



IGEM *Connect*

Inspector-General Emergency Management

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Disaster management is renowned for its twists, turns and unpredictability.

Cyclones regularly don't follow forecast track maps; disaster plans often don't reflect the script we predict will roll out; and a plethora of variables always complicates the way we approach tasks and duties before us, during an event.

It's the nature of the game and something we need to accept will occur within the disaster management sphere.

To successfully negotiate this unpredictability, we need to be resilient, adaptable and well prepared.

And it's a little like that in life too.

Of recent times I've been surprised by an unexpected personal disruption of my own – a diagnosis of prostate cancer.

It wasn't a consideration in my forward plans for the medium term nor something that I expected may be a possibility into the future.

But through the careful and excellent work of a general practitioner, I found out how quietly and indiscriminately prostate cancer can strike and unexpectedly present a challenge.

In response to this unexpected diagnosis, I will be undergoing surgery in the next week and will then take some extended time off to recuperate.

I have embraced a disaster management approach to this challenge and will employ preparation, resilience and adaptability in confronting this scenario.

Likewise, I believe there needs to be greater openness and transparency within disaster management and accordingly I have decided to also be an open book regarding my diagnosis and surgery.

While I am away, Kathy Parton, currently a Deputy Director-General with the Department of Local Government, Racing and Multicultural Affairs, will act in my role.

Kathy has a rich history in disaster management, particularly in a previous senior communication services role with the Department of the Premier and Cabinet, and I welcome her appointment.

I look forward to returning to the role in October and resuming my visits to regional Queensland and engagement with stakeholders across the sector.

EMAF Refresh Update

I have been extremely encouraged by the willingness and commitment of so many stakeholders across the sector to participate and input into the refresh of the Emergency Management Assurance 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.

We have established technical working groups to provide advice on specific elements of the Framework. These technical working groups comprise a broad range of representatives and content experts from State agencies, local government, government owned corporations, not-for-profit and non-government organisations.

To date, five out of a planned series of seven workshops to closely review shared responsibilities and other facets of the Framework and Standard have been held. I expect these workshops to finish in August.

Out of this work, we will develop a revised Standard and put this out to the sector for further consultation.

As I have outlined at some of the workshops I have been able to attend, the “refresh” is exactly that - a refresh, and we’re not moving the goalposts. The intent of the Framework through this work remains unchanged.

This is simply a review and refinement of some aspects of what has otherwise been a valued, well used, and highly effective Framework and Standard over the past four years.

Capability Review for Mount Isa

The Mount Isa Disaster District has been selected for the next capability review, beginning later in the year.

Following on from similar reviews in Townsville and Mackay and a pilot in Warwick, disaster groups within the Mount Isa Disaster District will be assessed on their ability to deliver effective disaster management outcomes, measured against the Standard for Disaster Management in Queensland.

The review will focus on the Mount Isa District Disaster Management Group and local disaster management groups in Boulia, Burke, Carpentaria, Cloncurry, Diamantina, Doomagee, McKinlay, Mount Isa, and Mornington.

Consistent with previous reviews, the Mount Isa Capability Review will not make an assessment on past performance but rather focus on strengths and development areas in the context of the anticipated future risk environment, specifically within the Mount Isa Disaster District.

An integrated improvement strategy will be developed as part of the capability review.

At this stage, we intend to start the review in November and have it finalised after the 2018-19 wet season.

I hold high hopes that the Mount Isa review will yield the same level of benefit as provided through past reviews.

Lessons Management Update

My Office has made solid headway in the development of a Lessons Management Program in Queensland.

Regular readers of *IGEM Connect* would be aware that my Office's review of arrangements associated with Tropical Cyclone Debbie last year identified the need for a sustainable improvement program for the disaster management sector in Queensland.

In response to the review's recommendations, we were tasked by the Government with implementing and maintaining a system-wide lessons management program.

Since that time, a core team from my Office has been busily developing a Position Paper, which builds on the *Lessons Management in Disaster Management: Directions Statement*.

The purpose of the Position Paper is to frame the development of a system-wide lessons management program which will enable the sector to make sense of observations, co-design improvement strategies and leverage innovative solutions, proven good practice and ideas to grow capability.

It is my intention that the Position Paper be released for comment within the next few weeks.

In addition to the Position Paper, we have also established a working group comprising a broad range of key representatives from across the disaster management sector to work with us in contextualising the Program.

We intend to build the Lessons Management Program utilising four core elements – framework, lessons management lifecycle, enabling environment and tools – and will actively engage the working group to assist in drawing broader sector comment and input in developing this.

The intention is to have this part of the work completed within the next six months.

In the interim, more information on the Lessons Management Program is available on the Collaboration Zone.

Research Framework Progress

It's been exciting to watch the breadth of disciplines within the Disaster Management Research Framework continue to grow.

A good example of this has been some interesting discussions between my Office and researchers from the pharmacology area, looking at the role of local community chemists before, during and after disasters.

The Creative Industries space also offers a unique perspective on disasters and how to engage with communities, with opportunities to work with students to develop and test visual and mixed media applications. Our work on immersive technology is continuing, with QUT testing and developing augmented reality scenarios to assist during evacuations. I look forward to reporting back on this work in future.

Another exciting research initiative currently being progressed is a community readiness survey collection, benchmark, environmental scan and stakeholder needs analysis.

My Office has engaged Griffith University with this work, and we have already conducted two workshops with representatives from local and state agencies and non-profit organisations to help build a profile of the 'current state' of preparedness data and collection methods in Queensland. The discussions, along with an online survey, are helping to scope a roadmap towards an '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, my Office will work with the Griffith team and the broader sector to further refine the roadmap.

We have also commenced a project with researchers from the University of Southern Queensland, QUT, BNHCRC and others to develop and test a community engagement framework for emergency preparation that will guide and support community engagement activities by agencies and local government. I will continue to provide updates on this important volume of work as it develops.

Our involvement in national level research also continues, with members of my Office represented on a number of BNHCRC projects examining "[Effective Risk and Warning Communication During Natural Hazards](#)" and "[Catastrophic and Cascading Events: Planning and Capability](#)." Over the next few months we will work on translating and sharing this work with the sector and, as always, continue to seek your input and advice on research issues, projects and collaborations.

If you would like further information on any of these projects or the DM Research Framework, please contact my Office.

Disaster Deep Dive - Testing Within Government Program



IGEM Director Mike Shapland networking at the Disaster Deep Dive - Testing Within Government industry briefing.

As part of our approach to the Lessons Management Program, my Office has put up a challenge in the Disaster Deep Dive - Testing Within Government program. Through it, we aim to develop an innovative solution to better capture, analyse, and share what we know works about dealing with disasters across Queensland.

The intent of the program is to help small and medium size businesses learn about working with government and help to provide jobs for Queenslanders. We hope to use it to engage a software company to work with us to develop a tool for the sector that delivers what we collectively want.

If we find the right enterprise through this process, we will be seeking the sector's input to that development. If you are interested more broadly in this activity, additional detail of the initiative is on the Advance Queensland Website.

We hope the effort will contribute to this most significant initiative and its contribution to the future direction of the Office and sector.

Disaster Management Plan Assessments – New Analysis

Many of you will be familiar now with the annual disaster management plan self-assessment process that we facilitate through an online survey.

My Office has now collected three years of data, which essentially shows the confidence that exists in the various aspects of local and district plans.

Through a partnership with the Department of Housing and Public Works (which has recently absorbed parts of the former Department of Science, Information Technology and Innovation) we have developed a dashboard where this data can be analysed in different ways and in greater detail. The dashboard is available on the Collaboration Zone.

This move into 'business intelligence' about the data is deliberate. The Dashboard gives immediate insight into local government or district confidence by colour-coding their assessment of each shared responsibility and component. Differences in confidence levels between district and local levels can also be viewed, as can changes in confidence levels over time. Further insights appear when the plan assessment data is compared with publicly available data on population size, revenue, and disaster events.

For me this raises wider questions about this data. What other data can it be combined with to gain more insights? Is it the best data we can collect about our performance? Who should have, or needs, access to it? Is there is a public interest in making it 'open'?

I recall a hackathon a couple of years ago, when the prize was won by a team that had come up with their own bushfire danger rating from open data. This was a demonstration of how a community can take responsibility for its own risk assessment.

We should encourage this kind of scrutiny, as we build resilience and continue to strive for ever-better disaster management arrangements.

Review Update: The Efficacy of Recovery Governance

Recovery is a complex and multi-faceted area that makes up one quarter of the prevention, preparedness, response and recovery paradigm that is the basis of our disaster management arrangements.

And for recovering communities, we know it can be a long drawn-out and emotionally charged period. It is unsurprising then that my Office's Recovery Governance review has generated a lot of interest.

We continue to work to finalise the recovery review and the considerable feedback provided as part of that work.

In late June, I extended the consultation period by three weeks to allow sufficient time to ensure we understood the views of those who contributed, prior to broader circulation of the review.

We are always looking for innovative ways to communicate our work and for the Recovery Review we were able to provide web presentations for stakeholders over three dates, as part of the consultation process.

The presentation about our draft report is now available to the sector on the Collaboration Zone.

NAIDOC Week Celebration



Pictured at the NAIDOC Week Art Exhibition are John Kyriakidis (PSBA), Marian McCreath (IGEM) Julie Moylan (PSBA), Jo Ekstrom (PSBA), Lee Schmidt (PSBA), Iain MacKenzie (IGEM), and Shane Donovan (PSBA).

It was the great pleasure of my Office and our colleagues in the Public Safety Business Agency (PSBA) to participate in NAIDOC Week celebrations last week.

Apart from a Flag Raising Ceremony at 111 George Street Brisbane, a number of us took time out to both admire and purchase work done by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists at an associated Art Exhibition.

My Office and PSBA also ran a joint stall at a Family Fun Day at Musgrave Park later in the week.

We look forward to involvement in the 2019 NAIDOC Week program.

New Strategic Plan Launched

And to conclude, I am pleased to advise that IGEM's [2018-2022 Strategic Plan](#) has been finalised and can be found on our website at www.igem.qld.gov.au

Until next time.

Iain MacKenzie

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