVEL...

...is the most effective method of reducing, mitigating, and preventing disasters. Local governments can reduce the impact of disasters on their communities by increasing their community's resilience. Resilience is the capacity of a community to respond creatively,

preventatively, and proactively to change or extreme events, thus mitigating crisis or disaster.

While the changing nature of disaster risk is well analysed and increasingly addressed at international and national levels of debate and decision-making, efforts to provide direct and practical guidance to local government policy-makers and planners on how to reduce exposure and increase resilience to disasters have been few. Through ongoing dialogue with international disaster management experts and local government authorities, ICLEI recognised the need for supporting local governments in disaster risk management and believes that building resilience to disasters is a crucial element in creating sustainable communities and cities.

ASSESSING THE USABILITY OF DISASTER RISK MANAGEMENT INSTRUMENTS BY LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

In January 2007, a group of ICLEI Members and international disaster risk management experts gathered in Freiburg, Germany, for a workshop to assess the usability of 21 selected disaster risk management (DRM) instruments. Mainstreaming resilience-building into local government processes includes the use of various instruments such as tools, policies, and procedures. Given the wide range of existing instruments available, ICLEI's goal was to gather a selection of existing instruments that are geared to supporting DRM efforts at the local government level and assess them at the workshop in terms of their usability by local governments.

"Local governments have been neglected in global disaster risk management efforts"

WORKSHOP PARTICIPANTS

The workshop was facilitated by the ICLEI World Secretariat and funded by the German Technical Cooperation (GTZ); the workshop was an important initial step in ICLEI's Resilient Communities & Cities Initiative. Department heads and disaster and emergency managers from ICLEI Members:
• Blue Mountains (Australia),
• Cape Town (South Africa),
• Makati City (the Philippines), and
• São Paulo (Brazil)
participated in the workshop along with disaster management experts from:
• Earthquakes and Megacities Initiative (EMI),
• ProVention Consortium,
• UNDP,
• UN-HABITAT, and
• the UN Inter-Agency Secretariat of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UN/ISDR).

WHAT MAKES A DRM INSTRUMENT USABLE FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENTS?

The workshop identified a number of characteristics of DRM instruments that were particularly relevant for local government users. Technical experts and local government participants agreed that instruments need to be written clearly and concisely, have a clear purpose and a target audience, and contain relevant and practical information in order to make them usable to local government authorities. As well, participants noted that instruments need to be tailored to different audiences within local governments, such as mayors, policy-makers, implementers, etc. Also, local government experts found that organisations creating DRM instruments should provide or at least address training and capacity-building.

CHARACTERISTICS OF USABLE DRM INSTRUMENTS FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

The workshop identified that DRM tools should:
• Address the question: "Why should one be concerned about disaster risk reduction?"
• Include guidance on engaging the community;
• Include monitoring and evaluation steps to help institutionalise the process;
• Provide different sections or different components for different audiences;
• Contain annotated lists of web links and refer readers to specific web pages, not just organisations' home pages;
• Provide references in the text to the content of the annexes;
• Include checklists as "aide-memoirs";
• Include a training component;
• Contain up-to-date information and reflect current realities and knowledge;
• Clearly indicate the purpose of the tool and its target group;
• Use language that is clear, concise, and appropriate for the target group;
• Minimise the number of pages and amount of text.

A PROGRAM TO BUILD RESILIENCE AMONG LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

Over the next five years, ICLEI plans to build the Resilient Communities & Cities (RC&C) Initiative as a program that provides value to its municipal membership. Building on previous consultations as well as the recent workshop, ICLEI plans to provide cities and communities with a holistic approach to DRM that extends beyond the provision of a methodological "toolbox" and incorporates DRM into a broader strategy to build resilience at the local government level through the development and implementation of Local Resilience Agendas.

Currently, ICLEI envisages a three-tiered RC&C program that involves the provision of:

- a step-by-step process methodology for DRM and resilience-building specifically geared to local governments' needs, which will be provided as a hardcopy document;
- training and capacity-building of local government staff as an integrated process and based on individual training modules in accordance with the steps of the process methodology;
- an actively maintained and expanding networking forum for sharing and exchanging expertise and experiences among local governments and DRM professionals with regard to the RC&C Initiative.

The process methodology will draw heavily on existing DRM instruments and synthesise their strengths into a comprehensive approach to DRM and resilience building specifically tailored for implementation by local government policy-makers and planners.

FOOTNOTE

'We' in Australia are very fortunate when it comes to disaster management. We have a great deal of local autonomy supported through a comprehensive tiered approach by Region, State and Federal bodies. We are able to design our disaster mitigation to meet the demands of 'our local community'. Many overseas countries do not have this ability and are either left to their own devices in mitigation, response and recovery or have state or federal agencies dictate what level, if any, of help will be provided.

We should not rest on our past achievements. We must continue to improve our communities' ability to be able to survive. ●

About the author: Alan Holley is currently employed by the Blue Mountains City Council in NSW as the Program Leader for Bush Fire and Emergency Management and the Local Emergency Management Officer. He served in the NSW Police Force for 33 years and has been an active volunteer fire fighter since 1992. He is a Fellow of the Australian Institute of Emergency Services where he is President of the NSW & NZ Divisions and a National Board member and a member of the Australian Emergency Management Volunteer Forum (national committee). He is the Vice President of the Blue Mountains Chapter of the RFSA, Vice Chairman of the Central East Region Conference and CERC Delegate to the State Council.

VALE COMMON SENSE

"The only thing common about common sense is that it is not very common".

LONDON TIMES OBITUARY OF THE LATE MR. COMMON SENSE

'Today we mourn the passing of a beloved old friend, Common Sense, who has been with us for many years. No one knows for sure how old he was, since his birth records were long ago lost in bureaucratic red tape. He will be remembered as having cultivated such valuable lessons as: Knowing when to come in out of the rain; why the early bird gets the worm; Life isn't always fair; and maybe it was my fault.

Common Sense lived by simple, sound financial policies (don't spend more than you can earn) and reliable strategies (adults, not children, are in charge).

His health began to deteriorate rapidly when well-intentioned but overbearing regulations were set in place. Reports of a 6-year-old boy charged with sexual harassment for kissing a classmate; teens suspended from school for using mouthwash after lunch; and a teacher fired for reprimanding an unruly student, only worsened his condition.

Common Sense lost ground when parents attacked teachers for doing the job that they themselves had failed to do in disciplining their unruly children. It declined even further when schools were required to get parental consent to administer sun lotion or an Elastoplast to a student; but could not inform parents when a student became pregnant and wanted to have an abortion.

Common Sense lost the will to live as the Ten Commandments became contraband; churches became businesses; and criminals received better treatment than their victims. Common Sense took a beating when you couldn't defend yourself from a burglar in your own home and the burglar could sue you for assault.

Common Sense finally gave up the will to live, after a woman failed to realise that a steaming cup of coffee was hot. She spilled a little in her lap, and was promptly awarded a huge settlement.

Common Sense was preceded in death by his parents, Truth and Trust; his wife, Discretion; his daughter, Responsibility; and his son, Reason. He is survived by his 4 stepbrothers; I Know My Rights, I Want It Now, Someone Else Is To Blame, and I'm A Victim.

Not many attended his funeral because so few realised he was gone.' ●

FATIGUE
AND EMERGENCY SERVICE PERSONNEL

PART 2

Gaye**Cameron,** MAIES

Registrar, NSW Division

This article is continued from the Summer 07/08 edition of National Emergency Response.

The recommended risk management approach when managing fatigue is described as following:

STEP ONE: IDENTIFY FACTORS THAT CONTRIBUTE TO FATIGUE

The first step when managing fatigue is to identify factors within the workplace that may contribute to fatigue. Employers or persons conducting a business or undertaking should develop a list of all the factors within their business or undertaking that have the potential to contribute to fatigue within the workplace.

One particular workplace factor that should be carefully considered is roster design. Shift length and roster design may be placing workers at risk of sleep deprivation and fatigue. When looking at rosters, it is important to assess whether the roster provides workers with a sufficient opportunity for rest and recovery between shifts. When determining if roster design is contributing to fatigue, consider the following:

- length of shifts worked — the length of shifts worked can contribute to fatigue
- previous hours and days worked — the effects of fatigue are cumulative, workers may have sleep debt due to the previous hours and days worked, which can contribute to fatigue
- type of work being performed — pay particular attention to the level of physical and/or mental effort that is required
- time of the day when the work is being performed — remember that disrupting the body's circadian rhythms can cause fatigue and also impact on task performance.

There are many ways to identify workplace factors that contribute to fatigue. They include:

- inspecting workplace rosters
- consulting with workers — ask them if they regularly feel fatigued. Also ask about any problems they have encountered, or any near misses or unreported injuries
- consult with workplace health and safety representatives and workplace health and safety committees
- conduct a safety audit
- analyse injury and incident reports, pay particular attention to injuries and incidents that occur in periods of high fatigue (i.e. the latter half of shifts and night work — particularly 2am to 6am)
- undertake worker surveys.

STEP TWO: ASSESS RISK

The second step when managing fatigue involves assessing the risks associated with the workplace factors that contribute to fatigue. Risk is the likelihood that death, injury and illness may result because of the factors that contribute to fatigue. To assess risk, it is necessary to consider both likelihood and consequences. For each of the risks:

- determine the likelihood (i.e. very likely, likely, unlikely, very unlikely) of an incident occurring at the workplace, bearing in mind the existing control measures
- determine the consequences (i.e. extreme, major, moderate, minor) of an incident occurring at your workplace, bearing in mind the existing control measures
- combine the likelihood and consequences estimates to rate the risk.

Once the above process has been completed, the ratings of each risk should be prioritised for further action.

The following should be considered when assessing the factors that contribute to fatigue:

- time of day — incidents are more likely to happen in circadian low points (such as night time, especially between the hours of 2am to 6am)
- length of shifts worked — the effects of fatigue are cumulative; workers are more likely to feel fatigued in the final hours of a shift, than in the first few hours of a shift
- lack of opportunity to recover from fatigue — incidents are more likely to occur if workers are not given a sufficient opportunity to recover from fatigue
- how often the situation occurs — generally, the more often a worker is fatigued, the greater the likelihood is that an incident will occur
- how many people are fatigued — generally, the greater the number of people who are fatigued, the more likely an incident is to occur
- the skills and experience of persons fatigued — consider training and competence both to perform work-related tasks and manage fatigue
- any special characteristics of the people involved — for example if a worker is on medication for a medical condition that is affected by circadian rhythms and night shift work (such as asthma, depression or diabetes)
- the duration of exposure to fatigue — generally, the longer a person is fatigued, the more likely an incident will occur
- the level of risk inherent in the work — incidents are more likely to occur in work that is generally hazardous, such as when operating heavy machinery or plant.

STEP THREE: DECIDE ON CONTROL MEASURES

The third step when managing fatigue involves deciding on control measures to manage exposure to fatigue.

Employers and persons conducting a business or undertaking should implement control measures that adequately control exposure to fatigue. Control measures should be introduced according to the hierarchy of control; the ideal solution when managing fatigue is to completely eliminate factors that contribute to fatigue. This may involve the elimination of night shifts and extended working hours. If this is not possible, there are a number of control options that may be used alone, or in combination, to minimise and control exposure to fatigue. Because fatigue is caused by a combination of factors, the most effective way to manage it is by using a combination of risk control measures. Examples include:

- limiting shift work to essential jobs and tasks that must be completed at night
- redesigning work practices so that routine administrative tasks are minimised for night shift workers, allowing them to focus on core duties during night work
- scheduling later start times so that maximum night sleep can be obtained before starting work (however, this can affect those on night shift)
- scheduling low risk work during periods of high fatigue, such as night time (especially during the hours of 12 midnight to 6am) and/or in the latter half of shifts
- scheduling complex tasks to be performed only during the day.

Administrative controls are last on the hierarchy of control. Administrative controls should not be relied on as the primary means of risk control until the options higher in the list of control priorities have been exhausted. In general, administrative controls should only be used:

- when there are no other practical control measures available
- as temporary measures until a permanent solution is found
- to supplement other controls.

Examples of administrative controls that may be used to manage fatigue include:

- sufficient supervision, particularly during periods of high fatigue (such as night time, or in the latter half of shifts), and especially for hazardous work
- contingency plans if workers become fatigued — this would involve removing fatigued workers from work activities where there is a considerable risk to health and/or safety (e.g. operating heavy machinery or plant)
- effective emergency responses
- strict controls and procedures if performing hazardous work during high fatigue periods (especially during 2am to 6am)
- job rotation for repetitive or monotonous work, or work that involves heavy physical demands.

STEP FOUR: IMPLEMENT CONTROL MEASURES

The fourth step when managing fatigue is putting the selected control measures in place.

This involves undertaking those activities that are necessary to allow the measures to operate effectively. These activities include:

- developing work procedures
- communicating control measures
- providing training and instruction
- supervision.

Work procedures need to be developed to ensure that fatigue control measures are effective.

Effective fatigue control measures should define and communicate responsibilities. For example, employers and persons conducting a business or undertaking are responsible for providing a shift system that provides staff with sufficient opportunity for rest and recovery. Employers and persons conducting a business or undertaking should inform workers about the control measures to be implemented. It is important to clearly communicate that the control measures are being introduced to effectively manage fatigue. When communicating control measures to workers, it is important to remember that workers (through their workplace health and safety representatives) are entitled to be consulted about any changes in the workplace that affect, or could affect, their safety.

This consultation may be achieved through the workplace health and safety committee, including the workplace health and safety officer and workplace health and safety representatives. This consultation should include:

- the possible health and safety impact of changes
- the benefits and problems associated with the proposed changes
- measures needed to eliminate or control any adverse impact on health and safety
- processes for incorporating any special needs of workers with impairments (e.g. workers on medication that could be affected by changes to night shifts)
- procedures for workers to notify supervisors of any impairment or potential impairment that may place any person at risk before starting work
- definition and communication of responsibilities.

Employers and persons conducting a business or undertaking should provide training and instruction for workers and supervisors on fatigue. This should include information about:

- common causes of fatigue including shift work, extended working hours and roster patterns
- potential health and safety impacts of fatigue
- how workers are responsible for making appropriate use of their rest days, and how they should ensure they are fit for duty on rostered shifts.

Training should be arranged so that it is available to all workers on all shifts. If workers must attend training outside the normal shift, they should be considered at work and rosters should be adjusted accordingly.

STEP FIVE: MONITOR AND REVIEW

The final step in the fatigue management process is to monitor and review the effectiveness of fatigue control measures. When working through this step, it is useful for employers and persons conducting a business or undertaking to consider:

- have the chosen control measures been implemented as planned?
- are the chosen control measures working?
- are there any new problems?

When answering these questions, employers and persons conducting a business or undertaking can:

- consult with workers, supervisors, health and safety representatives, workplace health and safety officers, and workplace health and safety committees
- measure exposure to fatigue — are workers still getting fatigued?
- monitor incident reports and assess the likelihood for fatigue contributing to incidents — pay particular attention to injuries and incidents that occur in periods of high fatigue. (i.e. the latter half of shifts and night work — particularly 2am to 6am)

To best manage fatigue, employers and persons conducting a business or undertaking should ensure there is a process for ongoing monitoring and evaluation of workplace fatigue. This process should be regularly reviewed.

WHAT ARE SOME OF THE FACTORS TO CONSIDER WHEN MANAGING FATIGUE?

Roster design should not place workers at risk of sleep deprivation and fatigue. The following components need to be considered within roster design to control fatigue:

- number of consecutive night shifts worked — ideally, few night shifts should be rostered in succession
- starting and finishing times of shifts — should take circadian rhythms into consideration
- length of shifts — depends on physical and mental load of the work
- distribution of leisure time — should allow for adequate rest and recovery
- regularity of shift system — regular shift systems allow workers to prepare for work and minimise the potential of workers arriving to work fatigued.

The key to managing fatigue successfully is ensuring that workers are given sufficient time for recuperative sleep between shifts. As outlined in section 1.4, adults require approximately seven to eight

continuous hours of daily sleep. While roster designs may not always be able to give workers seven to eight hours of daily sleep, it is important to remember that workers may develop a sleep debt if they are not getting enough sleep between shifts. Within work environments where workers are unable to get seven to eight hours of daily sleep, it is important to give them regular periods of rest time to recover from their sleep debt. One way of doing this would be giving workers two successive full days off within a seven-day period, so workers can catch up on their night sleep.

Commuting hours also need to be taken into account when managing fatigue. Excessive hours spent travelling to and from work can extend the effective length of a shift, and reduce the time available for sleep and recovery between shifts. This can have significant effects on fatigue levels.

Driving can be a mentally and physically fatiguing activity for many people. When combined with work-related fatigue, driving to and from work can become a significant hazard. To minimise the effects of fatigue when commuting, some employers in remote areas provide bus transport to ensure that workers get home safely after a long shift.

If the starting times of shifts vary throughout the cycle of shifts, the cycle should begin with an early start and move progressively later. Where a rotating three-shift system is in operation (i.e. day shift, afternoon shift and night shift), the preferred rotation is in the order of day, afternoon and night. This is because changes from a late start to an early start reduce the number of rest hours between shifts, which makes it harder for people to gain sufficient sleep between shifts.

Sleep inertia can occur if a person is woken after sleeping for more than 40 minutes. This means that if a person is woken after sleeping for more than 40 minutes, the person may be slow to respond. Some people will feel drowsy and disoriented, and it may take up to 30 minutes before complex tasks can be performed efficiently. Sleep inertia has implications for safety when workers are on-call for emergencies. Suggested measures to control sleep inertia and the subsequent impairment in work performance include:

- minimising naps taken at work that exceed 40 minutes
- planning for recovery times of up to 30 minutes for workers who may be subject to sleep inertia, before they are to perform hazardous tasks.

Breaks are an important control measure when managing fatigue. Time spent away from the work environment has the potential to allow workers to recover from fatigue and improve work performance, vigilance, safety and efficiency. For this reason breaks should be taken during work shifts, and

should not be traded for an early finish time for the shift. Consider the following when deciding on the length and frequency of breaks within a shift:

- type of work being performed — generally the greater the physical and/or mental effort required to perform the work, the longer the total break time required per shift. Regular rest breaks are also needed
- Length of shifts worked — generally the longer the shift, the longer the total break time required per shift. Regular rest breaks are also needed.

Extended working hours may increase the risk of health effects that are generally associated with work. Exposure to hazards such as noise, heat and chemicals may be increased, and should be carefully monitored. National and international exposure standards are usually based on five, eight-hour days per week. Therefore, workplaces where extended hours are worked will need to adjust their exposure levels.

It is recommended that expert advice is sought in adjusting exposure levels. This is because the increased exposure of workers over, for example, a 10-hour shift may not be simply 1.25 times the exposure for eight hours. Models need to take into account the reduced recovery time after exposure to a hazard where extended shifts are being worked. Workplaces should always aim for best practice, aiming to keep all exposures significantly below the specified standards to allow for daily variability in exposure levels. This will ensure that workers will not be over-exposed to a hazard.

SHORT TIPS FOR SHIFT WORKERS

If you work outside of normal hours, your body's circadian rhythms will cause you to have:

- more trouble getting sufficient sleep
- poorer quality sleep.

It is important for shift workers to get as close to the average amount of required daily sleep (or rest in bed) as possible. The quality of day sleep will not be the same as night sleep. Day sleep is lighter than night sleep, and is more likely to be disturbed by noise. This is why planning is required to ensure that conditions for day sleep are as favourable as possible. The following tips may help you avoid unwanted disruptions while trying to sleep during the day:

- blinds or curtains with backing will reduce the light level in bedrooms during the day — consider using heavy curtains and sound insulation on doors and windows to also reduce noise levels
- cool conditions can help in getting to sleep and staying asleep
- inform relatives and friends of your work schedule and sleep times to avoid unwanted disruptions
- use an answering machine, or turn the phone down to help minimise disturbances

- develop ways of 'unwinding' after the afternoon or night shift, e.g. take a walk or watch some television
- take a shower or a relaxing bath before going to bed
- go through all of the normal rituals of going to bed as you would before a normal sleeping night
- avoid having a television in the bedroom
- don't get upset if you can't sleep straight away. Reading the paper or listening to music may help, but remember that rest in itself is important
- be cautious with the use of sleeping tablets, which may appear useful in the short-term, but can actually be quite harmful to health in the long-term.

Food and drink consumed before going to bed can affect sleep quality. This is because the digestive system is controlled by circadian rhythms and has its own regular rhythm of activity and rest. Digestion slows down at night irrespective of bodily activity. The timing of meals and the quality of foods eaten can affect sleep, and may lead to digestive complaints such as heartburn, constipation and indigestion. As a result, heavy or fatty food eaten at night is difficult to digest.

Shift workers should be aware of the following tips:

When to eat and drink:

- wherever possible, keep to daytime eating patterns
- when working a night shift, try having two meals at regular times and a light meal in the middle of the night shift
- consider having the largest daily meal during the day
- do not have a big meal or drink too much liquid before sleeping
- eat a meal before 1am as the effects of digesting a meal can decrease alertness in the second part of the night shift. It is better to eat before becoming fatigued at night.

What to eat and drink:

- alcohol lowers the quality of sleep and overloads the bladder. It is recommended that alcohol is not consumed in the last few hours prior to sleeping
- avoid drinks which contain caffeine (such as tea, coffee or cola) in the last few hours prior to sleeping
- eat light, healthy food that is easy to digest.

Driving while tired is a major killer on the roads. Fatigue slows your reaction time and affects your scanning ability and information processing skills. Workers should be aware of the effects of fatigue when driving to or from work. Some precautions include:

- avoid driving when you are tired
- avoid using the car heater as it can make you feel drowsy. In cool conditions direct warmth to your feet and open the window a little to allow fresh air on your face
- keep the mind active by listening to the radio while driving home

- make the car as windy, noisy and uncomfortable as possible
- share the drive with other people
- try not to drive in the hours when you would ordinarily be asleep (especially midnight to dawn).

These methods only have an effect for approximately 15 minutes. Therefore, whenever you are driving a car and begin to feel fatigued (i.e. find it difficult not to fall asleep while driving), then turning up the radio or relying on cold air should only be used as a method to stay awake until you find a safe place to pull over and rest.

It is recommended that people consult their doctor before beginning shift work if they:

- are on regular medication (e.g. insulin for diabetes or antidepressants)
- have a chronic medical condition (e.g. asthma or epilepsy).

Shift workers tend to have more health-related problems than day workers. Shift workers should seek medical advice if they experience:

- depression
- sleeping problems
- heart problems
- indigestion, or other stomach or bowel problems.

You should also report these effects to your health and safety representative. As your health and fitness are contributing factors to fatigue, it is important for you to maintain a good level of physical fitness. Shift workers should make an effort to increase their physical activity during leisure time.

The most important thing to remember is that you are number one. The goal for each day is to go to and come from work safely and alive. As an individual, you need to factor in as part of your own health management – fatigue management. I personally have driven two hours to work and two hours from work on top of a 12-hour day… I know too well the toll it has. Consult with your employer and where possible put in better management strategies.

For more information or workshops on fatigue management and/or stress management, you are welcome to contact me – http://www.gayecameron.com.au ●

REFERENCES:

NSW Department of Primary Industries "Fatigue Management Audit Checklist", 2006

NSW Labour Council, "Experts Question Fatigue Tests", February 2004

Wellman Organisation, "Occupational Health – Fatigue Management", August 2001

NSW Roads and Traffic Authority – "Transitional Fatigue Management System", April 2004

Northern Territory Government – Fatigue Management Code of Practice, December 2005

"The Theory of Fatigue - Ergonomics", C Cameron, 1973, Pages 633 – 638

"Extended Working Hours in Australia - Counting the Costs, 2001", Queensland Department of Industrial Relations

Queensland Government "Fatigue Management Guide", 2005.

CONFERENCES

2008

2008 IAWP TRAINING CONFERENCE

"Policing New Territory"
September 2008
Darwin

Policing New Territory emphasises the important role of law enforcement leadership in creating safer and more secure communities and the need for a law enforcement environment, which envisions the future of its people and their diversity. For more info go to: www.nt.gov.au/pfes/police/community/iawp/index.html

Application for admission to
AUSTRALIAN INSTITUTE OF EMERGENCY SERVICES (ABN 75 050 033 764)

To:- The Divisional Registrar, _____ Division

I, _____ (Name in Block letters)

of _____ (Full postal address for entry in Register)

_____ Postcode [ ][ ][ ]

Phone (W) _____ (H) _____ Mobile: _____ Date of Birth [ ][ ][ ]

Email: _____

do hereby apply to be admitted to the Institute.

I am (a) employed by or (b) a volunteer member of : (delete as necessary)

Name of Organisation _____

Address _____

_____ Postcode [ ][ ][ ]

Position/Title _____

Statement of experience and qualifications. (Note: Applicants may supply extra, relevant information and attach it hereto)

Experience (as an Emergency Officer/Worker)

From	TO	Appointment/Position	Duty/Responsibility

Emergency Training Courses

Institution	Course/Year	Results (where applicable)

Qualifications (Degrees, Diplomas, etc) _____

Decorations/Awards etc _____

Referees (Persons who have known me for several years and can give evidence of my character and background)

	Name	Address	Phone	Email
(1)				
(2)				

I declare the above particulars to be true and hereby agree to be bound by the Constitution, By-Laws and Code of Ethics of the Institution)

Signature: _____ Proposed by: _____ (Use Block Letters)

Witness: _____ Seconded by: _____ (Use Block Letters)

(Proposer and Seconder shall be financial Members of the Institute)

For Office Use Application recommended: Member ☐ Associate ☐ Student ☐ Corporate Affiliate ☐

Fee Received ☐ Receipt No: _____ Divisional Registrar _____

Completed Application forms with fees should be forwarded to the Division Registrar in the State where you normally reside. Further information may also be obtained by contacting your Division Registrar or General Registrar of the Institute at the following addresses:

NATIONAL COUNCIL

The General Registrar
Australian Institute of Emergency Services (General Council)
14, No 159 Middle Head Road Mosman, NSW 2088
Fax: (02) 9265 4830 or Email: general.registrar@aies.net.au
National Web Site: www.aies.net.au

NEW SOUTH WALES AND NEW ZEALAND

The Registrar - NSW Division of Australian Institute of
Emergency Services. PO Box 57 Oatley, NSW 2223
Email: registrar.nsw@aies.net.au,
registrar.nz@aies.net.au

**SOUTH AUSTRALIA, WESTERN AUSTRALIA
AND NORTHERN TERRITORY**

The Registrar - SA Division of Australian Institute of Emergency
Services. Unit 21/17 Fourth Ave Everard Park, SA 5035
Email: registrar.nt@aies.net.au, registrar.sa@aies.net.au,
registrar.was@aies.net.au

TASMANIA

The Registrar - TAS Division of Australian Institute of
Emergency Services. PO Box 1 Lindisfarne, TAS 7015
Email: registrar.tas@aies.net.au

QUEENSLAND

The Registrar - QLD Division of Australian Institute of
Emergency Services. PO Box 590 Fortitude Valley, QLD 4006
Email: registrar.qld@aies.net.au

VICTORIA

The Registrar - VIC Division of Australian Institute of Emergency
Services. C/O- 44 Webb Street Warrandyte, VIC 3113
Email: registrar.vic@aies.net.au

AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

The Registrar - ACT Division of Australian Institute of
Emergency Services. 59 Majors Close Wamboin, NSW 2620
Email: registrar.act@aies.net.au

WHAT ARE THE INSTITUTE'S AIMS

To provide a professional body for the study of the roles and functions of Emergency Services and Emergency Management Organisations throughout Australia, and the promotion and advancement of professional standards in these and associated services.

THE INSTITUTE'S OBJECTIVES ARE:

- To raise the status and advance the interests of the profession of emergency management and counter disaster services administration.
- To represent generally the views and interests of the profession and to promote a high standard of integrity and efficiency in the skills of emergency and counter disaster administration.
- To provide opportunities for association among members and students to promote and protect their mutual interest.
- To facilitate full interchange of concepts and techniques amongst members.
- To bring to the notice of the public such matters that are deemed to be important for safety and protection of the community and to promote research and development of emergency services generally.
- To establish a national organisation to foster international cooperation in counter-disaster services administration.

WHAT THE INSTITUTE OFFERS YOU:

- An opportunity to be part of a progressive Australia-wide Institute dedicated to the progression and recognition of the Emergency Service role in the community.
- An independent forum where you can be heard and your opinions shared with other emergency service members.
- A journal with information from institutes and other sources around the world in addition to the interchange of views between Divisions in Australia, as well as access to the Institute website.
- Reduced fees for members at Institute Seminars and Conferences and an information service supplied by professional experienced officers.
- A Certificate of Membership.
- The opportunity to use the initials of the particular membership status after your name.

- Corporate members receive a bronze plaque free of charge and can advertise on the AIES website, as well as provide articles for inclusion in the Institute's journal.

WHAT DOES MEMBERSHIP COST:

Nomination Fee:	$20.00
Annual Subscription:	$30.00
Fellows:	$40.00
Corporate Subscription:	$250.00

Note: Institute Fees may be tax deductible.

MEMBERSHIP:

There are four classes of membership:
• Members • Fellows • Life Fellows • Corporate
There are five categories of affiliation with the Institute that may be offered to persons who do not meet the requirements for membership:
• Associate • Student Member • Retired Member
• Honorary Member • Honorary Fellow

WHO CAN JOIN:

Applications for membership will be considered from persons who are at least twenty-one years of age and who:

- Are members of a permanent emergency service or associated service with at least two years experience, or
- Are volunteer members of emergency or associated services with a minimum of four years experience as an emergency services member.

Admission as a member may be granted if in the opinion of the General Council the applicant meets all other conditions of membership and passes such examinations and/or other tests as may be required by General Council.

WHERE DO MEMBERS COME FROM:

• Ambulance Service • Community Services • Emergency Equipment Industry • Emergency Management Organisations • Fire Services • Health, Medical and Nursing Services • Mines Rescue • Police Service • Safety Officers • SES • Transport Services • Volunteer Marine Rescue • Volunteer Rescue Associations

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