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Government
of South Australia



RESCUE

Emergency Management

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SOUTH AUSTRALIA'S DISASTER RESILIENCE NEWSLETTER

Training course being piloted and evaluated in remote communities

The South Australian (SA) State Recovery Office received funding from the National Emergency Management Program to pilot and evaluate the Safer in Emergencies training course in remote Indigenous communities.

The base course was developed by the State Recovery Office.

Project Manager Anna Strzelecki travelled to Pukatja (SA), Yalata (SA), Beagle Bay (WA) and Warruwi (NT) to deliver the training to people living in those communities.

The aim of the course is to raise awareness of emergencies and disasters and to encourage participants to become more involved in preparing for incidents and in the recovery process, for both themselves and others.

Large vinyl mats are used for several of the activities, which means that the course does not rely on technology and can be delivered in a variety of environments.

When resources are finalised, interested parties will be able to utilise the materials to deliver the course in their communities.

In Warruwi, the training was delivered to the Northern Territory Emergency Services (NTES) volunteers, some of whom were teachers at the local school. Subsequently, they have successfully delivered the course to community members and school students.

For further information please contact Susan McCormick by email: susan.mccormick@sa.gov.au



Community members at Warruwi in the Northern Territory take part in the training being delivered by NTES volunteers

The Department for Environment, Water and Natural Resources, the State Emergency Service and the Local Government Association are jointly presenting a workshop on the application of NERAG on Tuesday, 19 April 2016.

The aim of the workshop is for participants to understand how to use the new NERAG version 2 document and the basics of undertaking a risk assessment.

National Emergency Risk Assessment Guidelines (NERAG) workshop in April

For more information and to enrol in the course go to <http://www.lga.sa.gov.au/page.aspx?c=66728>



Each decision and action makes us more vulnerable to disasters – or more resilient to them. Thus disaster risk reduction involves every part of society, every part of government, and every part of the professional and private sector." United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction.



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Recovery operations in full swing following Pinery bushfire



Recovery operations following the Pinery bushfire are well underway following the devastating fire last November, but we know this is a long-term challenge.

Housing SA, through the Emergency Relief Functional Service, is providing practical assistance and personal support at a recovery centre in Gawler, including case management via mobile services and through outreach home visits.

South Australians have donated generously to the State Emergency Relief Fund. To date, more than \$2 million has been donated,

and the Relief Fund Committee has processed over 400 applications to the appeal.

The State Government has so far provided \$2 million to assist in the relief and recovery effort and is considering further assistance.

The Local Recovery Coordinator, Mr Vince Monterola, has arranged nine community recovery meetings to date, and a range of other activities are underway to support the affected community.

A Pinery Fire Recovery newsletter is being distributed regularly to the community through a range of channels.

In addition to the formal government response, several non-government organisations have supported the community with financial and emotional assistance, while others have provided physical support through clean-up and reconstruction tasks. Some of these groups are St Vincent De Paul, Disaster and Recovery Ministries, Red Cross, Salvation Army, Country Women's Association, Habitat for Humanity, Samaritan's Purse and BlazeAID.

The State Recovery Office and Red Cross SA partnered to arrange for well-credentialed disaster recovery psychologist Dr Rob Gordon to visit in January. Dr Gordon spoke at three community meetings and also conducted sessions for staff. These sessions were very well received.

The Local Recovery Coordinator is organising barbecues specifically for men, and is investigating other program options in consultation with SA Health.

Farmers are being provided with practical support through PIRSA, Regional Development Australia and Rural Business Support.

New flood warning and intelligence team appointed

The Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources (DEWNR) and the State Emergency Service (SES) have received funding to undertake a joint program to build and deliver a new real-time flood warning and flood intelligence system for South Australia.

The cost of damage caused by flooding in South Australia is estimated to be \$26 million per year, including loss caused by floodwaters damaging goods and possessions as well as economic disruption.

Improved warning and preparedness is estimated to reduce this flood damage by between 10 to 20 per cent.

Through this project the South Australian Government will invest in building capacity and capability in:

- flood intelligence and flood warning (especially flashflooding),
- community engagement, education and flood awareness, and

- improved residential and business flood planning.

Community engagement, education and awareness is being driven by the SES over the next two years. It is an exciting opportunity to create new collaborative relationships with some non-conventional stakeholders such as early learning centres, community groups and tourism operators.

Additionally there is the opportunity to reaffirm and crystallise some longstanding community relationships with local councils, volunteer units and other government agencies.

It will consist of an intensive community awareness program which will see South Australians gaining a greater awareness of:

- their flood risk,
- measures they can put in place to minimise the impact of flooding, and
- community resilience.

In a somewhat unconventional approach, community messages will be contextualised to incorporate local topography, climate and

culture while still retaining a standardised format and consistent SES key messages aligned with the State Emergency Management Plan.

At the project's completion DEWNR, SES and other state government agencies will have quality controlled and centrally managed flood intelligence to inform flood warnings, emergency response, and long-term floodplain management.





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Entries now open for 2016 Resilient Australia Awards

Are you a part of a project or initiative that makes your community safer, stronger, more resilient and better prepared to manage any emergency situation?

The 2016 Resilient Australia Awards may be the perfect way to promote and recognise your project.

Nominations can be made by completing an application form online <https://resilient.awardsplatform.com>. In addition to gaining recognition, state winners will automatically be nominated for a National Resilient Australia Award.

Have you taken a photograph which depicts what disaster resilience in Australia means to you?

Why not enter the 2016 Resilient Australia Photography Award.

More information is available on the website below: http://www.safecom.sa.gov.au/site/emergency_management/resilient_australia_awards.jsp

Award information is also available from Angela Smith, the Resilient Australia Awards Coordinator (SA) at SAFECOM on (08) 8463 4147 or angela.smith3@sa.gov.au

Entries close on Thursday, 9 June 2016.

Registrations now open for the AFAC16 conference

Registrations are now open for the AFAC16 conference which will be held in Brisbane from 30 August to 2 September 2016.

Under the conference theme "Mitigation – Response – Recovery: Getting the balance right", the conference will be co-produced by AFAC with the Bushfire and Natural Hazards CRC.

Emergency and disaster management has advanced dramatically over the past five years with emergency service agencies worldwide implementing new and innovative ways to mitigate and respond to disasters.

Recent worldwide catastrophic events as well as those closer to home have identified the need for better recovery capability. AFAC16 will explore how agencies are getting the balance right, within new, diverse and inclusive multi-agency disaster management services.

Held over four days at the Brisbane Convention and Exhibition Centre, AFAC16 will attract delegates and visitors from emergency and security services agencies, all levels of government, non-government organisations, research and education institutions from Australia and overseas.

Day 1 of the program (Tuesday 30 August 2016) is the research forum, driven by the all hazards research agendas of the Bushfire and Natural Hazards CRC and complemented by the science from

a wide range of universities, research organisations and emergency service agencies.

Days 2 and 3 of the program feature concurrent streams which are designed to bring together and share the combined wisdom of experience, research and analysis from across the sector. There will be post-conference development sessions on Friday 2 September 2016, the last day of the conference.

The conference is the premier emergency management event in Australasia and this year the program will also feature latest innovations on display in the trade exhibition. The conference is being delivered in partnership with INTERSCHUTZ and will include networking events, expo stage presentations and the popular Knowledge Lounge, where delegates can catch up with researchers and presenters to continue conversations and share ideas.

If you register before 24 June you can take advantage of the early bird discounts. The full program is at <http://www.afaconference.com.au/program/>



SA taking giant strides in large animal rescue

Horse SA has proven itself a frontrunner in the safety of both animals and their human owners.

The organisation recently secured funding through the Natural Disaster Resilience Program (NDRP) for equipment and training to assist large animal rescues in South Australia.

Regularly, horses and cattle require rescue for many reasons, including through accidental falls during natural disasters (including storms, floods and bushfires) or vehicle accidents. Rescues can be difficult and distressing due to the weight, size and location of the animals. They can also create safety concerns for both owners and rescuers.

Horse SA collaborated with academic and operational organisations to achieve their goal of raising the bar in best practice for large animal rescue in South Australia. Initially, Horse SA used a life-sized mannequin horse and organised a workshop at the University of Adelaide's Equine Health and Performance Centre at Roseworthy. At the workshop new rescue techniques and equipment were demonstrated by the State Emergency Service (SES), and the role of a veterinarian within a rescue team was discussed and subsequently agreed upon.

Consequently, training has been arranged at various locations across the state. Currently, 23 SES units are on target to be included. These innovations involving veterinarian assistance and the new quick-release sling will provide the methodology to reduce further harm to already distressed large animals.





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International women's day prompts calls for increased diversity in the emergency services

International Women's Day (8 March) was celebrated around the globe with many local events and activities focused on this year's themes of celebrating the achievements of women.

It also focused on leaders and agencies pledging to help women and girls achieve their ambitions, challenge conscious and unconscious bias, improve gender-balanced leadership, create flexible inclusive cultures and value women's and men's contributions equally.

As a part of the event, fire and emergency agencies across the country have been engaging in dialogue on diversity principles and their application throughout the sector.

Under the auspices of the Australasian Fire and Emergency Services Authorities Council (AFAC) a diversity statement was issued on behalf of the industry. It is clear from this statement that there is a strong consensus among the leadership group of our nation's fire and rescue agencies that diverse workforces:

- better reflect the communities we serve,
- assist in better understanding and effectively dealing with community risks, as well as community capabilities,
- are a source of diverse skills and new ideas, which are essential to all phases of emergency management,
- improve organisational culture through inclusion and more open communication, which in turn can enhance mental health and wellbeing.



The statement has been published on the AFAC website (bit.ly/1TZnwLL) and is reinforced by an opinion piece penned by AFAC CEO Stuart Ellis (available from bit.ly/253GX9F) which echoes the need for greater efforts to improve diversity.

Celebrating International Women's Day has undoubtedly provided an opportunity to acknowledge the contribution that people of all genders, races and backgrounds can make to our fire and emergency services and also provide the impetus to encourage greater efforts to improve diversity outcomes to achieve substantial workforce transformations.

New information/incident management system being used by SA Health

SA Health (which includes the SA Ambulance Service) has responded to numerous significant emergencies over recent years that have impacted South Australians.

With 80 key health service sites and 111 ambulance stations across SA, the ability to access timely, relevant information along with transparency and a single source of truth during an emergency has been an 'Achilles heel' for SA Health.

Following last year's Sampson Flat bushfire, the Emergency Management Unit in the Department for Health and Ageing sourced funds to build and implement a web-based, whole-of-health information/incident management system.

Careful consideration and scrutiny was applied to several well-known, established incident management systems. However, after a marketplace expression of interest was complete, Adelaide-based developer Enee Solutions was chosen to undertake a bespoke, custom-built system. Key considerations by SA Health during the selection process were the licencing arrangements and ongoing hosting/maintenance costs.

Extensive stakeholder engagement and collaboration across SA Health was sought to inform the build. Several key principles were identified to ensure that the scope of the end product would meet the specific needs of SA Health.

The resulting product SAHEMS was used in a large scale user test / whole-of-health exercise last November, in which a large mass casualty incident in the Adelaide Hills formed the basis of a significant surge scenario for SA Health.

SAHEMS performed well during this exercise and, with some additional development and improvements, was launched on 1 December.

To date, SAHEMS has been used for the collation and reporting of heat-related presentations during an extreme heat event as well as several other low level, minimal impact incidents. SAHEMS has proven itself as a mechanism to improve efficiency, increase access and timelines of intelligence gathering/sharing, as well as clearly define the health and ambulance command structure(s) along with other key incident management roles.

While SAHEMS is presently limited to the bronze, silver and gold incident management structure and their respective incident

management teams, it does have capability in the future for deployment and access within internal clinical areas in hospitals and operational field incident sites to support greater situational awareness and developing an improved capability/capacity picture for command staff.

The Emergency Management Unit is happy to provide a demonstration of the system and can be contacted on 8226 7115 or by emailing healthemergencymanagement@sa.gov.au