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Summer2014/2015 • National Emergency Response

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SA Country Fire Service,
November 2014.



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Bob Maul LFAIES

General Secretary/Registrar

NEW MEMBERS

The Australian Institute of Emergency Services is pleased to announce the following emergency services people joined the AIES between September and November 2014.

NAME	ORGANISATION	STATE
Ashley Allchurch	International Rescue (USA)	SA
Daniel Austin	Fire Emergency Services	WA
Benjamin Cavanagh	Mines Rescue	QLD
Mitchell Clout	SES	NSW
Paul Dunmall	Prisons Dept	VIC
Joshua Emanuel	St John Ambulance	NSW
Brett Fletcher	CFA	VIC
Sue Gage	SES	SA
John Goldsworthy	Police	QLD
Rory McKenzie	SES	NSW
Craig Moore	Medical/Health Services	QLD
John Murray	Marine Rescue	NSW
Ben Scott	SES	NSW
Lucy Saaroni	Frankston City Council	VIC
Heath Simpson	SES	NSW
Jarred Stevens	Frankston City Council	VIC
Margie Thompson	Emergency Management	QLD
Lee Waller	St John Ambulance	WA

CFA: Country Fire Association; **SES:** State Emergency Service.



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or log in at au.linkedin.com and search for 'Australian Institute of Emergency Services' under 'Companies'.



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The **Australian & New Zealand Disaster and Emergency Management Conference** will be held at Jupiters Gold Coast on the 3rd - 5th May 2015. The Conference will continue our support for the Disaster and Emergency Management community. You are invited to join us as we focus on natural disasters with the conference theme of **"EARTH; FIRE AND RAIN"**.

The Conference will feature multi-agency presentations covering all phases of emergency and disaster management – prevention, preparedness, response and recovery. There will be representation by fire, ambulance, emergency, rescue, volunteer, defence and health sectors.

Presentations will facilitate discussion and provide a spotlight on developing leaders in Disaster and Emergency Community.

Joint initiative of:

Australian & New Zealand Disaster and Emergency Management Conference
3 – 5 May 2015 | Jupiters Gold Coast | www.anzdmc.com.au



FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

Barry Archer MAIES

AIES National President

Well, where has this year gone? Just when I'm settling in, I find that I'm getting close to Christmas and everything is wanted before the holidays start.

The summer has started early with many fires already raging, and cyclone season is upon us again. Other emergency response workers are equally busy with the events of the silly season. While most people have holidays and celebrate the festive season with their family and friends, our emergency services are geared up and ready for work.

As we look forward to a very busy 2015 with the 100-year anniversary of the landings on Gallipoli and the Turkish Peninsula, I have to wonder just how many of Australia's Emergency Service personnel left our soil and went to answer the call overseas or how many returned to Australia to join and help develop our emergency services, and emergency response, capabilities. I have always looked at the relationship between emergency service workers from any agency and compared their devotion and dedication to that of the soldier. Is it that same sense of duty to one's fellow man, community or to country that sets them apart from others?

Our political leaders, many who have never fired a shot or had one

fired at them, fashion platitudes to suit the task of tying sacrifice and slaughter to a prescriptive set of contemporary Australian values.

"We are fighting now for the same values the Anzacs fought for in 1915," John Howard said at the funeral of the last Gallipoli veteran in 2002. These values he named as 'courage, valour, mateship, decency ... a willingness as a nation to do the right thing, whatever the cost'.

Is that any different to the values of our emergency service personnel who display the same values when they also put themselves on the front line to protect and preserve life or property? I think not.

As we move into 2015 we should give thanks to the thousands of those that serve or have served our country and those that continue to serve the community in times of adversity.

As we move into 2015 we should give thanks to the thousands of those that serve or have served our country and those that continue to serve the community in times of adversity.

I believe in the sayings of wiser people than myself:

"In times of danger we should be rightly proud of those who instead of



running away, walk towards danger to help their fellow man," Anon.

"Being brave isn't the absence of fear. Being brave is having that fear

but finding a way through it," Bear Grills.

Our emergency workers are brave no matter what job or in what capacity they work.

I hope that you all have a joyous and peaceful Christmas with your family and friends.

Cheers

Barry ●

P.S. As many of our resources come from the ranks of the volunteer I wanted to tell you of an organisation that can help you both find a volunteer and also direct you to a suitable service if you have the time to volunteer.

GoVolunteer is an initiative of Volunteering Australia. <http://govolunteer.com.au/> The GoVolunteer website is an initiative of Volunteering Australia, where they maintain a database of available tasks, positions and needs of the community. Have a look at their website and decide for yourself if you can help.

BEYOND VULNERABILITY: DEVELOPING DISASTER RESILIENCE CAPACITIES TO TARGET HOUSEHOLD PREPAREDNESS ACTIVITIES PART 2

By National Coordinator—Preparedness, Australian Red Cross

John Richardson

INFLUENCING CONCEPTS: RESILIENCE, ADAPTIVE CAPACITY, AND STRENGTHS

Resilience can be defined in many different ways. For the purpose of Red Cross' emergencies program, a slightly modified definition of resilience from the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies' is useful.

'The ability of individuals, communities, or organisations, exposed to disasters and crises and underlying vulnerabilities to anticipate, reduce the impact of, cope with, adapt to, and recover from the effects of adversity without compromising their long term prospects (IFRC 2012)'.

The modification to the federation's definition recognises that adaptation to a new set of circumstances, including the effects of adversity, is an important part of the processes that underpin resilience.

The words 'ability' and 'capacity' are key to understanding resilience. Ability is capacity or capability based on different human, psychological, social, financial, physical, natural or political assets. Each of these actions, anticipate, cope, adapt and recover are different and draw on respectively different sets of competencies, knowledge and relationships. The resilience approach acknowledges that there is always capacity in people or communities; resilience can be strengthened by both reinforcing individual and community capacity and addressing vulnerabilities (IFRC 2012).

A person's capacity increases the likelihood of responding (versus reacting) to uncertain, specific events and circumstances. This is an important but seeming subtle difference. Responding to an event entails planning for the event to occur, and taking actions to reduce the impacts. Reacting to the event is being caught unaware and unprepared (Paton and McClure 2013).

It is also important to recognise that resilience is not a static state of being. It is a dynamic process. The dynamism of resilience is captured by Norris et al's (2008) term *adaptive capacities*. Resilience rests on both the resources themselves and the dynamic attributes of those resources (robustness, redundancy, rapidity); the term 'adaptive capacities' is used to capture this combination. Recognising resilience as a dynamic process is critical, as circumstances change; a person's coping ability may be influenced by major life or health events, their financial capacity influenced by whether they have a secure livelihood, etc. It is also important to note that to indicate that a person is resilient does not mean there will be no distress or dysfunction after an emergency. It is a function of how quickly this distress subsides and the dysfunction or disruption resolves, as well as how they adapt to different circumstances.

Strengths-based approaches underpin community services practice. The principles and concepts, though, also have good application to emergency preparedness activities, as well as recovery. A strengths-based approach innately recognises that people have resilience. Saint Jacques et al (2009) outlines six key principles relating to strengths-based approaches:

- Every individual, family, group and community has strengths, and the focus is on these strengths rather than pathology
- The community is a rich source of resources
- Interventions are based on client self-determination
- Collaboration is central with the practitioner-client relationship as primary and essential
- Outreach is employed as a preferred mode of intervention, and
- All people have the inherent capacity to learn, grow and change.

This paper was presented at the Australian and New Zealand Disaster and Emergency Management Conference held in Surfers Paradise, Gold Coast, 5-7 May 2014. This paper has been slightly adapted to fit the style of, and space in, *National Emergency Response*. Part I appeared in the Spring 2014 edition of *National Emergency Response*.

Some of these are common sense, and the key shift in thinking for emergency management is to move away from pathology or deficits.

A benefit of this approach allows us to recognise the strengths of some groups deemed vulnerable; eg older adults have life experience, and many have lived through adversity, many community and linguistically diverse communities are close-knit and can draw upon resources internally, some Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have a good traditional understanding of weather and hazards, and strong connections to country.

By framing our approach as supporting or building resilience through a strengths approach, we are adopting a positive starting point and working forward.

FOUR DISASTER RESILIENCE CAPACITIES

As a result of the understanding of the impacts of emergencies on people, both through observed experience, and the work of a number of researchers, four broad *interlinked* adaptive capacities are suggested, being (in no order of importance):

- Wellbeing
- Connection
- Knowledge
- Security

These headings act as a way to broadly describe resilience in individuals, and each of them have a number of elements that can be grouped together. Each of these elements will potentially have an influence on other elements both within the capacity and in other capacities, for example good connections may increase a person's access





Red Cross aid workers survey an emergency shelter after the Katherine floods April 7, 2006 in Katherine, Australia. Authorities declared a state of emergency for the Top End for the next two days in response to the flood, during which the swollen Katherine River hit 18.97 metres.

to knowledge. Possessing elements of these capacities can minimise the disruption of people's lives from the impacts of the emergency. The more of these elements that a person possesses or can prepare for, then the more resilient they are likely to be to the impacts of emergencies.

Each of these capacities contributes a person's resilience to the impacts of disaster. Some of these factors that contribute to these capacities may be innate, for example their genetic makeup influencing their health status. Others may be a result of people's circumstances. From an emergency management perspective, some capacities can be improved through household preparedness activities. Understanding each of these capacities, and the elements that contribute to them, will help target household preparedness programs, and other strengths-focused social resilience building programs.

WELLBEING

Wellbeing, as a disaster resilience capacity, relates to a person's health and quality of life status, and how this supports preparing for and coping with an emergency.

WHAT DO WE MEAN?

Having good health (physical and emotional) and quality of life can assist an individual to develop positive risk beliefs and

enact them in preparedness activities, cope with, adapt to and recover from disruption. It also includes their psychological coping ability (John Hopkins and IFRC 2008). It can also assist with their ability to contribute to the community around them.

Specifically the focus in this capacity is upon the elements of resilience relating to physical health, quality of life, and mental health.

Physical health relates to death, injury and illness relating to the impacts of the emergency, and the steps that can be taken to reduce the impacts. Quality of life focuses upon people's coping capacity, the work life balance. Mental health recognises both the potential for exacerbation of existing conditions, as well as the development of emergency-related mental health condition as a result of exposure or stressors from the emergency.

Appendix A indicates in more detail the resilience elements relating to wellbeing, the consequences of an emergency on that factor, what contributes to resilience, what reduces resilience, and actions an individual may take to build or support resilience.

CONNECTION

Connection, as a disaster resilience capacity, relates to how well people are connected to others within their community (geographic or virtual), access

to services, participation in civic life, and their sense of belonging to a place.

WHAT DO WE MEAN?

Many of the impacts of emergencies are geographically focused. Hence communities, their makeup, and their level of diversity are important to understand. Connection to people's places, their spaces, and their community, in the disaster context, are important intangible factors in understanding disaster impacts.

Within this capacity the following elements support people's connection to each other and their place:

- Personal Networks
- Participation
- Access
- Attachment to place.

People with strong personal networks can draw upon their social capital to support achieve goals or shared preparedness, response or recovery objectives within their community (actual or virtual) (Australian Red Cross 2013). Connection to place is also important as it embodies a sense of belonging to a community, participating civic life, be it through actively engaged with local organisations or in local issues, therefore strengthening community links and resilience (Tuan 1977). Access to services is important

for people to be able to use a range of services and businesses to help them achieve their goals. Connection to the land/environment is important as it brings a cultural and spiritual dimension for some peoples, eg Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders.

KNOWLEDGE

Knowledge, as a disaster resilience capacity, relates to having access to appropriate information, and communal knowledge, regarding local hazard risk profiles and risk mitigation and management strategies for a geographic area. It also relates to knowledge about the impact of an emergency, understanding all of the consequences of an emergency.

WHAT DO WE MEAN?

Within this capacity the following elements support developing people's knowledge base through understanding:

- Hazard risk profiles
- Local emergency plans
- Recovery

Knowledge of hazards and their impacts, and local arrangements can inform behaviour change, can lead to people making informed decisions before,

Having good health (physical and emotional) and quality of life can assist an individual to develop positive risk beliefs and enact them in preparedness activities, cope with, adapt to and recover from disruption.

during and after disasters. This can then potentially reduce the impacts of the disaster and their subsequent distress. It also includes the capacity to process this information, and a willingness to act upon it, individually and collectively, in a meaningful way, that is, to anticipate in relation to prevailing hazard-scape and to cope, adapt, recover and learn from specific hazard experiences. It also includes having a good understanding of the long-term consequences of emergencies to enable people to plan fully informed about the hazards in their area.

Having this knowledge also contributes to community competence, where a community is able to collaborate effectively in identifying the problems and needs of the community; can achieve a working consensus on goals and priorities; can agree on ways and means to implement the agreed upon goals;



'Safety ... refers to a safe neighbourhood, where people can walk about safely, and there are low rates of crime'.

and can collaborate effectively in the required actions (Norris et al 2008).

This resilience capacity may also include a strong moral belief system or well developed world view, which may help with making meaning of events and circumstances. It also contributes to the individual and community narrative (Chamlee-Wright and Storr 2010), how people see themselves and their community, which can be very important in determining how the course of recovery may run.

SECURITY

Security, as a resilience capacity, relates to the ability to maintain personal safety within their household and neighbourhood. It also refers to maintaining a livelihood despite the impact of the hazard, and the capacity to provide financial protection of a person's household's assets and livelihoods. It also means being able to shelter safely during the hazard impact (Handmer 2003).

WHAT DO WE MEAN?

Three elements are identified within this capacity. The first relates to a person's personal safety within a home and their community. This relates to strong personal relationships with members of the family/household. It also refers to a safe neighbourhood, where people can walk about safely, and there are low rates of crime.

The second element relates to whether

the person's home is considered to be disaster resilient, that it is built to appropriate codes, or not within hazard identified areas.

The third element relates to whether the person has the financial capacity to undertake preparedness activities in the first place, and manage the financial consequences of an emergency, including dealing with the health and social consequences, reinstatement of their assets, and potentially disruption to incomes.

CONCLUSIONS

The importance of these capacities and the factors that contribute to them lie in the targeting of a range of activities relating to resilience. For preparedness, it can help form an assessment of a person's resilience to the consequences of an emergency. This assessment then allows the targeting of specific information or activities or engagement to support building of resilience. For example, someone new to an area may have a deficit in the knowledge capacity, not understanding the hazard profile, the plans in place or where to get assistance. Understanding this would then mean targeting of those people with information from the hazard management agencies would be a priority. Also some network building activities would be important to connect the people into the community.

Most of these factors lead back to some of the demographic categories first mentioned at the beginning of the paper. What this approach allows us to do, however, is to understand why people in a particular category are vulnerable to the consequences of emergencies, and what elements of resilience may need to be supported. ●



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One in Three

by Des Lambley



1169 Corporal Clarence Lambley
34th Infantry Battalion.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Des Lambley was a former officer who served with me in the NSW SES Civil Defence and State Emergency Services Organisation in the 1970s and 1980s.

Des was a Sergeant in the Australian Army and saw service in Vietnam during the Vietnam War.

**General Secretary/Registrar, AIES
Robert Maul**

Had I been alive, and between the ages of 18 and 42, 100 years ago, there is every chance that I would have gone forward for WW1. Anyone with an ancestor living in Australia before WW1 probably has a relation who served or was killed in that horrible war. One in every three males in that age category embarked from Australia with the Australian Imperial Force (AIF). They were all volunteers helping to defend Australian freedoms, and helping other people who were unable to defend themselves. Another perspective for this title was that my father had three cousins who enlisted in the AIF. One of them was killed in action on the western front.

AIES National Registrar, Bob Maul, advised me that the *National Emergency Response Journal* was seeking articles for publication as its contribution to the commemoration of that dreadful war. I felt compelled to write.

There is a wonderful connection here. The AIF men and the nurses were all volunteers. So many of the emergency services people right across Australia are also volunteers. The Secretary-General of the United Nations, Ban Ki-moon on 5 December 2012, said that volunteerism is "Founded on the values of solidarity and mutual trust, volunteerism transcends all cultural, linguistic and geographic boundaries". It is an intrinsic characteristic in some to want to serve humankind. To help and defend those unable to help or to defend themselves is honourable, and an admirable trait. Such service gives but does not take. The efforts of the AIF and the ES people

are also alike because of their training, in discipline, self-discipline, teamwork, and compassion for others. Caring, advanced, societies possess these qualities. It is the Australian way, and it is a particular feature that distinguishes us. That is how it was done and is done here.

In October 2014 my wife and I joined an eight-day rail tour of the Western Front. We departed from St Pancras in London by Eurostar and propped in Ypres and Amiens with coach trips to the various battle sites each day. There were 19 of us in the group – two from Australia, two from the USA, an Irishman and the remainder were from England. The tour leader was an ex-Royal Marine of the Falklands era.

A couple of weeks before we left for Europe I was invited to attend a First Shot Commemoration Ceremony held on 4 August 2014 at the old Portsea Army Barracks in Victoria. One hundred years ago to the minute, a 105mm artillery piece fired a commemorative shot to remind us that gun number six at the Fort Nepean Coastal Garrison put a shell across the bows of the German steamer *Pfalz* and prevented it from escaping. Just over three hours after war had been declared it was Australia that had fired the first shot in WW1. On arriving in London another coincidence was the talk of the town. We were told we must see *Rivers of Blood* at the Tower of London. It was an allegorical artistic construct of 888,246 ceramic Flanders poppies planted in the Tower's moat. Each poppy represented a British military death in WW1. It was a beautiful yet chilling visual experience.



'Rivers of Blood' at the Tower of London.

On the 90-minute run to Ypres and under the Channel by Eurostar I could not help but to reflect upon what each of those AIF soldiers going forward 100 years ago might have been thinking about. Their trip took more than four days usually. They had much more time than I to think of their mortality, their loved ones, and why they had enlisted for such a horrid war. They would have wondered how long the war was going to last. If they were returning to the Front they might have wondered where their own unit was now located, how many of their comrades were still alive, and what were they doing. They might have reflected upon their short leave and how well or poorly they had utilised it. Four days is a long time travelling and some would have considered the prospect of desertion or some other ruse that would delay or prevent their return to possible death. Some would have thought about the number of times they had been wounded, only to be sent forward again. How many times were they to be so lucky? We know that many of them succumbed and others sacrificed themselves in brave acts, or were to descend into madness from shell shock. It seems easy for armchair critics of WW1 history

to speculate about the rights and wrongs of a war held so long ago. But it would be entirely wrong to denigrate their individual spirit and the soldiers' gift to humankind. They had volunteered in their thousands to assist in the defence of freedoms.

There were many impressions on this tour. The thousands of headstones in hundreds of carefully kept Commonwealth War Grave Cemeteries. The Belgians, French and the Commonwealth War Graves people care and tender these places in a quietly beautiful way. One cannot be but sobered by the large cemeteries like Tyne Cot or by the little ones like Gordon near Mametz. It is hard to comprehend that there are 54,000 names of those soldiers killed but whose bodies were never found that are inscribed on the Menin Gate. I was impressed by the Ypres Fire Brigade Buglers who have blown a Last Post there at 8pm each night since 1928. (During WW2 the ceremony was evacuated to the UK. By making prior arrangement you could lay your own personal wreath at this ceremony.)

Another impression was seeing how all of the battlefields have revegetated, how cities and villages have been rebuilt in their former style, how the landscape is intensively farmed or has now succumbed

to urban development. The visual amenity of the villages remain pristine. We saw no graffiti. There is a poignant history embedded in every spot. There are numerous museums and interpretative centres to the Great War. These places are not trashy commercialisations but establishments that have been sensitively constructed to help remind new generations about the nonsense of war. We were impressed by the way the local people went about their business and made the ever present pilgriming tourist welcome. There was no evidence this was a grudging acknowledgement of the contribution made by the Allies to help repel German armies. There is the physical geography of the place. Passchendaele with its long low salient, and the soft tender light. There are the braided channels of the Somme River, and such pleasant undulating hills and valleys on its northern banks. It is easy to see why such places were difficult ones in which to wage war. Near to the cemeteries ears of corn ripened on erect stalks in serried rows like an army marching shoulder to shoulder. The limy soils are sweet and the crops looked lush (and well fertilised). There were no fences and few cattle in this area. Vast acreages of vegetable and fodder crops merged across the undulating landscape. Hundreds of tons of potatoes and sugar beet were





Gordon cemetery near Mametz. Pleasant undulating hills and valleys.

being harvested. One could be forgiven for thinking that such an aesthetically beautiful countryside could not be a place of such death and destruction.

One hundred years ago the unfamiliar foreign names like Oude Kortrijkstraat

“One could be forgiven for thinking that such an aesthetically beautiful countryside could not be a place of such death and destruction.”

were Anglicised to become Moo Cow Farm and Devil Wood, Plugstreet and Hellfire Corner. The huge forest regrowth at Delville Wood belies the carnage that went on there. Its silence during our visit was unnerving. No birds sang. Lochnagar Crater at La Boisselle remains an incredible hole in the ground 100m in diameter and 30m deep. It was where one of the first of the 19 mines under the Messines Ridge was blown. Another memorable moment was the visit to the little known Wellington Caves at Arras. The underground limestone quarries that are hundreds of years old were connected during the war by some 24 kilometres of tunnels that were dug by New Zealand engineers and miners. The entrances were under Arras and the network of tunnels and galleries allowed 24,000 allied troops to be secretly assembled before bursting out upon a surprised enemy. Hotels, restaurants, businesses and private residences along the Front displayed flags of the allied forces, and poppy emblems were everywhere. It was not as though it was done for the tourist dollar but as a show of gratitude to those who had volunteered to help them in their time of need. There were more Australian flags flying there than fly around Melbourne and Sydney.

Clarence William Lambley was born in 1889 and his brother Percy in 1891

at Stroud, New South Wales. They travelled from there by train to Maitland and enlisted in the 34th Battalion, AIF on 29 January 1916. Their Regimental Numbers are sequential. They departed Sydney on 2 May 1916, per HMAT Ship Honorata Aragon. After training in England they moved to their Battalion on the Western Front. After Clarrie's promotion to corporal there were rounds of schools, front line duty and hospitalisation from Trench Fever. He rejoined his unit at Rouelles in July 1918 and six weeks later was killed in action at Peronne. The Battalion had fought at Messines, at the battle of Amiens on 8 August, and during the rapid advance to the St Quentin Canal that followed. It went on to help breach the Hindenburg Line at the end of September to seal Germany's defeat.

While the tour group visited the Historial de la Grande Guerre Museum at Peronne I took the opportunity to pay my respects to my Dad's 1st cousin, Clarence, who was buried nearby in the Peronne Commonwealth War Graves Cemetery Extension. I planted a poppy cross on behalf of his family and softly played the Last Post and Reveille from my smartphone. It was a very special but an emotional moment.

For those of you intending to visit the Western Front you should do your





Essex Farm cemetery. Even the smaller ones are well maintained and cared for.

homework first. Learn as much as you can about the ancestor relation(s) in which you are interested. The Australian War Memorial and the National Archives of Australia jointly provide a wealth of information about WW1 servicemen in digital form online. For those who paid the supreme sacrifice, the Commonwealth War Graves Commission website provides details of

the cemetery and the grave reference. Each cemetery has a register of burials and a plan showing the layout of graves behind a brass plaque at the entrance gate. This makes finding a headstone much easier.

One cannot fail to be moved by a visit to these sites. You will reflect why it was that so many Australians readily volunteered to defend freedom and democracy from tyranny. That they

succeeded is a testament to their gallant efforts and their ability to distinguish good from evil. Their service was the foundation upon which the subsequent generations could enjoy what Australia today has to offer. It is my hope that there will be enough men and women of similar substance to continue volunteering to protect freedoms, and society from the perils of nature, and inhuman aggressors. ●

THE COUNTDOWN TO 100 YEARS ON

On 25 April 2015, Australians and New Zealanders will stand together to mark the 100th anniversary of the ANZAC landings at Gallipoli.

To commemorate this significant event, *National Emergency Response* will publish stories about the emergency services heroes who played an important role during World War I over three editions—Spring 2014, Summer 2014/15 and Autumn 2015.

This special feature series will culminate in the Winter 2015 edition, where we will showcase how ANZAC Day 2015 was celebrated across Australia and New Zealand.

CALL TO ACTION!

Do you have a story of an emergency services family member or friend who served in World War I? *National Emergency Response* would love to hear from you. Email editor@aies.net.au or your local Division.

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Further to this, APS is owned by its members, so any profits are channelled back to members. Help spread the word by introducing new members and APS will send you, your nominated charity or your staff social club \$50 for each new member you nominate. **For more information call us on 1300 131 809 or visit www.apsbs.com.au.**



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POSTCARDS FROM THE UNITED KINGDOM

By Bill Hoyles, MAIES

AIES member and intrepid traveller, Bill Hoyles, shares his adventures of his recent trip to the Mother Land in August.



BROCKLEY, SUFFOLK

Staying on my niece's farm in Suffolk, I and other Australian relatives that had arrived to attend her wedding, joined a menagerie of domesticated animals. On the wild animal side there was a squirrel denuding its hazelnut tree, brown rabbits eating the grass, a red fox that had killed their previous chickens, moles making holes near the weeping willow tree, and small deer known to eat just about

anything valuable that grows.

Previously, there had also been a swarm of bees in their farmhouse chimney but a local apiarist successfully relocated these prior to our arrival. Over a delicious ploughman's lunch the table talk turned to the growing national environmental issue of foxes and deer in England.

Following the ban imposed on traditional horse-and-hounds fox

hunting by The Hunting Act (2004), the number of foxes has been steadily increasing — causing concern for many farmers, particularly those that keep lambs and chickens. More recently, foxes have also started to kill family pets including kittens and puppies, which needless to say has raised the profile of the problem with the general public. As yet there is no immediate solution in sight. The current hunting laws, which allow a hunter to use a maximum of two dogs to hunt foxes which when cornered must then be shot, are generally acknowledged to be more humane than the traditional gentrified sport of fox hunting. However the new methodology has proved inadequate to control numbers. A conscience vote on a return to traditional fox-hunting methods has been mooted by the Prime Minister but change appears unlikely given the strength of the anti-hunting lobby and the weight of public opinion.

Later during a rural stroll with our hosts along a traditional Right of Way through fields adjacent to their property, we saw a number of rabbit and fox holes. We then took a rather scratchy shortcut through a bramble hedge and drainage ditch to be shown one of the many deer-shooting hides that have been constructed by farmers in response to the growing deer population. The issue lies less with the rarer large native red deer, but more with growing numbers of the introduced, smaller, non-native munjuck or barking deer. The latter grow to the size of a very large dog have a seven month breeding cycle, 15 year life span, no natural predators, and eat valuable crops and garden plants at will.

The shooting hides have a triangular steel frame incorporating a steel

ladder providing access to a slatted wooden seat surrounded by a padded chest-high railing. When in position the licensed sharpshooter remains largely hidden from view by a hessian cloth screen. Local Suffolk pest control companies advertise their availability to cull deer or if necessary to relocate injured munjuck deer. There is an upside for non-vegetarians. Our timely visit to the twice weekly markets at nearby Bury St Edmunds allowed us to taste-test delicious venison salami and provided us with the opportunity to purchase prime local venison meat from the back of the local butcher's van.

Snape

I travelled along a myriad of small country roads, some of which still had flood-warning signs displayed, to visit the small Suffolk village of Snape close to the River Alde. In December 2013 the east coast of England was hit by a massive storm surge that was even more severe than the storm surge of 1953. In this latest event a tide of more than 1.8 metres above the normal maximum was recorded. I had read that Snape was home to the Crown Inn which was flooded during this latest spectacular storm surge (as reported by the BBC). I found the Crown Inn to be a picture-perfect pub with a large car park situated at the bottom of the road that climbs upwards through Snape village. On arrival I was stopped by passing hikers who asked me for directions to the Snape Maltings – which by chance I had passed on the way to the Crown Hotel. They told me that the Snape Maltings were a collection of buildings originally used for brewing malt for beer, but now housed an arts complex and a concert hall where an annual music festival and televised concerts were held. All of this in the middle of nowhere! The River Alde ran between the Maltings and the Crown Inn and was home to several boats, a family of ducks, and a graceful white swan. From the Maltings' car park I could clearly see how flat the land was across the river and why the low lying Crown Inn situated at some distance on the other side of the river would be quickly impacted when a storm surge caused the river to burst its banks. In fact the road and



bridge between the two landmarks had been cut by floodwater leaving Snape effectively split in half but the Maltings unaffected.

Southwold

I then travelled north to Southwold to visit another pub that had suffered a similar fate in December 2013. Entering the town of Reydon just outside of Southwold I passed the magnificent buildings of Saint Felix School, which had been designated as an official rest centre for flood affected residents. My journey ended at the Harbour Inn, Southwold, which is located in the boat mooring area on the banks of the River Blyth and is known to be prone to flooding. On arrival I walked along one side of the river, past the various boatmen's shacks, the Royal National Lifeboat Institute fundraising bookstall and the many moored boats of all shapes and sizes. It was the last week of the long summer school holidays and there were many families fishing, netting for crabs, or queuing to cross the river on the rowboat ferry. Before visiting the Inn (and after a 15 minute wait), I enjoyed the most delicious takeaway meal of battered cod and chips with a sprinkling of salt and vinegar from Mrs T's fish shop cabin. Suitably fed and watered I then walked the Harbour Inn to see the flood height of the December 2013 storm surge. The reality was somewhat of a surprise. The BBC report was that the bar of the Harbour Inn had flooded

to a depth of 1.5 metres. What had not been made clear was that the bar is actually downstairs below ground level, and so while the height of 1.5 metres recorded in the bar was significant when measured from the floor of the bar, it did not appear to have reached the external ground level. It reminded me of calls that my NSW SES unit receives to flooded cellars and underground garages – structures that are almost designed to become submerged.

Ely

The fens are a low lying area of Cambridgeshire, Lincolnshire, Norfolk and part of Suffolk that was originally perpetually waterlogged marshland but which was drained several centuries ago to produce rich but flood-prone agricultural land. In August several fenland towns were hit by flash flooding caused by the remains of Hurricane Bertha travelling across from North America and dumping a month's worth of rain in just two days. Cambridge Fire and Rescue reportedly pumped out 11.5 million litres of water from the fenland town of March during this event. I visited the nearby town of Ely which was previously known as the Isle of Ely because of the water surrounding it. Ely cathedral sits at the top of the hill in the town centre with all roads running downhill from it. A local had posted footage on the internet of the storm hitting the cathedral precincts causing flash flooding on the





road at its entrance. Walking from the cathedral towards Oliver Cromwell's house I came across Ely's former Fire Engine House now converted to a restaurant with a solid reputation for good food. Internet research showed that Ely has two fire engines in its current fire station which is only manned full time during the daytime on weekdays. At night and during weekends it is crewed by retained fire-fighters who are on-call but only get paid when they respond to emergencies.

PERRANPORTH AND LANDS END, CORNWALL

In September 2014 I visited the small Cornish coastal town of Perranporth. It is home to the only licensed bar on an English beach – The Watering Hole – which was impacted by dramatic storms in January 2014. Those storms had gouged great chunks out of the beachfront sand, leaving four-metre cliffs of sand and threatening to destroy the property. At the time of my visit the tide was at least 100 metres out, the beach was flat and there was just a gentle rise of sand up to The Watering Hole and to the nearby Perranporth Surf Life Saving Club further along the beach. It was hard to believe that I was in the same place depicted in their website storm photos. On my travels around Cornwall I passed several deceased badgers squished on the roads. I subsequently read that the motor car is their only natural



predator and according to Cardiff University's research survey, Project Splatter, reported in *The Independent* newspaper, they account for the highest incidence of road kill in the UK. At the time of our visit a cull of badgers was about to commence, which surprised me as I had recalled previous protests at the removal of badgers habitats when I was younger and when I thought badgers were described as an endangered species. I even recall an episode of British TV show, *Yes Prime Minister*, which had this as its central theme! I learned that badgers are now so common in the UK that they pose

a threat to farmers because they are believed responsible for the spread of Bovine Tuberculosis. There have been suggestions that some farmers are killing badgers and throwing the bodies onto roads to be mistakenly identified as road kill.

I also made the obligatory tourist visit to Lands End, arguably the southernmost point of the UK. On display at the visitor centre were an air ambulance chopper and lifeboat ... tribute to many a rescue and air evacuation along the rugged coastline, cliffs and dangerous rocks of Southern Cornwall. ●

A SUMMARY OF THE 23RD WORLD VOLUNTEER CONFERENCE OF THE INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR VOLUNTEER EFFORT

GOLD COAST, 15-20 SEPTEMBER 2014

I was indeed fortunate to be selected to attend this international event at the courtesy of the AIES, as supported and sponsored by the Australian Government's Attorney-General's Department.

This International Association for Volunteer Effort (IAVE) conference was divided into two sub-events: A Youth Conference held on 15-17 September and the World Conference (17-20 September), which was the sub-event I attended. This was only the second time this international biennial conference has been hosted in Australia.

By Gordon **Blair**, FAIES



IAVE 2014
 YOUTH 15-17 SEPT 2014
 WORLD 17-20 SEPT 2014
 GOLD COAST AUSTRALIA
 23RD WORLD VOLUNTEER CONFERENCE

ABOUT THE IAVE

IAVE is the only global network with a sole purpose to promote, strengthen and celebrate volunteering throughout the world. Created in 1970 by a group of inspired volunteers, the organisation believes that volunteering is a high-value strategy to address

the world's most pressing human, social, economic and environmental problems. Volunteering Australia is the organisation's Australian member, with HRH Prince Charles, Prince of Wales as the World Patron.

IAVE's Board of Directors created a Universal Declaration on Volunteering

in 1990. The 2011 revitalised document promotes the following vision:

'Volunteering is a fundamental building block of civil society. It brings to life the noblest aspirations of humankind – the pursuit of peace, freedom, opportunity, safety and justice.'

In 2012, the Board of Directors proposed that:

'IAVE is the connective tissue through which leaders of volunteering worldwide can share their experiences, challenges and innovations, drawing inspiration and support for their work. We place high value on developing strong, sustained, mutually beneficial partnerships with NGOs, businesses, multilateral organisations and governments that share our belief in the power of volunteering to change the world.' (IAVE 2012, Board of Directors' Strategic Planning Process)

IAVE's philosophy complements the 2009 statement made by UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon. He stated:

'Volunteerism is a source of community strength, resilience, solidarity and social cohesion.'



It brings positive social change by fostering respect for diversity, equality and the participation of all. It is among society's most vital assets.' (IAVE 2014, A Call to Action hand-out at the Conference).

CONFERENCE OVERVIEW

The World Conference activity commenced with a Gala Dinner and Cultural Night on Wednesday 17 September. Guest of honour was Governor-General The Honourable Sir Peter Cosgrove AK MC (retired). Sir Cosgrove gave a very supportive address, highlighting the great overall humanitarian value of volunteering within the Australian and world-wide communities. Attendees were 'welcomed to country' by a delegation of senior indigenous elders, and a song and dance troupe enacted a selection of traditional cultural interpretations. Included, was the Australian National Anthem sung in an indigenous dialect (and later, in English).

What may have been considered 'too bright and too early' for some (considering the night before), the conference was officially opened at 9am by the Prime Minister's delegate, Assistant Minister for Social Services The Hon Mitch Fifield. A message from Prime Minister The Hon Tony Abbott was played as a video recording, which caused a chuckle among some as it inadvertently returned to play a second time due to a technical difficulty.

Keynote speakers included retired High Court judge The Hon Michael Kirby AC CMG and Executive Coordinator United Nations Volunteers Richard Dictus, together with the world leaders of IAVE.

During the opening plenary session, distinguished speakers acknowledged the immense value of volunteering. In Australia alone, volunteers generate over \$200 billion in services, provided by around six million volunteers each year across the country (Tim Jackson, President Volunteering Australia). The Hon Michael Kirby is always a highly inspiring speaker

on any social issue, and his address on this occasion was no different. In retirement, he is a volunteer himself with a number of human rights and world peace and security-related organisations. His entertaining style invariably includes elements of his own personal life, entwining issues of social minorities and the successes of social activists in changing laws and community attitudes.

After the Thursday and Friday plenary sessions or forums, there were a number of breakout sessions where delegates attended two or three like-themed presentations. As a representative of AIES, I was interested in attending the sessions related to emergency services and disaster

Volunteers generate over \$200 billion in services, provided by around six million volunteers each year across the country.

management issues, and if none were available, a session related to leadership. As this was an international world conference, organisational representatives from 40 countries presented the various themes.

The Thursday night social event saw delegates relocating to the restaurant strip of nearby Broadbeach, to savour the offerings of select food specialties in a more casual environment. Friday night was a free night, where delegates sought their personal choices for entertainment, or more wisely, caught up on sleep.

The Saturday morning consisted of forums, followed by the final plenary, closing ceremony, and a farewell luncheon.

Throughout the conference, delegates were guided and entertained by Ralph Devlin OAM QC, a distinguished lawyer and President of Surf life Saving Queensland. He is a prominent volunteer in his own right.

MY BREAKOUT SESSION

Volunteer Management: Can we do better? Sukin Yoon of the Caritas Volunteer Centre in Seoul, South

Korea presented the first session. The session introduced the Caritas Volunteer Training Certification in Leadership program. This endeavour prepares select volunteers for management roles in welfare programs. It is skills focused, and integrates volunteerism into mainstream society. Participants self-design their own projects and, after an ethics evaluation, can proceed with training and mentoring. Certification requires the passing of a formal exam.

Andrew Coghlan from the Australian Red Cross presented the second session, Challenges and Opportunities for the Emergency Management Sector in Australia. Mr Coghlan highlighted that Australia's 6.4 million volunteers

included around 500,000 emergency management volunteers, producing some \$200 million of value to the wider community.

Of the challenges that lie ahead for the next 5-10 years, extremes of weather, bio-security issues, and socio-political events (terrorism, labour strikes and mass public protests) were highlighted.

Key organisations are increasing their volunteer training programs to meet increasing demand. Other emerging themes include: the redefining of the traditional roles of government and non-government organisations in disaster management; safety; the use of social media; and 'the casual' volunteer – how to best use their offer of assistance.

In the third session, New Zealand presenters Vanisa Dhiru and Karen Smith highlighted their experiences in Building Capacity of Managers of Volunteers. In particular, they cited the NZ experience of leadership issues within their emergency management organisations. Best practice now sees the whole organisation striving for

The 23rd IAVE World Volunteer Conference was organised by the International Association for Volunteer Effort (IAVE) and hosted by Volunteering Australia, the national peak body for volunteering. The conference theme was Volunteering – Today's Imperative and focused on current models of volunteering as well as future trends.

competency-based training objectives, with managers of volunteers now targeting select volunteers for specific roles. This presents an issue for managers – how to manage volunteers not selected or those who fail to qualify.

After lunch, I attended the Volunteer Management theme of presentations. First session was from Taiwan presenter Nien Chen. He spoke about language skill management during large international events. Large sports events, such as the Olympics or other world-class events can attract a hundred thousand international visitors to a venue city. Which language will take precedence? Medical/first aid volunteers are required in increasing numbers, with local university students often presenting as a valuable resource for skills, in both language and other services.

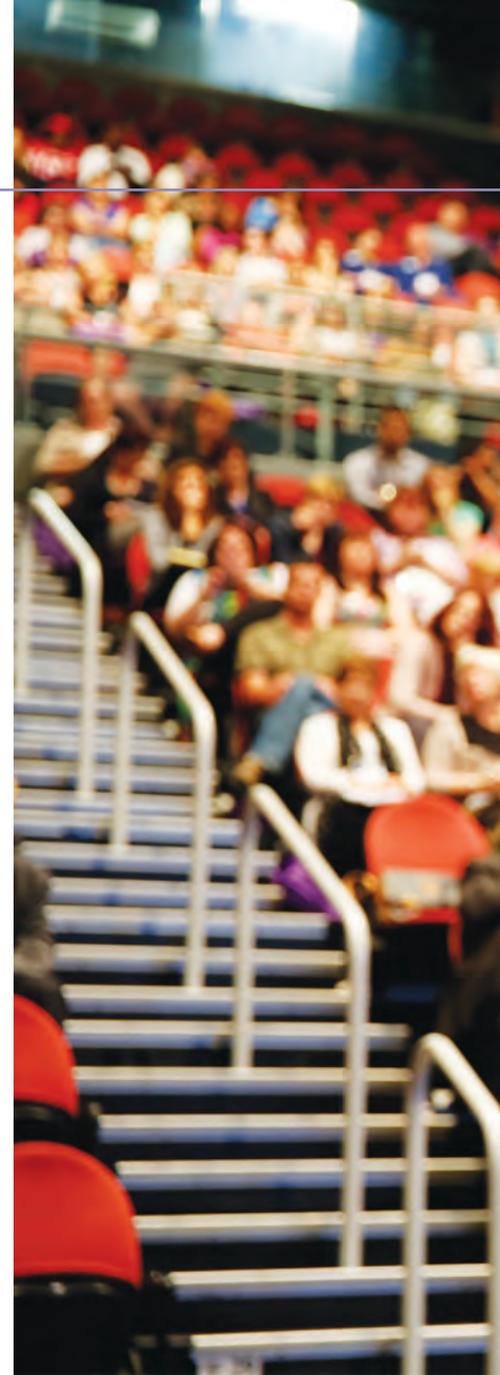
Next, Australians Anastasia Magriplis from Uniting Care Communities, and Mark Creyton from Volunteering Queensland, presented on Adaptive Leadership for Volunteer Managers. They spoke about new methods and tools available to today's leaders and managers – the internet and social media – and the relationship with developing trends in the socio-political environment. Volunteer managers need to challenge their current thinking, and be open and responsive to new methods. Is there room for improvement? Why do we often prefer to keep using old methods, and what of the lessons learned? Volunteer professionalism – what does this mean?

The presenters quoted the work of Heifetz 2006, that there is 'disparity between what we hope to achieve, and what our current capacity to do so is'.

The final session on Thursday was a youth-led workshop conversation on Disasters and Community Preparedness. Sam Johnson, founder of Student Volunteer Army New Zealand, led the group through an exploration of why young adults volunteer with uniformed organisations, and a brief review of some of their experiences in the field. Participating were young adult volunteers with St John Ambulance, volunteer fire fighters from NSW, QLD and SA, Surf Lifesaving Australia, Australian Red Cross and Girl Guides Australia.

Later, Claire Ellis from Volunteering Australia led a discussion to review the definition of volunteering. This was a limited numbers event, with priority allocated to members of Volunteering Australia.

Friday morning plenary sessions included Volunteering: The role of Government and Citizens post 2015, presented by Richard Dictus of the United Nations. The Australian Aboriginal Volunteering Experience by Jody Broun of the National Congress of Australia's First Peoples followed this. Mr Dictus spoke of UN programs in the world's hot spots. At any one time, there are over 6,000 UN volunteers in the field, with another 11,000 working from home online in technical support roles. A focus of the UN is to deliver sustainable aide programs that are resilient of



changes in government of many Third World Nations, and assisting to set up legal framework and infrastructure for volunteers to operate in.

Ms Broun spoke about her family and of the life and times of living in outback Australia during the pre-1960s era. Australia's First People (AFP) is now the preferred terminology over Aboriginal or Indigenous.

Moderated panel forums were next up. I attended the Disaster and Emergency Service Dialogue forum. Panelists were: Stefan Agerhem from Swedish Red Cross; Sam Johnson, Founder of Student Volunteer Army New Zealand, Raelene Thompson, Executive Director Emergency Management Institute; and Corazon Alma de Leon of Philippines Red Cross.

After morning tea, I attended the Volunteers and Emergencies session where Sarah Lockwood from New



Zealand spoke about youth volunteers responding to local crises, which followed on from introducing the Student Volunteer Army.

Jeremy Horan from the USA presented his views on what we have to learn from Spontaneous Responses Efforts during times of disasters. The leverage of volunteer resources can expedite response and recovery times in disaster-affected communities. The largest single most important group to be considered, are the 'spontaneous volunteers' who are there on the scene (often survivors of the impact zone), yet many response organisation officials dismiss their potential.

Vanessa Brown from Surf Lifesaving Australia elaborated upon The True Value of Emergency Services, and their role in building social capital, and promoting resilience in communities. Volunteer Emergency Services are present in most

Australian communities to some degree. Clearly, without their presence, many communities would suffer far greater adverse outcomes.

After lunch, a plenary panel considered Volunteering and Building Engaged Communities for the Future.

The final sessions for the day were a presentation from Russian Irina Smirenko of the Moscow Youth Multifunctional Centre on the 'volunteer tear' as a tool of government. The ever-expanding social and political crisis in world events increases the value of maintaining stable dialogue between government agencies and citizens. Volunteerism is now seen as a favourable development of civil society. There is now a distinct volunteer movement, whereas only a few decades ago, under the previous political system, volunteerism was not open and overt. Today, it promotes positive attitudes

between local communities and the State (which may still seek to capitalise upon the strengthened relationship with its citizens).

In a similar theme, Australians Robert Wagner, Joan Pepiand and Marie Brookfield focused on reducing the clash between local government and community volunteer organisations. Working together, local government and community organisations can develop and maintain greater capacity than either group working as a single entity, thereby building and maintaining effective and collaborative partnerships.

Australians Matthew Taylor and Michael Feszczak looked at Networking and Building Social Capacity in volunteering. The key feature of the Local Government Association Passport Project was to allow volunteers to work across council boundaries,

when the pool of volunteers in an affected area was unable to meet demand, due to local conditions such as roads blocked by flood waters. In essence, the project was very similar to uniformed emergency services organisations, and how they respond to large adverse events.

Saturday commenced with a Forum on Volunteering in a post-2015 World of Sustainable Development Goals. This was followed by a discussion group session on Integrating Volunteering in the Next Decade: A Ten Year Plan of Action.

The final plenary session of the conference presented a global review of volunteering, re-enforcing the social and economic value of millions of volunteers around the world, and ending with announcement of the 24th World Volunteer Conference of 2016 to be hosted by Mexico.

Delegates enjoyed the farewell luncheon, and final opportunity for networking, prior to commencing their travels home. Additionally, there was a display area set aside for international delegates to get a feel for the work that Australian organisations do in the context of volunteerism.

CONCLUSION

Over the two and a half days of this international conference, delegates were privileged to witness the presentations of a diverse range of innovative speakers from around the world. Emergency Services was not the sole theme of this conference, however, there were sufficient links between the many community organisations and the Australian uniformed emergency services community to maintain interest. Emerging themes for the future include the casual or spontaneous volunteer –

how to effectively use this vast human resource, and leadership development and the building of capacity to meet the demands of the post 2015 socio-political environment. While Australia's six million volunteers will continue to support the wider community, current and future leaders of volunteers must continually evolve and adapt to the ever-changing socio-political environment, both at home and abroad. The ongoing challenges of recruitment and retention of volunteers will require managers of volunteer groups to update their human resource management skills, and redefine their commitment to their organisational mission and vision. Today's volunteer can expect a professional and legally competent management approach to all aspects of the job, as if they were actually employed in their volunteer role. ●

Evolving volunteering

Australia must recognise that the practice of volunteering is evolving.

This is among the findings of the 23rd IAVE World Volunteer Conference hosted by Volunteering Australia, the national peak body for volunteering, on the Gold Coast in September.

The conference was attended by 1,000 delegates from over 40 countries.

"Volunteering models here and overseas are shifting," said CEO of Volunteering Australia Brett Williamson OAM.

"One lesson to emerge is that not for profits, corporates and governments must adapt if the next generation is to fill the volunteering shoes of their parents and grandparents. The voices of young volunteers must be heard.

"That means refreshing the image of volunteering, using new media to engage them and creating opportunities that suit their lifestyle."

Traditional perception of volunteering as a long-term



commitment is fast disappearing, giving way to one-off spur of the moment undertaking. Understanding the motivation behind the new age volunteer will be critical to charting the future of volunteering not only in Australia but globally.

Volunteer organisations that have already heeded the call are transforming their operational models so they are more compatible with

today's fast paced lifestyle. They are also mastering online, social media and other tools to reach younger audiences and shrink distance.

Mr Williamson said a national dialogue on the future of volunteering is needed.

Volunteering Australia will work with voluntary organisations, academics and government to frame a new National Volunteering Strategy.

2016 National Volunteering Conference

BUILD the future

6-8 April 2016
National Convention Centre in Canberra

The conference theme, Build the Future, will advance volunteering by bringing the sector together to build leadership, knowledge, networks and innovation in volunteering.

The conference will leverage off the success of the 2013 National Volunteering Conference held in Adelaide and the recently concluded 2014 IAVE World Volunteer Conference hosted by Volunteering Australia at the Gold Coast.

The Conference Program will focus on emerging volunteering challenges, trends and ideas. It will feature:

- Innovative programs and models of volunteering
- Networking lounges
- Tours of our national institutions' volunteering programs
- Research roundtables
- Social activities

For more information visit www.2016nationalvolunteeringconference.com.au

Beyond Bank Australia is the community partner and the bank for volunteers. Volunteering Australia is please to announce it will once again be the conference partner.

Key Dates

Early bird registrations open: **1 June 2015**
Call for Abstracts: **1 June 2015–24 July 2015**
Conference: **6–8 April 2016**

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT INVESTMENTS IN RESILIENCE

By David Mack, MAIES

Many emergency management plans are developed from risk assessments but, are the subsequent spending on the control measures sustainable or should emergency management be investing more in a community's vulnerability?

There is an integral link between all plans, whether they are risk management, business continuity management, enterprise risk management, disaster management, crisis management or emergency management. There may be other names for plans, but looking at the design and outcomes of other plans can improve the return on investment where public or donor money is spent in emergency management. When emergency management assesses a hazard, the risk profiling is increased proportionally to the risk exposure and the impact on communities, infrastructure and to a lesser extent the environment. Business continuity management and enterprise risk management directly relate to risks that impact on the survivability of the enterprise but these plans also focus on the internal and external vulnerabilities that are a consequence of the identified risks. There is also a fundamental association between enterprise and communities as one can't survive without the other.

"It is important to separate risk analysis from vulnerability analysis. A risk analysis is mainly limited to accidental events taking place within the immediate physical boundaries of the system. A risk analysis may include the barriers needed to mitigate, ie. prevent accidents, but the actions needed to restore and restart the system are usually not part of the traditional risk analysis. The focal point of a vulnerability analysis is the survivability of the system." (Einarsson, S., Et Rausand, M 1998, An Approach to Vulnerability Analysis of Complex Industrial Systems, Risk Analysis)

This is an interesting approach when considered it was written for emergency risk management.



This concept when placed in context of emergency management and disaster management plans may challenge or change some of the outcomes as it may be considered the majority of expenditure is in response capability for emergency management and recovery for disaster management.

At 3.20am on Friday 29 August, the Tavurvur volcano, East New Britain in Papua New Guinea had a strombolian eruption generating a viscous material discharge that lasted about eight hours followed by another 12 hours or so of sonic booms and occasional ejecting of pumas blocks the size of small houses.



The event created an opportunity for the author to examine the above concept in light of the surrounding community's perception and the responding agencies' capacity and capability. This was achieved through a series of post-impact interviews and observations of the affected area within the first 24 hours from the initial eruption. There was no indication from scientists at the volcano's observatory of the pending eruption and limited qualitative information to predict future outcomes. The comment 'Authorities in East New Britain are hoping the recent Mt Tavorvur volcanic eruption will be a short term activity' from Tiden, G 2014, *Locals Urged not to Panic, Post Courier*, doesn't generate the feelings of comfort, safety and security one would want to hear. It should also be noted that the 1994 eruption was not anticipated and caught the community by surprise even though scientists had measured an increase in seismic activity.

In looking for the answer as to why people live in the hazardous area, the responses given were concise and to the point. Three community segments were asked this question, these being the indigenous people, migrants born in Papua New Guinea and resettled Australian expatriates with business interests. People make decisions on the risks presented by hazards on the basis of the 'physical environment, human and social conditions and the economic environment. Why? It must be the pluses far outweigh the minuses'. (<http://lh-igcse-geography.wikispaces.com/3.7+Why+do+people+live+in+hazardous+areas%3F>). In conjunction with this, the consideration of assessing the individual's propensity for risk taking is equally important as this can influence the community's vulnerability. These risk-taking personality-based attributes are listed as 'stimulation seekers, goal achievers and risk adapters.' (Nicholson, N Soane, E Fenton-O'Creedy, M William, P 2005, Personality and Domain-specific Risk-taking, *Journal of Risk Research*.)

INDIGENOUS PAPUA NEW GUINEANS

It was a clear night sky when around midnight on 28 of August, about three hours prior to the eruption, some of the Toli community of Matupit Island on the Gazelle Peninsula observed the Megapod scrub fowl flying away from Tavorvur.



The scrub fowl flew from their roosting place in the surrounding vegetation of Tavorvur directly across the gulf to the mainland. In hindsight they now realise this was an indicator of imminent events but at the time no one made the connection. As a side note the scrub fowl returned on the evening of 29 and the morning of 30 August. The shore line of Matupit Island is within two kilometres from Tavorvur placing the community directly in its shadow, yet during the interview process, no one, male or female, indicated they ever felt fearful for their life. The building elements used in the community infrastructure are primarily thatched bush products or recycled man made sheeting attached to timber framing with the exception of three free masonry concrete block churches. Grid connected essential services do not exist.

When the eruption started the community assembled at one of the churches and made the following decisions: able bodied women and children would be evacuated to the Vunapope Catholic Mission on the mainland and the majority of men would stay behind, to look after the elderly and maintain the security of

the village. This was agreed upon and the women and children went to the mission for three days, while the rest of the village continued as normal. Although the village was impacted by volcanic debris up to 30 centimetres in diameter, it was not subject to any significant dust fall out.

This segment of community had the least to lose with regards to developed countries' perception of economic terms but the most to lose in respect of human spiritual, cultural and social associations. The community's primary source of sustenance comes from self sustainable farming, fishing and scrub fowl egg collecting. As one Toli lady said "the island and beach is our life, it is where we collect eggs and fish". The only indication of any vulnerability was a comment that during these events it is difficult to obtain 'processed store food'.

The resilience of this community should not be underestimated; their ability to adapt to the environmental risks and their resolve to live with the consequences is extraordinary. In the 1994 eruption the entire community was evacuated to the highlands of East New Britain and many of them were given free land,

in an attempt to resettle the community. Within two years of this event, many of this Toli community had chosen to return to their birth place on Matupit Island.

MIGRANTS BORN IN PAPUA NEW GUINEA AND RESETTLED AUSTRALIAN EXPATRIATES

In contrast to the indigenous segment, the above two segments had a lot to say, and even though there were some subtle variations in emphasis on the topics, the content was similar, so both segments have been put together. The majority of people that represented these segments are long-term inhabitants, most living in Rabaul during the 1994 eruption, they have commercial interests, many were born in Rabaul, had family links to indigenous groups and had relatives buried there. One expatriate female entrepreneur summed the event up in a way that to me seemed to best reflect these groups, "maybe I am complacent, but to me the last thing to do was to get on the road, it's better to just sit back and make a cup of tea. It's just a damn nuisance; at least here I am surrounded by friends, there's no normal person amongst us". These groups were dominated by gaol achievers with a more cavalier approach to risk taking.

The main focus of discussion was on their enterprise interests and the associated issues such as the conflict of the national strategy not to rebuild Rabaul and the reality, vulnerabilities in essential services and of particular surprise, aid. The national strategy to not rebuild Rabaul is a failure simply because all government departments are having to maintain the life cycle, of services and associated government infrastructure in Rabaul. It would be more prudent to invest in developing more resilient services and infrastructure than have a patchwork maintenance policy that leaves the investments more vulnerable not only to hazards but to everyday supply requirements. Since 1994 the strategy included the outcome that children of Rabaul will be schooled at Kokopo; this for most people, required children to travel 20 kilometres on public transport twice a day. It is an expense that very few indigenous people can pay, so it was easier to keep the children at home, creating a generation of academically challenged people that the enterprises in



Rabaul are finding difficult to employ. It's a challenging strategy in anyone's view when taken into consideration with UNICEF's current statistic of the Papua New Guinea indigenous literacy rate, of 56 per cent.

Aid was heavily criticised for spending millions of dollars in the wrong areas and for the wrong reasons. Aid is a tool of government but it has also become an enterprise for many non-government organisations. If aid was given to a region that was not internally supported by the national government one would think the focus of aid would be on the sustainability and survivability of essential services. How does an aid organisation develop a feasibility study, stakeholder engagement and business impact analysis on major projects when the majority of the project designers are in another country? The particular example given is current and was a multi-million dollar 2004 aid project, where the donor was to upgrade the Rabaul wharf precinct by building a fish processing factory and extending the wharf facilities for large vessels. This project has failed to achieve any practical outcomes, the fish factory has never been used and the extended wharf facilities and associated

drainage system will probably see the wharf silt up to an extent where it will be unable to dock large ships in the near future. ENB Port Services Ltd had to buy earthmoving equipment and on at least 20 times over the last six years have had to dig out their offices and facilities.

The contributing factor given as to why significant aid projects can fail was insufficient in country stakeholder engagement. The donor usually engages an external consultant to undertake preliminary feasibility and scoping in the recipient country. No budget though is made available for recipient country key stakeholders, to gather the evidence and analyse the projects' viability. The reference to key stakeholders is those communities, individuals and enterprises directly impacted by the projects outcomes. The projects are sometimes endorsed and orchestrated by government more on the political aesthetics than the long-term viability.

VULNERABILITIES

For this particular event no significant emergency management response was given with the exception of a cash injection from the government disaster fund.





The lack of oversight of how the disaster management money is spent makes it difficult to audit and trace and there was no obvious signs of disaster management of recovery projects in the community. Although the scale of this event was smaller to the significant and more devastating eruption of 1994, the community vulnerabilities were the same. If the consequences were analysed correctly in 1994, significant and sustainable community mitigation strategies could have been undertaken reducing community vulnerability and accelerating recovery objectives. Given that there is no likelihood that people will stop returning to their place of economic or emotional attachment the following is a list of some of the known vulnerabilities identified in consultation with community stakeholders:

1. POWER

Power to Rabaul is supplied from a hydro plant 40 kilometres away. Power lines are aboveground and in the zones where the dust and ash falls the power insulators earthed out. The only response to this issue was the Papua New Guinea Fire Service taking their fire appliance to the affected area and washing down about 10 kilometres of insulators. This task could take up to a week depending on the distance as there is only one fire appliance available and no mains water supply in the affected area. Placing the main power lines underground would assist in eliminating this issue.

2. POTABLE WATER SUPPLY

Rabaul has an underground potable water supply, which has one main town bore pumped to an elevated tank by

an electric pump. No alternate powered pump such as a diesel pump is available to support this system and when the electricity supply is down the town quickly overruns the tank supply. Due to ash rainwater tanks are not a practical solution. This system is a single point of failure with no redundancy at all.

3. BUILDING CONSTRUCTION ELEMENTS AND DESIGN

Due to the high sulphur content in the ash, as soon as it comes into contact with moisture it turns into sulphuric acid. All metal products including zinc and galvanised metals corrode at an accelerated rate. Metal roofing in the area even without an eruption has a life span of about 10 years. Roof design should be a minimum of 30 degrees to allow for the ash to slide off and reduce the loading on the building. Buildings still have skillion roofs and pitches less than 22.5 degrees that allow for ash to build up and given the right conditions the building will eventually collapse. Building site layout should be on elevated ground; the 1994 eruption saw up to one-and-a-half metres of ash fall which buried significant parts of the Rabaul and it was not practical to try and remove the volume of new top soil in large flat areas of the town's topography.

4. PLANT AND EQUIPMENT

All moving parts suffer from the airborne particles, the additional redundancy systems and increase in normal maintenance is acceptable; it is the supply chain issues when there is an emergency event that creates a problem. As much as it would be considered a supply chain issue it is an internal dilemma; when government

intervenes during an emergency event they also take control of the community's transport supply network placing restrictions of access and egress. Allowing the enterprise groups in a community to access essential items is just as important as other emergency supplies as this allows for business continuity and quicker recovery times.

5. TOPOGRAPHY ASH CONTROL METHODS

When it rains the ash deposited on sloping land can develop into mud slides and depending on the volume these mud slides can cause significant issues. Rabaul had a major system on drains built pre-1994 that were designed to move mud slides away from areas of risk; this system has not been properly maintained or extended to meet current needs.

6. FRESH FOOD SUPPLY

The sulphur is devastating to vegetation; within 24 hours all vegetation in the fallout zone was dried up, brown and crumbled when touched. It's an ironical outcome when considering the volcanic ash is some of the most fertile earth on the planet and to this day farmers in East New Britain have had no need for fertiliser. This issue does create a short-term need for dedicated transport to bring fresh produce from surrounding unaffected farms to the affected area. The recovery time for harvest in these areas is only three months and this is well recognised by the local community as within 24 hours of the eruption they were involved in chopping down all dried up vegetation, to allow for new growth and crop plantings.

7. HEALTH

Respiratory and sulphur skin burn issues are most common. There are stocks of dust masks in the community but most consider the design of dust masks uncomfortable for long-term use and it is more common to see a piece of material tied around the face or nothing at all used. The Matupit Island community stated they did not have dust masks made available. Respondents observed skin burns appear to affect people with pre-existing health conditions more; healthy locals and indigenous people don't mind the extra sulphur in the atmosphere and many consider it assists in healing of tropical ulcers. Research into an appropriate design for dust



masks and targeted education in the health risks would reduce the number of health hazard related issues.

This is an example of an extreme risk in a developing country, where the community has very little support from emergency management agencies, yet they are individually and as a community resilient, even if they are vulnerable to some external factors. They have a tacit understanding of the hazards they live with and the associated risks and what's more important is they accept the responsibility for the decisions they have made. For those of us that may be more risk adverse, the actions of this community could almost be considered reckless, but there are plenty of examples just like this in developed countries. For example,

Australia as a contrast, where government funds multiple agencies that defend their legislative right to manage their mandate and yet they are becoming the target of the community's reaction to variegate their losses, when it is perceived the response outcomes aren't met during an event.

It may be time to draw the line in the sand, the risks from hazards are not owned by agencies but by the people who choose to live in that environment. Government is not a panacea to risk and will never be able to fund the elimination of risk. A lot of response resources used at significant incidents have no impact at all on the end result and in some cases create addition problems. Educating people in understanding the hazards and accepting the risks, as well as being

able to make their own decisions on how they will manage the risk appears more realistic and prudent. Sustainable investing in the community's vulnerability will improve their resilience, recovery time and may be a better return on EM investment. 'Therefore, in view of these observations, the vulnerability of the whole area, the impact on the community and engineering aspects should definitely be considered when addressing re-development and long-term planning of the Rabaul township and near-by villages.' (McKee, C de Sain-Ours, P 2000, How Dangerous is Rabaul Volcano?, UNDAC – National Disaster Management Office.)

This is a lesson already learned the question is when will it become a lesson managed? ●



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St John Ambulance NSW broke the Australian record for the largest Bicycle Emergency Response Team (BERT) deployment at the Blackmores Sydney Running Festival recently.

BERT has been operating in NSW since 1998, and has grown to more than 50 officers with 25 bikes in the fleet.

A total of 21 BERT bikes were in attendance at the running festival in September. The previous record is believed to be 16 bikes at World Youth Day in 2008 and, by comparison, six bikes a shift are usually deployed at the Sydney Royal Easter Show.

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