



IGEM *Connect*

Inspector-General Emergency Management

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Introduction and Lessons Management

Welcome to the latest edition of *IGEM Connect*.

I've been reflecting over recent months regarding the changing face of disaster management in Queensland.

An example of this has been the significant shift over the past decade towards the need for and use of specific disaster management research.

Critical decisions are increasingly evidence-based through research, science and documented and robustly-tested good practice rather those of past days which incorporated an almost exclusive reliance on experience and local knowledge.

Decisions at the coalface across the State are much the richer and better informed for this trend towards evidence-based decision making but moreso, outcomes for the community are ultimately enhanced.

Another facet of the changing face of disaster management in Queensland became apparent to me earlier this month at the Disaster Management Officers' Network Forum in Townsville.

This year's forum was attended by almost 70 practitioners and as I scanned the room on the opening day, I noted that a majority of our council disaster management officers at this year's conference were female. Fantastic!

With the greatest of respect to those excellent, dedicated and hardworking practitioners that have gone before us in years gone by, I was greatly encouraged to see gender equity evolving in our sector. Like evidence-based decision making, outcomes for the community will be greatly enhanced by increased numbers of women in key roles within the disaster management sector.

But we need to take this concept in practice to an even greater level again and expand it further to ensure full diversity exists within disaster coordination centres, and in critical decision-making at the coalface during disasters.

The delivery of disaster management in Queensland should be by the people and for the people, and the sooner we fully reflect community diversity in decision-making and delivery of disaster management services on the ground, the better we will be, to the benefit of all people in our communities.

Disaster Management Officers Forum

As I just noted, the third annual Disaster Management Officer's Forum was held in Townsville earlier this month.

This year's event drew 70 participants, including 50 disaster management officers and local disaster coordinator from councils across Queensland (including one Councillor).

The forum is a critical component of the broader Disaster Management Officer's Network which seeks to enhance capability at the local level through better collaboration, resource, idea and knowledge exchange, and the sharing of good practice.

The Disaster Management Officers Network has grown rapidly since its inception in 2016 and now involves 91 disaster management officers and local disaster coordinators from 55 councils from across Queensland.

As with past forums in Cairns and Mackay, this year's program was mainly delivered the DMOs themselves around themes including Capitalising on Our Capabilities, Mobilising Community, Stakeholder Engagement beyond the Local Disaster Management Group, and exploring elements surrounding the future of disaster management.

I look forward to the positive outcomes arising from this year's event.



Some of the participants at this year's Disaster Management Officers' Forum in Townsville

EMAF Refresh

Disaster management groups at all levels would have recently received communication regarding a refresh of the Emergency Management Assurance Framework (Framework).

For those of you who are unfamiliar with this project, my Office is seeking to refresh the Framework to ensure it remains contemporary; it enhances supporting tools such as the Prioritisation Tool; highlights gaps and amendments from lessons identified; and refreshes the Standard for Disaster Management in Queensland.

Let me be particularly clear on one point though. The refresh will not in any way change the intent of the Framework.

Can I take this opportunity to convey many thanks for the feedback received over the past four years regarding the Framework. I have asked my Office to use these comments as the starting point for the refresh.

Over the coming months, a number of you will be involved in technical working groups to ensure the refreshed Standard reflects effective disaster management outcomes.

Most technical working groups will be facilitated during July and I will of course keep you updated on the project into the future.

Lessons Management

In the last edition of *IGEM Connect*, I flagged the start of a system-wide lessons management program, aimed at delivering sustainable improvement based upon the identification and analysis of issues and the development, implementation and monitoring of improvement strategies.

Since then, my Office has made significant progress in the development of this program, with an agreed project direction finalised and a dedicated core team within my Office established.

The team is currently working to pull together evidence-based practice and literature to inform a Position Paper.

The lessons management program (LMP) will be developed through a phased approach with three key deliverables:

- Deliverable 1: Release of a position paper
- Deliverable 2: The development of a system wide lessons management program
- Deliverable 3: A comprehensive implementation strategy to support the endorsed program.

Support to develop and deliver this program has been sought from agencies, disaster management groups and practitioners. My Office will work in close collaboration with Queensland Fire and Emergency Services and the Queensland Police Service, which play key roles in supporting system improvement.

During the development of the LMP we intend to utilise the methodologies and the learnt successes of co-design, as well as other collaborative processes with sector representatives.

To support our co-design approach, and to allow collaboration, we have created a dedicated page in the Collaboration Zone. We will use the Collaboration Zone to share documentation, seek your input, provide a location for you to share your resources with us, and as an environment in which we can have discussions involving all agencies across the sector. We will also utilise the IGEM Facebook page for this purpose.

I will continue to provide regular project updates and as always you can contact my Office at any time regarding the project.

Research Framework

I continue to be encouraged by the extent to which the Disaster Management Research Framework continues to gain momentum.

In a sign of increasing interest, we now have more than 130 Queensland disaster management researchers engaged in our Community of Practice.

The purpose of the Research Framework is to collaboratively develop and promote research, for the Queensland context, for coal-face disaster management practitioners, nurturing enhanced partnerships, cooperation and understanding between academic institutions and government agencies.

The development of people, processes, technology and content under the Framework will support the transition between research and practice in Queensland's disaster management sector.

My Office is facilitating the broader work and is helping to build research collaborations on topics and challenges identified from the sector such as master planned communities; evidence-based planning and decision-making; warnings and communication; immersive technologies; and community resilience.

We have also already helped PhD students to access information to support their projects as well as having provided guidance to members of the disaster management sector interested in pursuing higher degrees.

Among our other initiatives, I would like to shine a spotlight in this edition of *IGEM Connect* on a research project we have commenced with a team led by Jim McGowan from the Griffith University Policy Hub.

The *Community Readiness Survey Collection, Benchmark, Environmental Scan and Stakeholder Needs Analysis* will provide a picture of the 'current state' of preparedness data and collection methods in Queensland, as well as a roadmap towards the 'ideal state' of information and data required to support the future measurement of community risk perception and community readiness/preparedness.

Over the next few months, the Griffith team will be talking to representatives from the local and state disaster management sector about what data, analysis and information is needed to help understand and strengthen community readiness/preparedness.

This is a chance for you to shape the way forward for community readiness/preparedness data that meets your needs, and so I would strongly encourage you to become involved.

If you would like further information on this project or the DM Research Framework, please contact my Office.

Townsville Capability Review

My Office has now completed its latest capability review – that of the Townsville Disaster District.

What was particularly pleasing for me was the finding that the district's disaster management capability was advanced and highly effective and that all seven local disaster management groups and the district disaster management group were well positioned to meet future challenges and risks in the region.

The review assessed the individual and collective capability of the groups across all facets of the disaster management system with outcomes measured against the Standard for Disaster Management in Queensland.

What pleased me was the extent of good practice across the region including innovative approaches to ensuring depth of trained staff; positive engagement of the community through sustainable risk reduction activities; and the setting up of working groups to provide expertise for planning.

My congratulations to the Townsville District Disaster Management Group and local disaster management groups of Townsville, Burdekin, Charters Towers, Richmond, Palm Island, Hinchinbrook and Flinders on the outcome of the review.

The review team, in conjunction with the Queensland Reconstruction Authority, facilitated a capability enhancement workshop. The focus for the Townsville Disaster District is continued leadership in community partnership for recovery.



Pictured at the release of the Townsville Capability Review are Burdekin Mayor Lyn McLaughlin, Palm Island CEO Ross Norman, Townsville Mayor Jenny Hill, Hinchinbrook Mayor Ramon Jayo, Charters Towers Mayor Liz Schmidt and Richmond Mayor John Wharton.

The review was the third in an on-going series of capability reviews, and follows like reviews in Warwick and Mackay.

My Office has begun consultation with key stakeholders regarding the location for the next capability review in 2018-19.

Evacuation Management Arrangements Review

As you may be aware, my Office has been undertaking a review into evacuation management arrangements.

I can advise that the last round of consultation has been completed and considered and we are now progressing towards finalisation of the review.

For those not familiar with the specifics of this particular review, my Office considered the extent to which arrangements reflect the Standard for Disaster Management in Queensland, best practice and are scalable for a mass evacuation event.

The review also assessed the extent to which the legislative authority to initiate evacuations is clear, as well as the capacity for adapting plans to events.

I will advise more broadly when the review is finalised.

Recovery Review

The review of recovery arrangements in Queensland is progressing well.

Currently we are in the consultation phase with the draft being considered by stakeholders who contributed to the review.

The review collected stories of recovery through focus groups and individual interviews involving 130 stakeholders, 16 local councils, 11 State agencies and 7 non government organisations.

The review has also taken into account a number of individuals with experience and expertise in recovery, including people of the caliber of former Victorian Police Chief Commissioner and Chair of the Victorian Bushfire Reconstruction and Recovery Authority Christina Nixon.

I anticipate a single round of consultation with a draft to be finalised by mid year.

On finalisation, I hope to share the review with the sector to ensure the best possible recovery practices and arrangements are put in place to support all Queenslanders.

Journal of Humanitarian Logistics Article

You may recall the Best Practice Emergency Supply research project undertaken by my Office in collaboration with Griffith University in 2016.

I am pleased to let you know the original research from this project has led to the development of an article *Best Practice Relief Supply for Emergency Services in a Developed Economy: Evidence from Queensland Australia* in the Journal of Humanitarian Logistics and Supply Chain Management.

This is an outstanding achievement for the researchers at Griffith University and an excellent way for my Office to be involved in the disaster logistics conversation on the international stage.

The 'Best Practice Emergency Supply' research paper is available on the Collaboration Zone.

Darkness to Daylight Challenge

As many of you may be aware, I am a proud supporter of White Ribbon Australia and accordingly we take an active interest in initiatives to prevent violence against women and support those in and outside the workplace affected by domestic and family violence.

Recently, I and colleagues from my Office and the Public Safety Business Agency participated in the Darkness to Daylight Challenge.

Along with hundreds of others, we undertook a three kilometre walk around Southbank and Kangaroo Point in support of the program. Others elected to run the circuit, participate in a 10km walk or run, or enter a 110km team event.

Can I encourage you and your workplaces to get behind this important initiative in future.



Some of the Office of the IGEM staff participating in the Darkness to Daylight Challenge: Mike Shapland, Iain MacKenzie, Sarah March, and Marian McCreath.

Release of Customer Satisfaction Survey Results

In February this year, we invited a wide range of just under 500 stakeholders to complete a customer satisfaction survey to identify what my Office was doing well and where we needed to improve and focus greater attention.

We received 113 completed returns and some valuable comment on our strengths and areas for improvement. Overall my office received a customer satisfaction rating of 81%.

Significantly, within the overall satisfaction rating, a higher proportion of respondents were “very satisfied” than any of the previous survey years.

Key reasons for customer satisfaction included providing accurate, relevant and clear information, good advice and guidance, and providing opportunities to share information.

Ratings of staff continued to be extremely high, with nine in 10 of our customers satisfied that my staff were polite, respectful, approachable and professional.

Seven in 10 respondents were keen to understand and apply the Standard to their work, and said that the Standard for Disaster Management in Queensland had been applied to their entity’s disaster management arrangements.

A lower proportion (57%) felt there were sufficient tools to help practitioners apply the Standard. This is something we will be looking at through our project to refresh the Emergency Management Assurance Framework during 2018 and 2019.

Importantly the survey results identified key areas of focus for service improvement. These included producing plain English documents and maintaining an emphasis on face to face communications.

Thank you to all of you who took time to complete the survey. Apart from being a key performance indicator which is published in the Office of the IGEM Service Delivery Statement and Annual Report, my Office is committed to continuous improvement and will use the survey findings as a basis for this.

Until next time.

Iain MacKenzie

Inspector-General Emergency Management

