MONASH University

Developments in Australian Emergency Management
Theory, Policy and Practice, 1930-2015:

An Autoethnography

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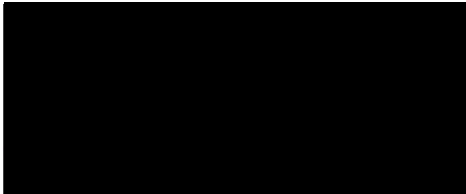Disaster Resilience Initiative

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DECLARATION

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Signed

ROGER TRELEASE JONES

Date 1 February 2019

ABSTRACT

The author has practiced as an informed observer of international, regional, national and state developments in emergency management theory, policy and practice for more than 40 years. He has come to the view that, while by the end of the 1990s significant development of a national approach to emergency management in Australia had taken place, by 2014 this development had been largely negated. In particular, there was a dearth of an accessible record of the key developments that helped shape Australian emergency management policy and practice. Further, the effectiveness of government arrangements for the protection and preservation of the lives and property of its citizens and of the essential infrastructure and services of the nation in the context of the historical development of these responsibilities is poorly understood.

To inform present and future developments in national policies, theories and practice and to help future emergency management decision-makers and practitioners, this research is an autoethnographic exploration of the history of the development of emergency management in Australia from its earliest civil defence foundations until the present day, with a view to drawing conclusions and lessons that may be applied by present and future emergency managers and decision-makers.

The thesis is a unique output of national significance, as no similar report is known to exist. It offers a chronology of the significant key events in the evolution of a national approach to emergency management in Australia over the period 1930-2015. Key developments are sequentially examined and the thesis offers a commentary on the drivers of those developments and the potential or actual outcomes and consequences of the selected key events and how they may have influenced the national evolution of emergency management.

The history of the role played by the Australian Emergency Management Institute (AEMI) and its predecessors the Australian Civil Defence School (ACDS) and the Australian Counter Disaster College (ACDC) is examined, as are the developments of emergency management organisational structures, policy and practice at both State and Federal levels.

Key themes include the long process of development from post-war civil defence to today's emphases in the emergency management sector on community resilience, shared responsibility, disaster risk reduction and international engagement.

Finally, the author, using his personal insights and comprehensive personal library of references and writings, offers observations about the future of proposed developments in Australia's emergency management sector, proposes possible courses of action and suggests areas for future study.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to all of my many colleagues and friends in the emergency management community who have taught me so much and shared their time, generosity, friendship and genuine desire to assist communities in planning, responding and recovering from emergencies and emerging more resilient. This includes, but is not limited to, staff, friends and colleagues at Emergency Management Australia (EMA) and the South Pacific Applied Geoscience Commission (SOPAC). In addition, people like Alan Cameron, great friend and colleague of many years, whose sage advice and support I treasure.

In particular, I dedicate this work to the former staff and colleagues associated with the Australian Emergency Management Institute (now Victorian Emergency Management Institute) at Mount Macedon, for their unwavering support, encouragement, passion and energy, without which the story of emergency management in Australia would not have come so far.

I salute you all.

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GLOSSARY

ACDC	Australian Counter Disaster College
ADAB	Australian Development Assistance Bureau
AEMI	Australian Emergency Management Institute
ANZEMC	Australian and New Zealand Emergency Management Committee
CCDC	Commonwealth Civil Defence Committee
CD	Civil Defence
CFA	Country Fire Authority (Victoria)
CIEM	Comprehensive and Integrated Emergency Management
COAG	Council of Australian Governments
DCPA	Defence Civil Preparedness Agency
DHS	Department of Homeland Security (USA)
DHS	Department of Human Services (Victoria)
DHHS	Department of Health & Human Services (Victoria)
DLIS	Defence Library and Information Service
DPC	Department of Premier & Cabinet (Victoria)
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction
EM	Emergency Management
EMA	Emergency Management Australia
EMV	Emergency Management Victoria
ERM	Emergency Risk Management
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Authority
HFA	Hyogo Framework for Action
IDC	Inter-Departmental Committee
IDNDR	International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction
ISO	International Organization for Standardization
MFB	Metropolitan Fire Board (Victoria)
MIRI	Monash Injury Research Institute

MUARC	Monash University Accident Research Centre
MUDRI	Monash University Disaster Resilience Initiative
MUHREC	Monash University Human Research Ethics Committee
NDO	National Disaster Organisation
NDRS	National Disaster Resilience Strategy
NEMC	National Emergency Management Committee
PER	Program Evaluation Report
PPRR	Prevention, Preparedness, Response, Recovery
SES	State Emergency Service (Victoria)
SOPAC	South Pacific Applied Geoscience Commission
UNISDR	United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction
UNOCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
VBRC	Victorian Bushfire Royal Commission

PROLEGOMENON[1]

Autoethnography is a form of self-reflection and writing that explores a researcher's personal experience and connects this autobiographical story to wider cultural, political and social meanings and understandings. Autoethnographers recognise the innumerable ways by which personal experience influences the research process. For instance, a researcher decides who, what, when, where and how to research. These decisions are necessarily tied to institutional requirements, resources, and personal circumstance. It is one of the approaches that acknowledges and accommodates subjectivity, emotionality, and the researcher's influence on research, rather than hiding from these matters or assuming they don't exist (Anderson 2006; Ellis, Adams & Bochner 2011).

I am very aware that my personal experience and my career as an emergency manager in particular have had a significant effect on how and why I have gone about this research. This Prolegomenon aims to identify and 'bring out in the open' some of those formative experiences and how they may have influenced my thesis.

My journey

After completing my degree and teacher training in Western Australia in 1951, I gained teaching and Army Reserve experience before joining the Australian Regular Army in 1956. I served in a range of commissioned ranks all in command, staff or educational appointments, retiring in the rank of colonel.

In the mid-1970s, the Australian Army posted me into the newly-established Natural Disasters Organisation - later to be Emergency Management Australia (EMA), the national body responsible for coordinating emergency management preparedness and response matters with the federated States and Territories – as its first Director, Operations and Plans. Just seven months into the appointment, our organisation was faced with the problem of coordinating the long-distance evacuation of most of the 45,000 people of the devastated and isolated city of Darwin and its immediate restoration and early reconstruction effort after Cyclone TRACY, which struck on Christmas morning 1974.

Nine months later when I joined the organisation's research and training arm, until recently the Australian Emergency Management Institute (AEMI), as its first Deputy Director and Chief Instructor, our immediate tasks were to establish a decent research capability. We also needed to develop an entirely new set of emergency management concepts and principles as a basis for curriculum development, to replace its time-worn and outdated civil defence doctrine.

These were the days when we were discovering the works of such now-recognised 'gurus' as Robert Kates, Ian Burton and Gene Haas in areas like 'the environment-as-hazard', backed up by renowned figures like Gilbert White, and seminal work for bodies such as the then US Defense Civil Preparedness Agency (DCPA) in the field of disaster management itself

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[1] Prefatory remarks; specifically: a formal essay or critical discussion serving to introduce and interpret an extended work. https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/prolegomenon

by such as E.L. (Enrico) Quarantelli and Russell Dynes – both of whom it was my pleasure subsequently to meet on their home territory of the University of Delaware. In the 1990s we were to become aware of many of those working on EM risk as a function of hazard and vulnerability – Davis, Blaikie, Cannon - and into the 2000s by leaders such as Wisner, Gaillard and Kelman. The Canadian Joe Scanlon visited the Institute to share his insights and work on informal communications in disasters.

That was in the period when similar developments were happening the world over, as the 'Cold War' seemed to cool and international attention began to focus on the increasing toll of major emergencies and disasters. So we soon discovered developments such as the US National Governors' Association 1979 report on emergency management which introduced the MPRR concept - mitigation, preparedness for response, response and recovery - which we promptly plagiarised as PPRR replacing 'mitigation' by 'prevention', which we felt was much more memorable than MPRR and besides, we weren't sure our audience would be entirely comfortable with 'mitigation'.

In February 1983, our area in the State of Victoria was one of those most affected in the 'Ash Wednesday' fires which heavily impacted both Victoria and South Australia. The Institute (AEMI) sheltered some 300 locals that night, and men in that group augmented our own small staff in our fire-fight. My home was threatened, and I had no idea where my wife and children were. Fortunately, they'd evacuated the area in good time. The Institute lost facilities and staff in the fires, and closed for a few months – on my part, I worked voluntarily on community clean-up and restoration issues with our local government.

Then in 1984-5 I was recruited by the Victorian State Government to run its major post-'Ash-Wednesday' Working Party on Victorian Disaster Management Arrangements, which once approved by government after public consultation resulted in the *Emergency Management Act 1986*, an Act which legislated new arrangements for prevention, preparedness, response and recovery in the State. Today, all States and Territories in Australia have comparable legislation and management arrangements. So PPRR, or something similar, is well established in Australia.

In 1987, after further work on the Victorian arrangements, I returned to the Institute (AEMI) as Director, and before retiring in 1994 participated in the early planning for the development of a new community-based emergency risk management model, which in 1997 the National Emergency Management Committee authorised for full development following the publication of the first International Standards Organization risk management standard – the Standards Australia/Standards New Zealand Risk Management Standard 4360:1995, now, after regular review, accepted internationally as ISO 31000:2009 – Risk Management: Principles and Guidelines.

After I left AEMI, as an Emergency Management Consultant I undertook a variety of national and international consultancies in the field of emergency management specialising in disaster reduction and public safety risk management concepts. I was able to work both with PPRR and an Australian adaptation of the risk management standard to community safety risk management, recognising the need to adapt its principles and processes to the

needs of *communities* rather than *organisations*, in both Australia and in the Pacific, in the latter working with a Pacific Forum instrumentality.

In 2000, on behalf of the Australian Development Assistance Bureau (ADAB) I represented Australia in the South African National Council of Provinces Disaster Management Project, resulting in the *Disaster Management Act 2003* which is internationally recognized as one of the most comprehensive national frameworks for disaster risk reduction frameworks worldwide.

Between 2000 and 2007 I worked as a consultant in community risk management in the Pacific and as a member of the South Pacific Applied Geoscience Commission's (SOPAC) Regional High Level Advocacy Team.

But back in the 1990s Australia had participated in the UN-declared 'International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction', and as one of Australia's contributions to the Decade Emergency Management Australia was tasked with assisting nations in the Pacific in issues such as disaster reduction and disaster preparedness. In the course of contributing to this effort I became familiar with the work being done in the area of natural disaster reduction and in the outcomes of the key 1994 Yokohama *Strategy and Plan of Action for a Safer World*.

Working in the Pacific myself between 2000 and 2007 I participated in the development of the Pacific's contribution to the 2005 Hyogo Conference and immediately after publication of the *Hyogo Platform for Action 2005-2015* I was directly involved in the development of its Pacific counterpart, the *Pacific Regional Framework for Action for Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters 2005 – 2015*. During that period, I made a number of consultancy visits to national members of the Pacific Forum to advise and assist in the development of disaster risk reduction and disaster management arrangements and plans.

Between 2002 and 2008 I served as Chair, Emergency Services Planning Group (subsequently restructured as the Emergency Services Advisory Committee), Australian Red Cross Victoria. In 2007, I was appointed to the National Emergency Services Advisory Committee of the Australian Red Cross Society as an emergency management adviser.

In 2006 I was appointed a Director and the Deputy Chair of the Board of the Victorian State Government's State Emergency Service Authority, and retired from that appointment at the end of 2014.

With my wife Lesley, I moved to Mount Macedon, Victoria in 1977, before relocating to Gisborne following the 'Black Saturday' bushfires in 2009 where I still have involvement in many community activities. Our children and grandchildren are scattered over a number of States and Territories.

Becoming actively involved in the change from World War II civil defence concepts and structures, with their emphasis on preparedness and response to war related events, to a focus on so-called natural disasters was the first transition which defined my career. A further transition to a comprehensive and integrated approach to community safety, the all

hazards/all agency concept with its whole-of-government approach to effective co-ordination, was the second. I feel gratified to have contributed to both.

As morbid as it may seem, other personal highlights included the happy, wonderful, odd collaborations that come when people work together on emergencies, disasters and events such as the Granville Train Crash, Ash Wednesday, Cyclone Tracy and the Longford Gas Crisis. They gave me the opportunity to contribute to concept development and policy formulation based on the cumulative lessons from these experiences.

As I started my MPhil, I was fortunate to have been still professionally active in the field of emergency and disaster management in my home state of Victoria. Now as I conclude my MPhil, and largely retired from active professional practice, I can look back on almost 40 years of lived experience in the field, as an administrative leader, thoughtful practitioner and reflective teacher, with a great deal of satisfaction and pleasure!

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Background

I have practised as an emergency management professional over the last 40 years, in the first 20 as a senior officer in the Commonwealth Department of Defence 'Natural Disasters Organisation' (later 'Emergency Management Australia'), and in the last 20 in a variety of international, regional, Commonwealth and State/Territory emergency management roles. My Prolegomenon (page xiv) details this 40-year journey.

Over that time, I have published in a peer-reviewed journal, the Australian Journal of Emergency Management (see Appendix 1) and have co-authored or influenced other relevant publications. Since the 1990s, I have focussed primarily on the development of disaster risk reduction theory and emergency risk management models, among other consultancy activities having facilitated the Hyogo Framework for Action-based *Pacific Disaster Risk Reduction and Disaster Management Framework for Action 2005-20015* (SOPAC 2005)

The Stimulus for a Return to Active Studies

In the 1990s, as Director of the Australian Institute of Emergency Management (AEMI) at Mount Macedon in Victoria, I had become involved in the work of Standards Australia in its development of what became AS/NZS Standard 4360 – Risk Management (1995) (AS/NZS 1995) and had contributed to the development of the early draft *Australian emergency risk management model*.

Later, I was able to apply that model in a flood risk management study in Murweh Shire on behalf of the Queensland Government and conducted a major community consultation/program in the flood-prone towns of Charleville and Augathella. The same model was subsequently and successfully employed by the Queensland Government itself in addressing cyclone/flood problems in a number of major northern coastal towns.

In retirement, I have continued to maintain an active interest in the application of disaster risk reduction (DRR) and emergency risk management (ERM) theory and practice, but remain disappointed in the lack of 'take-up' by Australian governments of proven effective DRR and ERM policies and practices and failure to promote the development of more effective community-based programs for risk reduction and emergency management.

In late 2013, as a regular attendee at the Monash University Disaster Resilience Initiative (MUDRI) Resilience Forums, I had discussions with Professor Frank Archer, Dr Caroline Spencer and MUDRI staff on the possibility of undertaking Master of Philosophy studies. Having identified the field of DRR/ERM as my area of primary research interest, I subsequently proposed to research the possibility of developing a practical tool helping individuals and communities in the assessment and management of emergency risk.

Changes of Direction

During the early months of 2014, while monitoring developments in Victoria in implementing the recommendations of the Victorian Bushfire Royal Commission (VBRC) following the 2009 'Black Saturday' bushfires, I became aware that much effort appeared to being directed into new community bushfire awareness and readiness programs.

Accordingly, during the on-campus mode of the requisite research unit MIR5110, Responsible Research Practice and Project Management in Emergency and Disaster Management, I proposed a change to my major project topic to address the practicability of the 'shared responsibility' element of the 'National Strategy for Disaster Resilience' (NSDR), then having just been endorsed by the Council of Australian Governments (COAG). However, I was counselled to delay making such a decision at that stage.

Later, I again had extensive discussions with Professor Archer and Dr Spencer on a possible topic change and it was suggested that my background of involvement in the development of emergency management theory, policies and programs at both national and State/Territory level post-1974 would allow me to make a better contribution to understanding trends and influences in that field. As a result, in mid-June 2014, I submitted as my new project topic: *Developments in Australian emergency management theory, policy and practice, 1974-2014: a critical analysis*. This proposed topic was approved.

While earlier undertaking an assignment requirement for the coursework unit MIR5110, within my Master of Philosophy I had scoped a draft research protocol for a similar topic using the Monash 'Guide to Good Research Practice' (Monash University, 2012). I used this model to structure a revised version of that protocol relevant to this topic, which was later presented, and approved, at my MPhil Confirmation Seminar.

A Later Supportive Development

In late 2014, the Commonwealth Attorney-General's Department, to which the whole of EMA, including AEMI, had been transferred from the Defence Department in the immediate aftermath of the '9/11' attacks in the USA, announced that AEMI at Mt Macedon would be closed in the New Year, it being indicated that the functions of the Institute, including its library and the management of its internationally-recognised Australian Journal of Emergency Management, would be transferred to Canberra. In February 2015, it was further announced that the facility itself, as well its programs, would be the subject of public tender and it is clear that little of the original EMA will remain as the direct operational responsibility of that Department.

I had worked at that Institute for 16 years, first as Deputy Director/Chief Instructor and later as Director and contributed to the Institute's programs, which had been primarily directed towards the strengthening of both Commonwealth and State/Territory emergency management capabilities. I was appalled by this apparently unilateral decision, the States and Territories do not appear to have been consulted on the matter, – the more so as the Institute in particular had gained both regional and international recognition for its innovations and activities.

I had been involved in the Monash MUDRI Resilience Forum program as both presenter and attendee over recent years, and because of my association with AEMI, I was invited to contribute to a 'Tribute to AEMI' session at the March 2015 MUDRI Resilience Forum. Although having recently suffered a lengthy illness, I accepted, and on 26th March made a presentation for which I had prepared a somewhat detailed 'speaking prompt' brief as included as Appendix 2.

This presentation was well received, and I was subsequently advised by Professor Archer and Dr Spencer to proceed with the development of my revised major project, on the basis that my extensive knowledge of and involvement in developments in national emergency management theory, policy and practice over that 40-year period, and my lived experience and accumulation of relevant information and documentation, could provide a start-point for more 'drilled-down' research.

(Past Directors of AEMI at MUDRI Forum: Dudley McArdle,

Raelene Thompson, Tony Pearce (ex DGEMA), Roger Jones)

Problem Statement

As an informed observer of international, regional, national and state developments in emergency management theory, policy and practice over that 40-year period, I had come to the view that *while by the end of the 1990s significant development of a national approach to emergency management in Australia had taken place, by 2014 this development had been largely negated*. There was also a dearth of an accessible record of the key developments that helped shape Australian Emergency Management policy and practice.

The effectiveness of government arrangements for the protection and preservation of the lives and property of its citizens and of the essential infrastructure and services of the nation in the context of the historical development of these responsibilities is poorly understood.

Aim of This Research and Initial Research Question

The aim of this research is to explore the history of the development of emergency management in Australia from its earliest civil defence foundations, until the present day, with a view to drawing conclusions and lessons to inform present and future developments in national policies, theories and practice. It will help inform future EM decision-makers and practitioners.

The initial research question asked 'Is there an informed and documented chronology and supportive data base from which to examine developments in national emergency management theory, policy and practice over the study period?' This would need to draw

upon accessible literature, including my own publications where relevant, research and legislation.

Preliminary Literature Review

A preliminary literature review was conducted. It began with a detailed study of my own comprehensive collection of historical documents and personal file notes, lecture notes, presentations, journal articles and submissions. In collaboration with Dudley McArdle a convenience search was then conducted using Google and Google Scholar and a search of the archives of AJEM was also undertaken. These searches identified no published chronology in the peer-reviewed literature of the nature intended in this study. There are other publications considering various limited aspects of the development of EM in Australia, but they are not collated in any way and are largely descriptive rather than analytical.

Thus, I have identified that there is a gap in any informed understanding of the historical context of the development of emergency management in Australia. One possible explanation for this situation, is that the constitutional responsibility for the preservation of civilian life and property rests with the separate States and Territories, and it is only when the Commonwealth or some independent agency undertakes a survey of the 'state of the nation' in this regard that some series of 'snapshots' of the national situation have been offered, but these are not in the public domain.

Why This Topic is Important

This research records the long journey that results in the current state of emergency management in Australia. It illuminates the current context and informs the future. Policy makers, senior leaders, and practitioners in this domain will find this knowledge useful.

Structure of the Thesis

The thesis offers a chronology of the significant key events in the evolution of a national approach to emergency management in Australia over the period 1930 - 2015. This is a unique output of national significance, as no known similar report exists.

Chapter 2 details the study design, including: revised research questions; theoretical/conceptual framework; methodology; ethics / governance issues; and research protocol.

Chapter 3 reports on the literature review and provides an overview of the key developments and selected key events in the period 1930- 2015 inclusive. These Key Developments are sequentially examined in Chapter 4. Within the limits of a 25,000 word MPhil thesis it offers a commentary on the drivers of the developments and the potential or actual outcome consequences of the selected key events and how they may have influenced the national evolution of emergency management.

Chapter 5 discusses key themes identified in the previous chapter with concluding remarks, including limitations of the study. Chapter 6 concludes the thesis including suggestions for further research.

CHAPTER 2: STUDY DESIGN

This chapter outlines the design of the study, considering the research protocol and the theoretical/conceptual framework. It also considers bias, and addresses data management, budgetary issues and outlines a dissemination strategy.

The Research Protocol

Revised Research Questions
In the context of the preliminary literature review, the revised research questions are:

- What is the chronology of significant key developments, at both national and State/Territory levels, in Australian Emergency Management over the period 1930 to 2015?
- For a number of selected key events, what were the drivers and consequences of these selected events and how do they aid understanding of their impact on Australian Emergency Management over this period?

Theoretical/Conceptual Framework
There is no 'Theory of Emergency Management' as such (McEntire 2015). The *Australian National Emergency Arrangements,* in place from time to time and recently revised and re-published by the Australian Institute for Disaster Resilience (AIDR) (AIDR 2014) provide the core structure for the research.

Key definitions have been adopted from the *Australian Disaster Resilience Glossary* (AIDR 2018). For some terms not defined in that publication, the *UNISDR Glossary 2017* (UNISDR 2017) was referenced.

I adopted an autoethnography approach (Ellis et al 2011) to examine my lived experiences, relating them to the literature and significant documents of the key developments and selected key events to understand and provide commentary on the wider cultural, political and social meanings and understandings evident in the Australian emergency management environment.

Study Design
A literature review informed the creation of a chronology highlighting the key developments and selected key events in the evolution of a national approach to emergency management in Australia over the period in question.

A desktop review, sampling accessible literature, research and legislation, and access to federal and State/Territory archival material where available, provides the main methodology. The chosen theoretical/conceptual frameworks guide the examination of this chronology, incorporating a critical analysis of key themes including the drivers and the potential or actual consequences of those events, and how they aid understanding of their impact on Australian Emergency Management over this period.

The chronology and selected analysis consider the period 1930-2015.The rationale for choosing this period is outlined in the next chapter.

Bias

In almost 40 years of experience in the field of emergency management in Australia, internationally and regionally (which includes almost 15 years as Deputy Director and later Director of the Australian Emergency Management Institute, AEMI), the researcher has acquired a great many professional and personal contacts in the field. Among Australian contacts, there would be general recognition that the researcher has operated at a relatively-high level in both the federal and State fields. However, a number of them would also recognize, particularly from recent submissions to government inquiries and from published articles, that I have expressed some strong concern about current directions in emergency management in Australia. It has been necessary to ensure a clear and as far as possible unbiased approach to both the project.

The researcher recruited a well-known and respected high-level former working associate, who has the advantage of living locally, as mentor for the course of the project to help identify and eliminate any perceived biases.

Ethics / Governance Issues

As a desktop review, this thesis required neither an ethics application nor consideration of agency governance applications.

Data Management

Assistance in developing materials was provided by a former associate, a recent AEMI Librarian. There were no privacy or data storage issues.

Budget

There were no budget implications for the study.

Dissemination

Dissemination of my research and findings will be undertaken through a selection of media:

- Publication in the Australian Journal of Emergency Management
- Presentation at a MUDRI Forum
- A national conference presentation
- Report to Emergency Management Victoria and The Australian Government Department of Home Affairs.

Summary

This chapter has outlined the research protocol and framework for this research and has defined the design of the project. Chapter 3 outlines the creation of the chronology of the key developments.

CHAPTER 3: KEY DEVELOPMENTS AND EVENTS IN NATIONAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

My involvement in the field and access to source material has allowed me to construct a framework chronology for the project, based on some key developments during that 85-year period, allowing me to tentatively identify the phases, major developments and key significant events through which the national approach to emergency management has passed. This chapter outlines in detail in tabular form the chronology (Table 1) of the development of the progression of Australia's public safety structures from Civil Defence to Emergency Management, Resilience, Emergency Risk Management and community-based structures.

Literature Review

The initial requirement was to locate and identify appropriate sources and items of information relevant to purpose, drawing on known sources, personal files, 'grey' literature as relevant, and known contacts within the AEMI and related library circles, collating these into a coherent information data base

During my lived experience in the sector, I have managed to collect a comprehensive range of historical documents relating to the topic, which I believe to be a unique resource. These documents have formed the heart of the research I have done for this thesis. Targeted secondary searching augmented my own extensive personal collection.

I chose to start my research in 1930, triggered by the Imperial Conference held in London in that year which began the process of standardising the creation of 'War Books' across the Commonwealth, including Australia.

I chose to end my research in 2015 as the year in which the Australian Emergency Management Institute ceased operation - a significant milestone for me personally and for the sector. It coincided with my own reduction in professional engagement in the sector and the commencement of my MPhil.

The phases of the key developments in the period into which I have broken the 85-year story have been a convenience analysis to structure this 85-year period enabling me to draw lessons from the events.

These key developments form the basis of the evolution of Australia's emergency management sector from the first traces of the concept of Civil Defence to the current structures which offer comprehensive resilience-building structures and processes to the Australian community.

Table 1 presents the outcome of this literature review.

Overview of key developments and selected key events 1930-2015

Key Developments	Selected Key Events in Period
1930-72 Civil Defence Beginnings • Into the War Years 1930-45 • The Early Post-War Years 1946-49 • Searching for New Directions 1950-59 • Civil Defence in Crisis 1960-67 • The Years of Uncertainty 1968-72	1. 1941 - Department of Home Security established 2. 1954 - Bikini Atoll hydrogen bomb test 3. 1956 - Opening of Civil Defence School 4. 1960s - 1970s - Decade of Disasters
1973-1990 From Civil Defence (CD) to Counter-Disaster • Changing direction 1973-74 • Establishment of Natural Disasters Organisation (Defence) 1974 • Civil Defence College becomes Australian Counter Disaster College 1976 • The search for relevant doctrine 1975-89: Aust CD Handbook published • Emergency of counter-disaster concepts 1989	1. 1974 Commonwealth/State/Territory negotiations and 1975 conference 2. 1974 - Cyclone Tracy NT 3. 1975 - Tasman bridge collapse 4. 1978 - Geneva Convention Protocols: Humanitarian Tasks 5. 1979 - Evolution of EM concepts 6. 1983 - Ash Wednesday - fires in south-east Australia
1991-2000 From Counter-Disaster to Emergency Management • A period of re-examination & a time of significant change 1992-3 • Establishment of National Emergency Management Committee 1993 • The new Emergency Management Australia 1993 • Opening of Australian Emergency Management Institute 1993 • Evolution of the new national arrangements 1994-2000	1. 1990 -1993 - Period of the Great Floods 2. 1991 - Geneva Convention Protocols: Role and Tasks of Civil Defence 3. 1992 - Program Evaluation Report 4. 1994 - Commonwealth Policy Statement on Emergency Management 5. 1995 - International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction 6. 2000 - Audit of EMA
2001 - 2015 Into the New Century • Transfer of EMA to Attorney General's Department 2001 • COAG review of national arrangements 2002 • National Strategy for Disaster Resilience (NSDR) 2011 • National Emergency Risk Assessment Guidelines (NERAG) 2010/12 • Closure of AEMI 2015	1. 2001 - World Trade Centre Attack (9/11) 2. 2005 - Hyogo Framework for Action 3. 2015 - Sendai Framework 4. 2009 - Black Saturday, Victoria 5. 2005-2015 - Decade of post-disaster formal inquiries

Table 1 Australian Emergency Management Chronology

Comment

This chapter, by defining a chronological listing of key developments in tabular form, has set the scene for a detailed description of those key developments and the key events that triggered many of the changes that took place.

CHAPTER FOUR: "THE 85 YEARS STORY"

This chapter uses the chronology outlined in the previous chapter to progress through the government and agency processes rolled out over 85 years that resulted in the emergency management structures now in place in federal, state and local government jurisdictions. It continues my autoethnographic approach to my research.

Civil Defence Beginnings, 1930-1972

Into the War Years, 1930 - 1945

Pre-War Developments

In Australia, under s.51. (vi) of the 1901 Commonwealth Constitution (Parliament of Australia, 2010), the Commonwealth is responsible for 'the naval and military defence of the Commonwealth and of the several States'. In the 1890s, the framers of that Act could not have foreseen that 20th century military developments such as airpower could make all countries, even those as relatively isolated as Australia, subject to the possibility of attack, without warning and from a distance. Such attacks could strike a nation's civilian infrastructure, which provides the basic capability for making and sustaining a war effort, so defence arrangements based almost entirely on a policy of ample warning times and a largely-reactive 'naval and military defence' of the homeland itself could be insufficient.

In the first fifty years of the new federation, Australia had experienced a number of impacts from a broad range of both natural and man-made hazards. Given the dispersal of its population and the vast distances which had to be traversed, transport accidents first on land and at sea and later increasingly related to air travel began to feature significantly among the list of man-made events. With the growth of industry and the demand for energy products, industrial accidents and mining disasters were more frequently recorded. Two world wars extracted their toll, both directly in lives lost and injury suffered and indirectly through pressures placed on the production of wartime requirements.

The Imperial Conference held in London in 1930, dealing with the rapidly deteriorating international relations which were to lead to World War 2, concluded that 'there was a general desire to adopt, as far as local circumstances allowed, a standard form of War Book throughout the British Commonwealth of Nations'. Subsequently, a special section of the Australian Department of Defence was established to prepare a Commonwealth of Australia War Book (Vardanega 1978).

After a number of Commonwealth/State conferences and interdepartmental consultations had been conducted to address the various issues concerned in preparing Australia for war[2], a copy of a still-incomplete War Book, which included an outline draft Chapter VIII headed 'Civil Defence (Air Raid Precautions)', together with a schedule of plans to be covered in war

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[2] A key meeting was that of the Conference of Federal/State Ministers held in Adelaide on 26 August 1936, at which it was decided inter alia that the States should accept responsibility for the organisation of measures for civil protection and for training of personnel of essential civil services for their populations; it was agreed that the Commonwealth would provide training equipment, training manuals, technical information and advice, and the services of officers to instruct key personnel.

planning at both Commonwealth and State levels, was placed in the hands of State Premiers at a conference on 31st March 1939. The scheduled plans included both 'preparations for military defence and measures connected with mobilisation and the active prosecution of a war', clearly a primary responsibility of the Commonwealth, and 'civil defence', concerning matters involving the protection of the civil population and of essential civil services.

In relation to civil defence, however, it could be argued that both the Commonwealth and the States had some shared constitutional responsibility, so joint ministerial meetings had been held in Adelaide in August 1936 and a Premiers Conference met in Canberra in September 1938 (at the time of the 'Munich crisis') to deal with measures such as 'the protection of the civil population against the result of gas attacks', the appointment of committees within each State's Chief Secretary's Department to formulate defence schemes for major cities, the provision of equipment for nucleus civil defence teams, and co-operation in regard to the use of police, ambulances and hospitals in an emergency situation.

While these earlier conferences and discussions laid some of the foundations for the development of a national civil defence capability, their outcomes were clouded by lack of agreement as to the financial responsibility for such measures – an issue, as noted later by Paul Hasluck[3], 'which was to be at the centre of all Federal-State discussions on co-operation for national planning or the conduct of the war' (Hasluck P. 1952), emphasis added.

However, indicating that there was some determination to resolve some of these problems, the March 1939 Premiers Conference (chaired by the Prime Minister) agreed that 'the preparation of suitable schemes of passive protection of the civil population and the application of such schemes in time of emergency were essentially a responsibility of each State'. The meeting gave approval for the officer in charge of a new section for 'Civilian Defence State Co-operation', which had been established within the Commonwealth Department of Defence, to correspond with the equivalent responsible officer in each State on technical matters 'and on the execution of agreed policy' (Hasluck, P. 1952)[4].

The intention (or perhaps the hope?) of the Commonwealth in regard to civil defence at the outset of World War II is clearly expressed in Chapter VIII of the Commonwealth of Australia War Book, dated May 1939 (the one which was originally presented, in incomplete form, at the March conference):

> *These precautions against air raids are universally accepted as being primarily the responsibility of the civil administration, as opposed to the Defence Services whose duties are those of active defence. In Australia, therefore, the Commonwealth Government must of necessity depend upon the State Governments to stimulate the interest and enlist the co-operation of all classes of*

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[3] Paul Hasluck served over a long period as Minister for Defence, Minister for External Affairs and later, Governor General.
[4] In November 1939 this section was absorbed into the newly-created Department of Defence Co-ordination, which among other responsibilities was given that for 'the central co-ordination of air raids precautions activities'. The section was now redesignated the 'Directorate of Civilian Defence and State Co-operation'.

the community in the respective States in the various civil air defence measures considered to be necessary.

(Ball D. and Langtry J.O 1983)

The 1939 Conference did agree that the Commonwealth Government should lay down the general principles of civil defence and the States should implement their own schemes. Following the conference, a Directorate of Civilian Defence and State Co-operation was established in the Department of Defence Co-ordination, and State Premiers were secretly advised of the scale and weight of potential attack on civilian infrastructure to be used as a basis for State Civil defence plans[5].

By September 1939, all States and the Australian Capital Territory had active civil defence planning and control structures and organisations, with the Northern Territory arrangements being managed by the Department of Defence.

The War Arrangements
During the war years of 1939-45 alone, Australia had suffered a country-wide drought to add to its problems of meeting its war needs,

In December 1940, the Defence Committee undertook a review of air raids precautions policy, based on a re-assessment of attack probabilities, including the assumptions that 70 tons of bombs might be dropped on any one of certain named objectives within a period of 24 hours and that there would not be more than one attack in any one fortnight. The Committee recommended the adoption of measures based on these assumptions at a meeting with executive officers of State Civil Defence organisations in March 1941 (Vardanega 1978).

In June 1941, a Commonwealth Department of Home Security was established in the Department of Defence Co-ordination, under separate ministerial direction, as an advisory and co-ordinating authority in regard to civil defence issues and given a lengthy list of responsibilities, later even increased to include the responsibility, when required by the Service Departments, to prepare camouflage schemes and to supervise their application in the civilian environment.

Further multi-agency discussions and conferences took place throughout 1941 and in February 1942, following Japan's entry into the war, the War Cabinet, the Advisory War Council and State Premiers met in Canberra to consider a number of civil defence issues, including the need for increased war powers in areas such as civilian evacuation policy.

In summary, during World War 2 the Australian position on civil defence was that:

- The States were responsible for preparing and implementing their own schemes for civil defence, and were required to meet the expenditure involved, and
- The Commonwealth was responsible for:
    - laying down the general principles of civil defence;

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[5] Presumably including the author who - in 1943 and as a teenager then living in East Fremantle WA - was recruited, together with his bicycle, into the local branch of WA wartime ARP arrangements as a 'bicycle messenger' (the then branch secretary being his mother)!

- providing advice as to the scale and weight of attack;
- assisting the States by supplying advice on potential technical matters, and training and procurement issues, and
- general co-ordination of Commonwealth and State efforts.

At its maximum in mid-1943, the total membership of all national and State civil defence personnel was estimated to have reached nearly 321,000 (Vardanega 1978).

The Early Post-War Years, 1946 - 1949
Winding Back the War-time Effort
State Premiers were advised by War Cabinet Minute No. 4533 of 12 November 1945 that a meeting of War Cabinet had determined:

> *That the nucleus Civil Defence Organisation in the post-war years should be limited to a Planning Organisation with the duties of preparing and keeping up-to-date plans for the creation and functioning of a Civil Defence Organisation if and when such is required, together with the compilation of records and plans which have been put into effect during the recent war.*

The same meeting was also advised that 'When the Department of Home Security ceases to function, its responsibilities in regard to civil defence are to be transferred to the Department of the Interior, but the Defence Department will continue to be responsible for advice on the military aspect of civil defence'.

As from 1st February 1946, therefore, the relevant officers and records were transferred to the Department of the Interior. Over time the functions of the transferred officers were absorbed by the regular staff of that Department.

On 4 June 1947, the Minister for Defence issued the following as part of a new policy statement:

> *The measures for the defence of the civil community come within the scope of the Commonwealth War Book, the details being embodied in the Departmental War Book of the Department which will handle this matter in war.*

> *Important new aspects of civil defence have been under consideration for some time. Adequate measures for the defence of the community against attack by atomic and biological weapons must be based on proper scientific investigation which has not yet reached a state to enable planning and other measures to be soundly developed.*

> *When this stage has been reached, it will be possible for the Defence Committee and the Defence Scientific Advisory Committee, which has liaison with overseas sources of information, to advise on the matter. It will then be possible to establish a Committee on Civil Defence, representative of the Commonwealth and State authorities concerned, to recommend plans and measures that should be taken. (*Commonwealth of Australia 1947*)*

New Threats, New Concerns

In April 1948, the Minister for the Interior, as chairman of a new Cabinet Sub-Committee on Civil Defence, convened a new Commonwealth 'Interdepartmental Committee (IDC)', with himself as chair. However, in June 1948, the Defence Committee was considering an 'Appreciation of the Possible Effect of the Use of Atomic Bombs against Australia', concluding that, while Australia was an unlikely target for early attack (or even attack at all), it was essential to plan a long-range policy of decentralisation of critical assets, 'particularly to avoid increasing the concentration of population and industrial capacity in a few cities'.

On 22 November that year, Cabinet approved a number of related recommendations made by the Minister for Defence, including establishing a new Commonwealth Civil Defence Committee, with State membership and again chaired by a representative of the Minister for the interior, but with a joint Defence/Interior secretariat, along with a provision that the Minister for Defence should handle any matters requiring submission to the higher-level Council for Defence.

At this meeting, Cabinet had also approved the appointment of a full-time Commonwealth Director of Civil Defence. The Cabinet Sub-Committee which had only been formed in April, as above, was disbanded as a result of this meeting.

In January 1949, the States were informed of the decision to establish the new Commonwealth Civil Defence Committee, and were invited to nominate representatives to it, while on 1 May Mr. J.A. Carrodus CBE, a former Secretary of the Department of the Interior, was appointed Director of Civil Defence (DCD).

Mr. Carrodus was given accommodation in the Department of Defence, 'to enable him to have close contact with the joint service "machinery" and the Commonwealth War Book official'.

On 7 June 1949, the nominated Commonwealth members of the new Commonwealth Civil Defence Committee met, and requested the Defence Department to provide an authoritative statement on the form and scale of possible attacks on Australia and its dependent territories, the new Commonwealth Director of Civil Defence having pointed out that the Council for Defence had so far failed to do so. The meeting was also advised that the Department of the Army had accepted responsibility for the control and co-ordination of civil defence measures in Darwin, Papua and the Mandated Territory of New Guinea.

Searching for New Directions, 1950 - 1959

Rethinking Civil Defence in the 1950s

On 9 November 1949, the full Commonwealth Civil Defence Committee met for the first time with the new Commonwealth Director of Civil Defence, Mr. Carrodus as chair. On the agenda was a briefing paper submitted by the new Director himself entitled 'Basic Considerations in Planning Civil Defence', which offered the following definition:

> *Civil Defence comprises all measures, other than active defence, taken to minimise the effects of enemy attack upon the civil population. It includes the organisation of the nation, so that the people can maintain their will to win,*

industry can continue essential production, public services can function and governments can govern.[6]

A further agenda item considered the implications of the recently-gazetted NSW 'County of Cumberland Planning Scheme' (Winston, 1957), seeking to extend the boundaries of the City of Sydney and creating another 'tier of government', developed in part to assist in addressing the need for decentralisation of population and industrial capacity raised earlier. The plan had obvious national implications for civil defence planning, but in the event was not proceeded with.

The Commonwealth Civil Defence Committee was to meet twice more in 1950. On 25 July 1950 Brigadier A. W. Wardell MC replaced Mr. Carrodus as Commonwealth DCD, chairing the final meeting of the Commonwealth Civil Defence Committee on 15 August, a file note suggests that by this time the Committee had been found too cumbersome in operation; it was also felt that the Commonwealth was over-represented - it had full-time representatives from nine Commonwealth departments and occasional representation from another five.

In September 1950, the Minister for the Interior advised State Premiers attending a Premiers Conference that Commonwealth proposals for Civil Defence policy and activities were currently being developed and would be 'circulated in due course'. On 2 March 1951 at a conference of Commonwealth and State Ministers, the Prime Minister advised that the Defence Council had discounted the possibility of any real and current threat to Australia as assessed by the Defence Committee at its 1948 meeting, and suggested that it might be more appropriate to create a 'National Security Council'.

The Prime Minister's announcement at the March 1951 Ministerial Conference led to an exchange of correspondence between Premiers and the Prime Minister over the next two years, with Premiers generally being critical of the Commonwealth's perceived failure to provide guidance as to whether and, if so, to what extent and in what areas, civil defence preparations should proceed.

As an example, the NSW Premier Cahill, in a letter dated 10 April 1953, wrote in some exasperation to then Prime Minister Menzies:

> *I would urge, therefore, that your Government give further consideration to the whole problem with a view either to the determination of the basis on which civil defence preparations should proceed or to my Government being reassured that civil defence preparations at this junction are unnecessary.*
>
> (Vardanega, R. 1978)

Indeed, on 23 April 1951 the federal Cabinet Secretariat had asked the Minister for the Interior for an appreciation of the current civil defence position. Brigadier Wardell, as

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[6] This definition, while never more than a 'working definition', was to remain in the vocabulary of Australian 'total national defence' and 'Fourth Arm' advocates well into the 1980s. In May 1956 a draft Cabinet Submission on basic civil defence responsibilities, proposing among other matters that civil defence be recognised as the 'Fourth Arm' of defence, was prepared for the then Minister for the Interior for submission to the Defence Committee. There is no record of it being taken by or agreed to by Cabinet.

Commonwealth DCD at the time, had provided an appreciation which opposed the June 1948 view expressed by the Defence Council, but this had not been passed on to the Department of the PM. Now that both the Cabinet Sub-Committee on Civil Defence and the Commonwealth Civil Defence Committee had been disbanded, it was clear that the Minister for the Interior was now an unsupported voice on civil defence in Cabinet, and potentially very much in the shadow of the much more influential Minister for Defence.

Eventually, in July 1952, the Minister for Interior lodged a strong Submission on Civil Defence with the Cabinet Secretariat. On 9 September 1952, Cabinet invited the *Defence Committee* to consider Australian civil defence requirements, noting that the question 'needed to be considered in its proper relationship with other aspects of Defence activity and that any money required to finance measures for civil defence was to be found within funds already allocated to Defence'.

The following day, 10 September, the Minister for the Interior wrote to the Prime Minister recommending that civil defence be taken over by the Department of Defence. His letter included the following:

> *I would prefer not to have the responsibility of administering a Department which controls neither its own appreciation of the situation nor the sum of money to be expended in respect of its organisation.*

The Minister's contention appears to have been supported by the Prime Minister of the day, but in August 1953 Cabinet again, in response to a request from the Minister of Defence, determined that the civil defence organisation should continue to be limited to a planning role and requested the Department of the Interior to formulate civil defence measures for inclusion in the Defence program, 'subject to the approved procedures for review by the Defence Committee and the Defence Preparations Committee', a process which continued into the 1970s.

The testing of the first hydrogen bomb took place in the Pacific on 1 March 1954, and thus it was against a background of renewed concern over defence issues that in mid-March a new program of civil defence measures was put before the Defence Committee. This program included a proposal to establish a Civil Defence School (a proposal originally considered by the Commonwealth Civil Defence Committee in 1950)[7]. This proposal originally was agreed by the Defence Committee and a subsequent submission was lodged with the Cabinet Committee on Defence Preparations on 30 March.

However, on 19 April 1954 Cabinet called on the Department of Defence for a report on the new situation created by the hydrogen bomb tests at Bikini Atoll prior to an intended meeting with the States, and on 30 June the State Premiers were advised by the Prime Minister's office that they would shortly be called to a meeting to discuss the new civil

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[7] The Australian Civil Defence School (ACDS) was formally opened by the then Minister for Defence in 1956. The site, on Mount Macedon, some 60km to the north-west of Melbourne and adjacent to the Calder Highway running towards Bendigo, had served variously as a private school and a post-WW2 rehabilitation centre and was purchased by the Commonwealth Department of the Interior. At time of writing (March 2016) it is unused but still Commonwealth-owned, with its adjacent 9-hole golf course leased to a private club.

defence situation. After lengthy discussions on the situation involving Commonwealth agencies and including the Defence Chiefs of Staff Committee, a further conference with State Ministers for Civil Defence in Canberra on 27 July 1954 decided to reconstitute the Commonwealth Civil Defence Committee (CCDC) (Commonwealth Department of the Interior 1965).

The new CCDC met for the first time on 6 September 1954. This Committee was to meet on a further 8 occasions, somewhat irregularly, until its final meeting in May 1960. However, NSW Premier Cahill was still dissatisfied with progress on the matter, and on 4 February 1955 wrote to the Prime Minister seeking the latter's views on 'the nature and scale of attack in respect of which civil defence planning should proceed'. The letter was acknowledged, but no further action on this matter appears to have ensued at this stage.

However, in early 1958, Federal Cabinet on the basis of a submission by its Defence Preparations Committee invited the <u>Minister for Defence</u> (emphasis added - it appears that at this stage issues of civil defence <u>policy</u> were still being dealt with by this minister) to prepare a paper on civil defence policy and development issues. This paper was taken to the 6th meeting of the CCDC on 31 March and endorsed by the Defence Committee[8]. Cabinet subsequently decided that a more active CD program was needed and was to be developed, but directed that no approach should be made to the States until the Commonwealth had practical proposals to offer.

Finally, on 5 August 1958, Cabinet directed that the Department of the Prime Minister convene an Inter-Departmental Committee (IDC) to develop a new civil defence approach and program proposals but also directed that no publicity should be given to this determination. The IDC met for the first time on 22 August, chaired by the Minister for the Interior, and directed the Commonwealth Director of Civil Defence to prepare 'an up-to-date civil defence appreciation'. A draft appreciation prepared by the Commonwealth Director of Civil Defence was submitted on 29 August, but the committee chairman rejected it on the basis that the 'nature of the draft was not what Cabinet wanted'.

Barely a month later, the 7th meeting of the Commonwealth Civil Defence Committee on 22 September was largely taken up with disagreement between the Commonwealth and NSW Directors of Civil Defence on the Committee's future directions, and in effect the whole issue lapsed until the following year.

At the second meeting of the IDC on 25 February 1959, there was further discussion over the 'up-to-date civil defence appreciation' and the non-Defence/Interior members were asked to prepare and submit papers – which they did, along with one from the Commonwealth DCD himself. The committee chair was asked to collaborate with Defence in the production of a new draft appreciation. The matter then appears to have lapsed until the 3rd IDC meeting on 10 August although in the interim the Joint Intelligence and Chiefs of

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[8] The final paper was very similar to a draft Cabinet submission prepared for the Minister for the Interior in May 1956 on basic civil defence responsibilities, proposing among other matters that civil defence be recognised as the 'Fourth Arm' of defence. There is no record of this being taken or agreed by Cabinet.

Staff Committees undertook a review of aspects of the threats to Australian interests up to the end of 1963.

On 10 August 1959 the IDC held its third meeting, to consider this new draft appreciation, but in opening the meeting the chair advised that the Prime Minister had requested the appreciation by the following morning, and in consequence that draft, prepared by the chairman and titled 'Report <u>for</u> the IDC' (it was clearly intended only as a draft for IDC consideration) was adopted almost in full by the meeting. A report including this new appreciation was submitted to the Cabinet by the Minister for the Interior on 21 August[9].

The report was endorsed by Cabinet on 8 September, which directed that 'in due course' a draft statement should be prepared for Cabinet approval, to include material about the potential threats and to include suggestions for national organisation for civil defence. On 29 September, Cabinet requested that a revised statement should be made to parliament. The Minister for the Interior later that day made a statement to the House saying:

> *It is a basic principle that the States are responsible for the development of their own civil defence planning and programs with the Commonwealth providing national guidance and coordination as necessary*

and basically announcing:

- a reorganisation and expansion of the Commonwealth Directorate of Civil Defence to enable it to undertake the necessary planning and coordination of a civil defence program and its annual review;
- the continuation of the recently opened Civil Defence School at Mount Macedon, Victoria;
- the supply of special radiation detection equipment to the States for monitoring purposes;
- the provision of suitable Civil Defence training manuals at Commonwealth expense;
- the planning of a program of public education, and
- the provision of Civil Defence organisations in Commonwealth territories 'to the extent deemed necessary. (Lang 2017)

Civil Defence in Crisis, 1960-1967
A Conference of Commonwealth and State Ministers on Civil Defence held on 20 January 1960 considered and endorsed the ministerial statement, agreeing that:

- an initial Civil Defence organisation should be established in all States where they currently didn't exist;
- each State was to indicate the extent to which it could maintain its Civil Defence organisation within its own resources, and
- in light of the above, what (if any) financial assistance for specific purposes would be made.

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[9] A separate draft appreciation had been submitted to the Committee by the Commonwealth DCD himself but was effectively ignored, and the Director then publicly dissociated himself from the official report.

Between February and April that year, the Commonwealth Director of Civil Defence visited all States to discuss their individual plans, but on 3 May a meeting of the Civil Defence Committee met and following that the Commonwealth Director of Civil Defence had to advise his minister that NSW was still critical of Commonwealth inactivity, and in anticipation of the next Ministerial Conference the Minister for the Interior took some new proposals to Cabinet. Cabinet rejected these, primarily on the grounds that they had departed from the terms of the September 1959 policy statement and could lead to heavy demands from the States for further funding.

A Commonwealth Government interdepartmental conference was called by the Minister in mid-June, but directed that no further Civil Defence commitment should be entertained. In consequence, the following Commonwealth/State ministerial conference was inconclusive, although the Commonwealth noted the State views.

There was little policy activity in the next twelve months, but on 24 October 1961, Cabinet accepted a new proposal for a future course of action in civil defence, which was basically a slight redevelopment of the September 1959 and January 1960 proposals. However, it was agreed that there would be continued involvement of the Commonwealth interdepartmental committee in reviewing the annual program. In July 1962 the Minister for the Interior made an attempt to have funds for civil defence transferred to his own department from the Department of Defence, but this was rejected by the Prime Minister. Thus, the annual report of the interdepartmental committee continued to be made to the Defence Committee, which in effect continued to control the civil defence program.

While funding of the approved 1961 civil defence program was gradually extended in following years to cover some new projects, there was in effect little change in policies and arrangements. But the Commonwealth Civil Defence Committee, now renamed the 'Commonwealth and State Civil Defence Committee', continued to meet approximately annually and in August 1965 discussed an update in Commonwealth/State Civil Defence responsibilities. However, in November 1965 the first meeting of the Commonwealth and State Directors of Civil Defence was held, and prepared a report on the same subject.

This report was taken in turn by the interdepartmental committee and by further meetings of the Commonwealth and State Civil Defence Committee in February and June 1966. These last meetings also discussed a report prepared by the Directors on a proposal for Commonwealth assistance in the development of State civil defence organisations.

After much consultation, in March 1967 the Government accepted a revision of the existing responsibilities and arrangements – but when in May 1967 the Prime Minister, in advising State Premiers accordingly, announced that the Government did not accept the proposal for some direct financial assistance in the development of State civil defence organisations, the reaction of most States was to decline to accept the agreed division of responsibilities on the grounds that the Commonwealth had not agreed to provide them with the 'necessary funds to discharge their responsibilities'.

The Years of Uncertainty, 1968-1972

The period from the 1960s through to the mid-1970s in particular has sometimes been referred to as the 'disaster decade', with bushfires and heatwaves in South Australia in 1958-59, the Lara bushfires in Victoria in 1962, further bushfires in Victoria and New South Wales in 1965 and 1968 and in Hobart in 1967, and severe flooding in Queensland, New South Wales and Victoria in the early1970s.

Queensland in particular seemed to suffer disproportionately, with Cyclone ADA in 1970, Cyclone MADGE in 1973 and Cyclone WANDA in early 1974 the latter resulting in extreme and widespread flooding in Brisbane. There were industrial and transportation accidents across the country. It had become abundantly clear that changes had to be made in how responses to such events were planned and managed. The civil protection focus swung sharply towards concerns with the more effective preparedness for and response to natural disasters. At State level, most of the volunteer civil defence organisations assumed or were given more active roles in counter-disaster and emergency management. Legislation soon followed.

While there were some attempts from States in 1969 to resume discussions, the Commonwealth interdepartmental committee advised that it had no definite proposals to put to such a meeting at this stage, and there were no subsequent Commonwealth/State discussions on civil defence until the mid-1970s. However, both the interdepartmental committee and regular meetings of Commonwealth/ State directors continued to meet in the following years – the former reporting annually to the Defence Committee, and the latter dealing primarily with issues relating to the State volunteer civil defence organisations.

By 1971/72 the federal allocation for civil defence had risen, an emergency broadcasting station had been approved for Darwin and another was being planned for Brisbane, approval had been given for the appointment of a scientific adviser to the Commonwealth Director of Civil Defence, and a 1963 Government agreement to a survey of fallout shelter space in existing major capital city buildings to be extended to provide, 'as a Civil Defence objective', fallout shelter spaces in new Commonwealth buildings.

Some development of State civil defence organisations and capabilities also continued over the 1960-70 period, with a continuation of Commonwealth training and equipment support programs. In NSW there had been a number of significant developments leading to the passage of the NSW *State Emergency Service and Civil Defence Act*, and in most States the voluntary civil defence organisations were given or acquired roles in mitigating the effects of natural disasters.

In early 1972, responding to a request in mid-1971 by the Commonwealth Director of Civil Defence, the Minister for Defence agreed terms of reference for a complete review of civil defence, and by mid-year a draft report had been produced by the interdepartmental committee. But in December 1972, the Whitlam Government came to power in Canberra, with a Defence platform which had been adopted by the 1972 Australian Labor Party Conference, reading in part:

Under Labor the Commonwealth will bear the responsibility for civil defence and for the financing of a civil emergency service and will establish a professional civil defence service within the Department of Defence.

(Beazley 1983)

In drawing this section to a close, it is worth pointing out that the Hobart-region bushfires of 1967 in Tasmania which took 62 lives were to be the trigger for a new national disaster organisation to coordinate Commonwealth coordination of disaster events. However, it was not to take form until 1974 as discussed in the next section.

From Civil Defence to Counter-Disaster, 1973-1990

Changing Direction, 1973-1974

Following the new Federal Government's announcements in December 1972, the then Directorate of Civil Defence was instructed to undertake a series of studies to review the current international civil defence situation and to develop proposals for new policy directions. In mid-1973, an Inter-Departmental Committee (IDC) was formed to consider these studies and to prepare a consolidated paper for further higher-level interdepartmental discussion. Subsequently, and following such discussions, the Minister for Defence and the Treasurer prepared a joint Cabinet submission addressing a range of issues relating to Commonwealth/State arrangements for the management of natural disasters, including financial assistance to the States to enable them to develop appropriate disaster relief and restoration measures.

As predicted in the previous section, the genesis of a new national body can be traced back to the tragic 1967 Hobart bushfires. After the fires, Lance Barnard, then a Tasmanian member of the House of Representatives, fought tenaciously for the establishment of some form of national disaster organisation to coordinate Commonwealth efforts in disasters[10]. When the Labor Party came to power at the end of 1972, he became Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Defence, and his efforts led to the establishment of a National Disasters Organisation 'to cope, in co-operation with other civil authorities in Australia, with the effects of natural disasters'[11].

Establishment of National Disasters Organisation, 1974

Having considered a Cabinet submission in February 1974, the government announced that a new Australian Government agency, the Natural Disasters Organisation (NDO), was to be established to 'replace' the existing Directorate of Civil Defence and to be responsible for coordinating Commonwealth efforts with State and local voluntary organisations in major natural disasters[12].

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[10] Some coverage is given in Vardanega, R. 1978, Civil Defence in Australia – An Outline History (unpublished paper, Department of Defence).

[11] Statement by the Minister for Defence, the Hon L. H. Barnard, MP, 19 December 1972.

[12] The use of the term 'replace' in the formal announcement was the cause of some confusion – press releases at the time referred to the new organisation 'absorbing the Directorate…'. In the light of subsequent developments it is reasonable to assume that the intention was that NDO both 'replace' and absorb' the old Directorate.

The Government also authorised the Prime Minister to advise the Premiers that the Minister for Defence, who at the time was also the Deputy Prime Minister, would hold discussions on joint arrangements with the appropriate State Ministers. In April 1974 the Minister for Defence wrote inviting 'appropriate State ministers' to Canberra to 'discuss the implementation of the Government's decisions and the consequences that would flow from them'.

This conference was duly held on 27 June 1974, the attending State ministers being primarily ministers for police and/or emergency services - this is significant in that in the 1950s and 1960s Commonwealth/State ministerial meetings had customarily been attended by Premiers. It is also of some significance that the letter of invitation indicated the conference would examine the implications of the Government's decisions for 'relevant State organisations', which were seen as those organisations 'raised, trained, maintained and directed by the State' for counter-disaster/disaster relief operations 'including the long-standing civil defence role'. In States where CD was not a police responsibility, this could have been seen as specifically excluding ministers of State departments such as community services and police.

Following the ministerial conference and seeking approval by the Public Service Board for the establishment of the new organisation[13], the Department of Defence prepared a functional statement for a proposed Natural Disasters Organisation (NDO) - which in earlier discussions had been provisionally titled the '**National** Disasters Organisation'[14].The statement proposed the following functions for the new organisation:

- Operation of the Australian Government Program to meet civil defence emergencies affecting the civilian population, and
- Development and implementation of plans to cope with natural disasters.

In December 1974, Cyclone TRACY struck Darwin, leading to the loss of some 65 lives, injury to hundreds, and a massive evacuation and national relief effort, with an estimated cost to the nation from this single event of some $A4 billion. This was quickly followed by the Tasman Bridge collapse in Hobart. As a result of these events, the NDO's terms of reference were quickly sorted out, along with the organisation's systems and relationships. Finally, a number of otherwise reluctant Commonwealth Departments including Defence became convinced that they had a major role to play in disasters in Australia, whether natural or otherwise.

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[13] The new organisation was to 'get on the ground' very rapidly following the ministerial conference and the author must assume that its proposed structure would have been known to conference attendees. Its initial Director-General, Major-General Alan Stretton, was promoted into that rank and appointment on 2nd July, and its initial Principal Staff Officer (Operations), Colonel Roger Jones (the author) similarly on 25th July, with other staff members shortly to follow. NDO conducted a major 'paper' exercise to test its necessary proposed interdepartmental arrangements in a major disaster in October-November, based on a simulated cyclone affecting north-western WA – fortuitously in advance of the real Cyclone 'TRACY' which impacted Darwin on 24-25 December 1974.

[14] The change in the organisation's proposed provisional title from 'National Disasters Organisation' is understood to have resulted from State concerns with the use of the term 'national' in relation to what was clearly a State responsibility

The functional statement was further developed in a Defence White Paper issued in November 1976, which stated:

> *The Natural Disasters Organisation and the State and Territory Emergency Service Organisations, comprising more than 30,000 active members, constitute the core civil defence structure for Australia. The main preoccupation in peacetime is in mitigating the effects of natural disasters, but the primary role is to ensure that civil defence requirements in the organisation, especially those related to training and equipment, have the dual capability for meeting both the civil defence and natural disasters requirements.*

> (Ball D. and Langtry J.O., 1983)

All the State and Territory civil defence/emergency service organisations having by this time adopted the common 'Emergency Service Organisation' title or a close variant on it, this statement inevitably led to demands at the regular meetings of the State and Territory directors with the Director-General of NDO for a Commonwealth statement which would help them in determining the necessary 'civil defence and natural disaster requirements' and indeed Defence and NDO had been working on such a statement at the time. However, a new element was entering the civil defence debate.

In 1978 Australia was to become a signatory to the 1977 Protocols Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 1949, and Article 61 of Protocol 1 (ICRC, 2009) contained the definition of civil defence as 'the protection of the civilian populations from the dangers of and effects of hostilities or disasters', and specifically limited civil defence to the performance of fifteen specified humanitarian tasks[15]. There was no mention of civil defence being the 'Fourth Arm of national defence' or having a similar governmental function.

As late as April 1982, when the Australian National University's Strategic and Defence Studies Centre was sponsoring a conference on 'Civil Defence and Australia's Security' which

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[15] These tasks are:
- warning;
- evacuation;
- management of shelters;
- management of blackout measures;
- rescue;
- medical services, including first aid, and religious assistance;
- fire-fighting;
- detection and marking of danger areas;
- decontamination and similar protective measures;
- provision of emergency accommodation and supplies;
- emergency assistance in the restoration and maintenance of order in distressed areas;
- emergency repair of indispensable public utilities;
- emergency disposal of the dead;
- assistance in the preservation of objects essential for survival;
- complementary activities necessary to carry out any of the tasks mentioned above, including, but not limited to, planning and organization;

focussed on such a 'Fourth arm' role, a Department of Defence paper on 'Current Civil Defence Planning in Australia' was noting that Australia had already signed (but not yet ratified) the 1977 Protocols Additional. Indicating a significant role for NDO in developing, in close liaison with State/Territory authorities, 'civil defence capabilities and planning appropriate to Australia's strategic circumstances' and promoting the 1967 'core civil defence' concepts, the Minister made a statement to Parliament at the time. He also noted that the Commonwealth's assessment of the threat of any attack against Australia was low and that 'the judgement on whether resources should be committed now would properly lie within responsibilities of the relevant State or Territory Government'[16]

The Civil Defence College Becomes the Australian Counter-Disaster College, 1976
The Civil Defence School - to which the author was appointed as the inaugural Deputy Director and Chief Instructor - had maintained a collection of relevant civil defence reference works and handbooks, mainly of UK origin, where many original members of the School teaching staff had been trained, but no organised reference library as such. In the mid-1970s, the renamed Australian Counter Disaster College (ACDC) developed a set of *Counter-Disaster Guidelines* in 5 sections, addressing: *CD Planning*; *CD Organisation*; *CD Training*; *CD Operations*; and *CD Communications*. At this stage, much of the information used had been drawn or adapted, with acknowledgment, from training material used in State/Territory State Emergency Services (ACDC 1983).

The search for relevant doctrine, 1975-1989: The Australian Civil Defence Handbook published
By the late 1970s the College was able, largely through the Defence Library and Information Service (DLIS), to access suitable overseas source material on emergency/disaster management, including much research information commissioned by the then US Defense Civil Preparedness Agency (a FEMA predecessor). This allowed teaching staff to develop new and more relevant doctrine, including new approaches to 'command, control and coordination' in emergency response, developed for a series of new 'Disaster Control' courses which are still in wide use in Australia and overseas.

In 1979, a copy of the report by a 1978 workshop conducted by the US Governors' Association and chaired by the redoubtable Claire B. Rubin[17] reached the College. This had developed a new sequential and more science-based approach to disaster management, taking in the phases of 'mitigation, preparedness for response, response and reconstruction (MPRR)' (Rubin 2015). ACDC took much the same approach, modifying the material for Australian application and at the same time making significant changes drawn from

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[16] In September 1982 the then Minister for Defence also authorised the release of a series of statements on civil defence in which it was noted that the Commonwealth had endorsed the 1966 proposed Commonwealth/State division of responsibilities for civil defence, but these statements omit to mention that in 1967 the States had formally refused at accept their proposed responsibilities as a result of the Commonwealth's refusal to fund them!

[17] Claire Rubin has for many years been an active and respected leader in emergency management in the US. She edited a seminal work: Rubin, Claire B. (Ed) (2012) *Emergency Management: The American Experience, 1900-2010*, April 2012, CRC Press. Her emphasis in recent times has been on Disaster Recovery and she publishes an internationally revered blog under the name of 'The Recovery Diva' https://recoverydiva.com/ .

Australian and additional overseas sources. In the process, the Rubin sequence was reworked as 'prevention, preparedness, response and recovery (PPRR)', and became the basis for the development of a new series of ACDC courses in disaster planning and disaster response. The PPRR concept remains central to most existing disaster management policy, practice and arrangements in Australia and is enshrined in the NSDR (COAG 2011).

Today PPRR still features as the fundamental concept in our most recent statement of Australian EM concepts and principles, and even in recent State and Territory post-disaster reports and official reform proposals. Perhaps we should take some consolation in the new US reformulation 'PPMRR' – prevention, protection, mitigation, response and recovery - in the National Frameworks[18] resulting from Presidential Policy Directive 8: National Preparedness! (DHS 2018)

In addition to doctrine developed to support its course program, ACDC also embarked on an extensive inter-disciplinary and inter-organisational 'counter-disaster studies and workshops program', each usually of four days duration, dealing with subjects as varied as disaster medicine, disaster victim identification, post-disaster management, flood forecasting and warning, sector competency development etc. which produced detailed and widely-circulated reports. (ACDC 1983)

Connections with overseas counter-part institutions were developed, New Zealand provided a teaching staff member which allowed development of close trans-Tasman relationships, and visits from overseas emergency management authorities were encouraged. The College also hosted a one-week briefing and visits program for an annual Regional Red Cross/Red Crescent tour organised by Australian Red Cross.

As part of its contribution to EM knowledge management, the Macedon Digest was first published in March 1986, and then in Autumn 1995, the name was changed to the *Australian Journal of Emergency Management*.

In early 1983, a paper prepared jointly by the Strategic and International Policy Division of the Department of Defence and NDO, dated 27 April 1983 and issued in June as a discussion paper on limited distribution through the Department of the Prime Minister to State Premier's Departments, was reflecting a very different perception of civil defence.

This paper, copies of which were also provided by the Director of NDO to State and Territory Directors of Emergency Services, proposed that civil defence should be defined as:

Civil Defence in Australia is the protection of the civilian population against dangers arising from hostilities, assistance in its recovery from hostilities and the provision of the conditions necessary for the survival of the civilian population.

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[18] National Prevention Framework, https://www.fema.gov/media-library-data/20130726-1913-25045-6071/final_national_prevention_framework_20130501.pdf; National Protection Framework; National Mitigation Framework, https://www.fema.gov/media-library-data/20130726-1914-25045-9956/final_national_mitigation_framework_20130501.pdf ; National Response Framework, https://www.fema.gov/media-library-data/20130726-1914-25045-8516/final_national_response_framework_20130501.pdf ;National Disaster Recovery Framework, https://www.fema.gov/media-library-data/20130726-1915-25045-8527/ndrf.pdf .

The paper also acknowledged the government's agreement to the limitation of the scope of civil defence to the 15 'humanitarian tasks' as prescribed in the 1977 Protocols Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and Article 61 of that Protocol, as being tasks 'that signatories to the Geneva Protocols have accepted as having international recognition'. It also noted it did so in view of the fact that tasks other than those listed in the Articles would not attract the protection offered by the Protocol in a time of hostilities[19].

So, superficially at least, Australia at that time was proposing 2 mutually exclusive approaches to civil defence – 'civil defence as an element of total national defence' and 'civil defence strictly limited to the performance of Protocol 1's fifteen humanitarian tasks'. A follow-up to the June 1974 Commonwealth/State ministerial conference referred to earlier had been in planning since mid-1983, and this meeting was held in November of that year at the Australian Counter Disaster College, State/Territory ministers being accompanied by the directors of their respective emergency service organisations. This meeting came to the view that civil defence should be strictly limited to the performance of the tasks prescribed in Protocol 1.

One further issue raised during the 1983 conference concerned the departmental allocation of civil defence at Commonwealth level. The Defence Department's paper on 'Civil Defence Policy and Planning' argued that in the post-Protocol environment, particularly in the case of protection and preservation of civilian life and property in situations short of defence emergencies and war, it was inappropriate for the responsibility for such policy and planning to remain as a matter of exclusive Defence concern.

However, these two critical issues - determination of the extent of civil defence activities, and assignment of departmental responsibility for civil defence - were to remain unresolved throughout the 1980s. Two later developments would serve to indicate possible new roles and involvements for NDO:

- In 1989 the then Australian Prime Minister announced that Australia would contribute to work being undertaken under the United Nations declaration of the 'International Decade of Natural Disaster Reduction' by establishing an Australian Coordinating Committee chaired by the Director-General NDO. This committee also managed a major regional disaster risk reduction program in the Pacific on behalf of the Geoscience Division of SOPAC – the Secretariat of the Pacific Community.

- In mid-1992 a further Commonwealth/State ministerial meeting agreed a range of significant changes to the national emergency management arrangements. These changes are explored in the following section.

Emergence of Counter Disaster Concepts, 1989
Following the 1983 'Ash Wednesday' bushfires[20] and after an extensive series of reviews and reports, in 1986 Victoria introduced its *Emergency Management Act*, (Government of

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[19] The paper is referred to in a number of articles which included this definition to which the author had access. The definition has since been requoted in a number of my own articles from that period.
[20] An unpublished paper by the author, *The Macedon Ranges Story*, outlining the impact of the fires on Lions Club members and the wider Mt Macedon community, was delivered to the Macedon Ranges Lions Club meeting in 1983.

Victoria 1986) which clearly adopted the counter-disaster doctrine promulgated by ACDC and which remains largely unchanged today in both concept and principle. Thus by 1989 the Natural Disasters Organisation was able to publish, with agreement from all relevant federal, State and Territory authorities, the first edition of *Commonwealth Counter Disaster Concepts and Principles* (Emergency Management Australia 1983) which incorporates much of the emergency management doctrine still current in Australia.

The evolution of counter disaster concepts is explored in the following section.

From Counter-Disaster to Emergency Management, 1991-2000

From the earliest days in World War 2, there had always been some uncertainty about which Commonwealth government department or instrumentality should 'own' the responsibility for Australian civil defence policy and programmes at national level.

By the end of the 1980s, it might have seemed that the issue of Australia's basic approach to 'civil defence' had been resolved. In reality, though, the whole issue had simply been 'swept under the carpet' by the more immediately-pressing demands resulting from the decision to involve Australia in the work of the UN declaration of the 'International Decade of Natural Disaster Reduction' and thus to focus more directly on issues of disaster management.

While the November 1983 conference of ministers and senior Commonwealth, State and Territory officials at ACDC Mount Macedon was finally able to take the view that civil defence should be limited to the performance of the tasks prescribed in Protocol 1 of the 1977 Protocols Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and Article 61 of that Protocol (ICRC 2009), no formal statement had been made to this effect.

A Period of re-examination and a time of significant change, 1992-1993
The Federal elections in March 1990 saw Prime Minister Hawke and the Labor Party returned for a fourth time. In the almost automatic changes in federal departmental structure and responsibilities which seems to follow such events the Department of Defence underwent a restructuring. In the course of this, the Natural Disasters Organisation (NDO) was transferred from the Secretary's branch to that of the Chief of the Defence Force, resulting in a need for the redefinition of the role of the Natural Disasters Organisation in this new context.

Accordingly, NDO drafted a new policy paper entitled 'The Way Ahead – Emergency Management to 2000 and Beyond'. This draft was also circulated to the States and Territories, and in late 1990 the Director General of the NDO called a special conference with State and Territory Directors to allow consideration of the draft policy proposal.

However, in 1992, now an element within the Defence organisation, NDO was subject to a departmental program evaluation review, which was sponsored by the Program Evaluation and Review Directorate, itself part of the General Investigations and Review Branch of the Inspector-General Division of the Department of Defence. This review resulted in the 1992 Program Evaluation Review (PER) report, entitled *Natural Disasters and Civil Defence: Program Evaluation*. (Department of Defence 1992)

The major outcome of these various reviews was that, while NDO would henceforth be responsible for the development and implementation of national civil defence policy and programs:

- no further military appointments were to be made to the organisation, and
- a separate 'peak national body' was to be established for the development of national emergency management policy and programs.

NDO was 'demilitarised', with the appointment of its first 'non-military' Director-General and civilian replacements for other military appointees[21]. In June 1993 the first meeting of the new 'peak national body', the 'National Emergency Management Committee' (NEMC), with Commonwealth and State/Territory representation, was held in Perth WA. The Natural Disasters Organisation (NDO) was formally redesignated 'Emergency Management Australia' (EMA), while the Australian Counter Disaster College (ACDC) at Mount Macedon in Victoria ultimately became the 'Australian Emergency Management Institute' (AEMI).

The years 1990 – 1993 had been rather tumultuous ones for the new EMA/AEMI, and in 1994 two major Commonwealth/State and Territory meetings were convened to address a number of outstanding issues. The new 'National Emergency Management Committee' met in August, and was followed in December by a meeting of Commonwealth/State and Territory ministers for emergency management. The December ministerial meeting resulted in the development of a new *Commonwealth Policy Statement on Emergency Management* (Appendix 3), drawing primarily on the conclusions and outcomes of the 1992 Program Evaluation Review (PER) report. There were further meetings of the National Emergency Management Committee in 1994, 1997 and 1998 to review the developing arrangements, and New Zealand formally joined the NEMC at its 1998 meeting.

It will be appreciated that the events of the early 1990s ushered in a period of quite significant change for the organisation. It was far more than a simple change of organisational titles; underlying that change were some fundamental shifts in the direction of emergency management in Australia which required some re-evaluation of directions and programs.

The Defence White Paper in 1976 had espoused the 'dual capability' concept as the basis for the development of both civil defence and counter disaster capabilities. The concept could be seen to reflect realities of the day, when the responsibility for civil defence and counter disaster activities at State and Territory level had often rested with different departments and agencies and sometimes moved in different directions without much coordination or even contact between the authorities concerned. The new concept was seen as a way of bringing these two 'arms' together and providing an opportunity for more proactive Commonwealth activities to this end. The logical vehicle for this was seen as the civil

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[21] On the creation of the Natural Disasters Organisation in 1974 the post of Director-General had been established and filled as a senior Defence Force appointment, which in some quarters was seen as being an intended preliminary to the establishment of an Australian equivalent to the then newly-created multi-functional post-'9/11' US Department of Homeland Security. The post was not 'civilianised' until 1990. The eventual transfer of NDO's successor, Emergency Management Australia EMA, to the Attorney-General's Department (AGD) did not take place until late 2001, within months of the '9/11' terrorism attacks on the US.

defence structure in which a 'special relationship' had already been forged between the Commonwealth and the States.

By the late 1980s, however, legislation, structures and arrangements in the States and Territories had moved generally in the direction of bringing civil defence and counter disaster provisions under the same 'umbrella', using in many cases the term 'emergency management' to encompass both. The term 'emergency management' was being increasingly used by NDO itself, in both its publications and in its teachings, in just such a sense.

The same State and Territory legislation, structures and arrangements were also embracing the concepts of 'comprehensive and integrated emergency management' and the 'prepared community', again drawing on evolving doctrine being promulgated by NDO, and captured publicly in the small 1989 pamphlet *Commonwealth Counter Disaster Concepts and Principles* (EMA 1989). Whether NDO was fully conscious of the implications of these concepts at the time is a matter for debate, but one major implication was to extend the scope of emergency management far beyond the narrow focus on preparedness and response which had characterised the old civil defence programs. Prevention/mitigation and recovery might well be seen as stages in the 'emergency management cycle', along with preparedness and response, but responsibility for these could be seen to extend far beyond the warrant of those who saw themselves as 'emergency managers' – they raised issues which could only be properly addressed at the 'whole of government' level.

So the evolution of emergency management concepts and practices in Australia, particularly during the period of the 1980s when such events as the extended and extensive droughts of the early years of the decade, the 1983 'Ash Wednesday' fires, the storms and cyclones in New South Wales and Queensland of the mid-decade and the Newcastle earthquake in 1989 had forced most governments in the early 1990s to re-examine their emergency management structures and arrangements[22], created a very different climate for the new EMA to operate in. It was indeed a very different external climate from that in which its predecessor, NDO, had been able to operate.

There had been significant changes in the new EMA's internal climate, as well - the departmental climate in which the organisation found itself. The Department of Defence, as indeed all Commonwealth departments and agencies, was undergoing a period of re-formation and restructuring, adapting to a new public sector environment with its emphasis upon accountability and 'best practice'. NDO had been able to see itself largely as 'with but not of' the Department of Defence. Its relationships with the States and Territories, its functions and indeed the rather special circumstances in which it had been created tended to set it outside the mainstream of Defence activities, and in the 1970s and 1980s both parties had seemed to be reasonably content with the arrangements. While as a result of the 1992 Program Evaluation Report (PER) EMA could be seen as being 'demilitarised', at

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[22] The EMA Handbook *Australian Emergency Management Arrangements* lists the arrangements of the States and Territories. https://knowledge.aidr.org.au/media/1973/manual-2-australian-emergency-management-arrangements.pdf

least in terms of the senior appointments within the Canberra headquarters, in reality it was being drawn much more closely into the Defence structure. It had already been transferred from the responsibility of the Secretary, Department of Defence to that of the Chief of Defence Force.

Establishment of the National Emergency Management Committee, 1993
State and Territory reactions to the PER report had reflected some concern with these developments, and not all of the report's 77 recommendations were accepted (or implemented). The establishment of the National Emergency Management Committee (NEMC) as the 'peak consultative body', and the subsequent development of other mechanisms in support of the Committee such as the second-level National Emergency Management Executive Group, NEMEG and its supporting Advisory Groups, clearly set up new pathways for policy formulation and negotiation between the Commonwealth and the States and Territories in emergency matters generally. EMA would have to be seen to make these mechanisms work and give the entire new structure some credibility if there was not to be a possibility of a recurrence of the strained relations which had existed between the Commonwealth and the States in the 1950s and 1960s.

After its initial baptism in Cyclone TRACY (Darwin, December 1974) and the Tasman Bridge disaster (Hobart, January 1975), NDO undertook the development of a number of national and international emergency response plans, together with coordination and support arrangements with the states and territories, new emergency concepts and principles, and training programs and publications. ACDC introduced a new emergency management curriculum, established a new EM library and developed a series of preparedness guidelines on planning, organisation, training, operations and communications which became the basis for an 'Australian Counter-Disaster Handbook' which was first published in 1980. At the end of 1982 it established a new Course Design and Doctrine Section, and adopted the international 'comprehensive and integrated emergency management doctrine', including its 'all hazards, all agencies, all strategies and prepared community' approach.

During the 1980s, drawing on much relevant Australian and overseas research, NDO/EMA developed and promulgated new concepts in areas such as 'command, control and coordination', PPRR, post-disaster management principles and mass casualty management. In the 1990s, areas addressed included emergency management competency standards, disaster risk management, large-scale evacuation and development of the *Australian Journal of Emergency Management*[23] and the *Australian Emergency Management Manual series*[24]. Such developments continued into the new century. Clearly, the drive behind these early activities was the need for strengthening the national capability for managing potential disasters and their consequences.

However, these were not easy years, for the organisation. It was under constant review within Defence, which was finding difficulty with EMA's 'non-defence' role and increasing demands, and in the mid-1990s a Senate committee was recommending it should be

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[23] https://www.aidr.org.au/programs/australian-journal-of-emergency-management/
[24] https://www.aidr.org.au/programs/handbook-collection/

transferred into the Department of Prime Minister & Cabinet. The States were not particularly happy with the new 'whole-of-governments' line being taken by the new National Emergency Management Committee, jointly chaired by the Departments of Prime Minister & Cabinet and Defence, which was now determining priorities. Further, it was becoming apparent that the vital element in strengthening that national disaster management capability is 'the prepared community', which impinged on State/Territory and local government responsibilities.

The New Emergency Management Australia, 1993
In consequence, the new EMA after its official redesignation on 1 January 1993, had to move rapidly to restructure itself, incorporating into its processes and activities a range of new departmental administrative requirements and practices while at the same time addressing the needs imposed by the establishment of the new national emergency management consultative arrangements.

Some of this process was helped by work done internally following the recommencement of work in later 1992 on the 'Way Ahead' project, which it will be recalled had been suspended with the initiation of the departmental Program Evaluation Review. An Organisational Analysis, undertaken as part of that study with the assistance of an external consultant, can be seen to have assisted the organisation in preparing for the inevitable 'winds of change', even though the implementation of the outcomes of the analysis was swallowed up in the changes imposed by the Program EvaluationReview report itself.

Yet while all this was going on, the organisation was having to deal with its usual policy development and operational tasks.

Civil defence policy development, for example, had languished during the 1970s and 1980s in a period of low civil defence threat. Responsibility for the development of civil defence policy at national level had rested throughout the period in another division of the Department of Defence, the Strategic and International Policy Division, which in 1987, in conjunction with NDO, had published a paper on civil defence planning. At the same time, NDO was in the process of transferring the organisational remnants of the old Fallout Shelter Survey Team - two positions located in Sydney - to its headquarters in Canberra to undertake more detailed analysis of civil defence issues.

Just prior to this, Australia had become a signatory to the 1977 Protocols Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 1949, duly ratifying these protocols in 1991, which had redefined the role and tasks of civil defence. Concurrently, work was being undertaken on planning for the protection of civilian communities adjacent to defence facilities jointly managed by the US and Australia, and in the course of this it became apparent that there were serious deficiencies in the 1987 paper on civil defence. There was an evident need to rethink the whole civil defence issue, and adoption in late 1992 of the PER recommendation that the responsibility for civil defence policy should be undertaken by NDO put the issue squarely on NDO's (and thus EMA's) plate.

This and other ongoing policy issues absorbed a good deal of the new EMA's efforts over the next few years, and required considerable rethinking, but there was no end to the

organisation's 'normal work' - maintaining its full range of State and Territory support programs, continuing its education and training functions, undertaking an expanded range of activities under its IDNDR and Public Awareness Programs and, of course, meeting its operational commitments.

For these were the years of the 'great floods' in Queensland, New South Wales and Victoria of April 1990, of the severe storms in Sydney and Queensland's Cyclone Joy in January 1991, more cyclones in Western Australia in April of that year, floods and storms again in South Australia and New South Wales in 1992, and the major flood in northern Victoria in October 1993. These and other events of the period kept EMA fully involved operationally.

However, EMA's 'main game' had clearly become the task of formalising the new national emergency management consultative arrangements and making them work. This was work of such significance that it is useful to follow the developments in this field.

Opening of the Australian Emergency Management Institute, 1993
The rapid succession of events following the determination of the recommendations of the 1992 report of the Program Evaluation Review has already been sketched out. In terms of the development of the new national emergency management consultative arrangements, the first step was a meeting of senior officials of State and Territory in December 1992 at Mount Macedon, barely a month before the Australian Counter Disaster College was to become the Australian Emergency Management Institute. The meeting was called at the direction of the Minister of Defence, and high-level representatives of State and Territory emergency management organisations attended, accompanied by directors of the State and Territory Emergency Service organisations.

The meeting was briefed on the recommendations and outcomes of the PER report, and examined these in some detail. There was the usual and expected debate over some proposals regarding changes to the existing Commonwealth support programs and their related administrative arrangements. However, for the purposes of this brief history, there were two highly significant outcomes from the meeting.

Firstly, the meeting strongly supported and endorsed by formal resolution the establishment of the proposed National Emergency Management Committee 'with the broad purpose of coordinating Commonwealth and State/Territory interests in national emergency management issues'. It was agreed that the Committee should meet annually.

And secondly, the meeting endorsed the continuation of the 'special relationship' between the Natural Disasters Organisation and the State/Territory Emergency Services, but noted that the formation of the NEMC would establish a parallel relationship between NDO and the State/Territory disaster or emergency management committees.

The evolution of the new National Arrangements, 1994-2000
Once the executive summary of proceedings of this meeting had been circulated and agreed, the establishment of the NEMC proceeded apace, with its inaugural meeting being held in Perth on 3 June 1993. On the day before, directors of the State and Territory emergency service organisations, who were to attend the Committee meeting and who

would in the main become members of the Committee's Executive Group sub-committee (NEMEG), met to consider the agenda and some of the issues to be raised.

The meetings agreed to the Terms of Reference for the Committee and discussed a series of position papers presented by the newly-redesignated EMA. It accepted a program of annual meetings and agreed that, when and where necessary, sub-committees or working groups should be formed to resolve outstanding issues rather than take up the time of Committee representatives seeking assurance, which was given, that such sub-committees would 'become neither too numerous nor unwieldy'.

Particular issues dealt with at this meeting included the desirability of uniformity of State and Territory emergency management and legislation. The NEMC endorsed the principle of uniformity of legislation, particularly in regard to the exercise of emergency powers, and EMA undertook to provide comment subsequently on the suggested features of such legislation. The meeting was also briefed on current civil defence issues as perceived by EMA, and endorsed a number of EMA's proposed initiatives in this field, including the proposed composition and protocols for a new National Civil Defence Working Party. A number of developments in the education and training field, including the priority to be given to the development of national competency standards for emergency managers, were also discussed and endorsed.

The inaugural meeting having been generally regarded as useful and valuable in its role as a consultative and advisory forum on national emergency matters, work began on actions to give effect to the wide range of recommendations and endorsements which came out of the meeting and to lay the ground-work for the second meeting. This was held at Parliament House in Canberra on 17 August 1994.

Again, the majority of agenda items came from EMA initiatives, but this time there was considerably more input from State and Territory representatives picking up issues raised at the first meeting and in subsequent correspondence. The meeting was joined briefly by the then Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Defence, who has special responsibility for emergency management matters. Mr. Bevis re-affirmed the Commonwealth's intentions to assist States and Territories in coping with disasters, and spoke in support of a draft paper on Commonwealth Emergency Management Policy[25] on which EMA had begun work in late 1993 and which by this stage had proceeded through many drafts incorporating the views of the States and Territories.

This paper, representing the first formal statement on such policy and a very considerable development in national emergency management concepts, was further discussed at the meeting, and a revised draft was promised to the States and Territories by October 1994. The meeting also considered and endorsed, subject to further working party consideration of a number of matters raised, a paper 'Civil Defence for Australia', which was the outcome of two meetings of the national civil defence working party formed after the last NEMC meeting. The meeting was also asked to consider the outcomes of the recent Senate

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[25] The finalised version is at Appendix 3.

Committee Report on Disaster Management, and the proposed Commonwealth Government response to the report, and a number of other matters arising from further consideration of the Commonwealth Support Program and its future directions. The third meeting was agreed to be held in September 1995.

Before this, however, in December 1994 a meeting of Commonwealth and State/Territory ministers with emergency management responsibilities, the first such meeting since 1983, was held in Sydney. The ministers had before them the new *Commonwealth Policy Statement on Emergency Management* (Appendix 3) which had resulted from the August 1994 NEMC meeting and the subsequent consultative process, and welcomed the statement which 'for the first time, clearly enunciates the responsibilities accepted by the Commonwealth in this area'. Among other matters considered at the meeting, the ministers endorsed the proposed division of responsibilities and the arrangements needed to give effect to Australia's civil defence commitments under the 1977 Protocols Additional to the Geneva Conventions, and agreed to the formation of a working party to resolve some outstanding issues in the area of civil defence.

There can be little doubt that the senior officials' meeting in December 1992, the first two meetings of the NEMC and the December 1994 ministerial meeting together mark a milestone in the development of national emergency management policy and arrangements. In turn, all these activities can be shown to have their origin in the departmental PER report of 1992, a review regarded with some trepidation by the then NDO and its State and Territory clients but which, in the event, turned out to have major benefits.

For the first time since the establishment of NDO in 1974 there was an agreed national policy in relation to emergency management, and active consideration of long-dormant civil defence issues.

While the 1995 meeting put in place the sub-committee and advisory group structure needed to provide appropriate on-going consideration of issues to be considered at the NEMC's annual meetings, the pattern of increased Commonwealth and State/Territory communication and interaction on emergency management issues of national importance had been well established, shown to be effective and would clearly continue.

Subsequent NEMC meetings, in September 1996, October 1997 and October 1998, cemented the process of continuing consultation and the development of advice on a wide range of national emergency management and civil defence issues. The National Emergency Management Executive Group and a number of advisory groups providing support to the NEMC met regularly and acted both as mechanisms for giving effect to NEMC considerations and as forums for the early consultative consideration of matters which would arise at NEMC level.

Over these years, matters taken to NEMC level included research issues, extensive reports from advisory groups on a number of matters, the development of a national disaster mitigation strategy, coordination of recovery activities, emergency call-taking, national guidelines for multi-agency incident management, a national civil defence policy paper, the

development of arrangements for co-operation in emergency management between Australia and New Zealand, progress in the integration of the new Australia/New Zealand risk management standard principles and process into Australian emergency risk management competency standards and practices, including the development of emergency risk management guidelines, revisions to a number of national response management plans, curriculum development, community awareness programs, interstate disaster assistance arrangements, remote sensing, urban flood mitigation and the review of the membership of the NEMC itself. Across issues such as these, the NEMC has been able to demonstrate its capacity for establishing goals and developing methodologies long sought after in the national emergency management community.

The Director of the New Zealand Ministry of Civil Defence attended the October 1997 NEMC meeting, which noted progress on the development of the proposed co-operative arrangements with New Zealand, and the NEMC invited a New Zealand representative to attend its subsequent annual meetings with observer status. It is pleasing to report that this agreement was signed in 1998 and is now in force. In addition to its well-established links with Papua New Guinea and the South-West Pacific (the latter largely through its work with the IDNDR program), EMA could properly claim to have developed a full regional presence. This was reinforced by the findings of the Australian National Audit Office report (Auditor General 2000) which also reaffirmed the *Commonwealth Policy Statement on Emergency Management* (Appendix 3).

Similarly, the role of EMA, together with the significant policy and arrangements changes made in this 'revolutionary' decade, was seen as setting a sound foundation for Australia's emergency management capability and capacity for the new millennium.

The next section considers the effectiveness of these changes in the following decades.

Into the New Century, 2001-2015

Transfer of the EMA to Attorney General's Department, 2001
When it might have been thought that the changes of the previous decade had set the scene for a period of leisurely consolidation and review of Australia's emergency management sector, events conspired to cause the following years to be just as turbulent. This section follows those events and their consequences.

September 11th 2001 (the '9/11 event' the terrorist attack on the New York Trade Centre) ushered in some major changes in the national emergency management environment. The national 'public safety' focus shifted from natural disasters and general community safety risk management concerns to issues of national security and counter-terrorism.

In late 2001, within months of the '9/11' event in the USA, EMA was transferred from the Department of Defence into the Attorney General's Department (AGD). The national responsibility for emergency management was shared between two separate divisions within that department - the National Security Resilience Policy Division, which had responsibility for 'policy, legislation, advice and programs related to developing resilience to all hazards … and emergency management', and the Emergency Management Australia

Division primarily responsible for 'coordination of Australia's response to crises, including natural disasters …'.

COAG Review of National Arrangements, 2002
Australia benefited from work being done overseas on disaster risk reduction, for example, the *Hyogo Framework for Action 2005* (United Nations 2005) and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Reduction 2015), resulting in increased national effort put into programs.

The underlying theme of those years, in its focus on the safety and preservation of the lives and property of Australians, was the critical need for 'the prepared community'.

Over the last 15 years there have been a number of major emergencies at state/territory level in Australia, affecting most states and territories and resulting in a number of major inquiries, including a Royal Commission and formal Commissions of Inquiry[26]. In most cases, these have focussed primarily on issues of response and relief and have been undertaken in accordance with terms of reference set by governments in response to public expressions of concern. In a number of such cases, governments as the commissioning authorities have adopted all or at least the majority of their recommendations[27].

There has been no recent formal national survey of State and Territory emergency management legislation and arrangements, although in 2002 a national review did include a brief survey of the extent to which the States and Territories had adopted the 'list of desirable features' in legislation as recommended by the NEMC in 1993. It found that by that time a considerable degree of commonality in the emergency management legislation had developed in all States and Territories excepting WA, which did not introduce emergency management legislation until 2005.

In 2002, and clearly reflecting concerns over the recent '9/11' event, the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) commissioned a major national review by the NEMC of state/territory emergency management arrangements and programs. It recommended the development of a number of programs designed to 'achieve safer, more sustainable communities, and reduce risk, damage and loss', and proposed 'a fundamental shift in focus towards cost-effective, evidence-based disaster mitigation'.

The 2002 report's recommendations were approved in principle by COAG in December 2003. Today, its implementation rests with COAG's Law, Crime and Community Safety Council which is supported by the Australia-New Zealand Emergency Management Committee (ANZEMC), but no progress reports appear to have been produced to date.

National Strategy for Disaster Resilience (NSDR), 2011
In late 2009 COAG, on the recommendation of the then NEMC, determined that the future direction of emergency management should be based on achieving community and

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[26] Including the Victorian Bushfire Royal Commission 2009, Tasmanian Bushfires Inquiry Report, 2013; Margaret River Bushfire Inquiry 2012; North East Victoria Flood Review, 2012; Queensland Floods Commission of Inquiry, 2012; Heatwave Management: Reducing the Risk to Public Health-Victorian Auditor-General's Report, 2014; Hazelwood Mine Fire Inquiry Report 2015/2016, December 2015.
[27] See (Cole et al 2017)

organisational resilience, and in early 2011 the '*National Strategy for Disaster Resilience: Building Our Nation's Resilience to Disasters*' (NSDR) was released (COAG 2011). The Strategy features 'Shared responsibility'[28] (McLennan 2014), a 'Risk Approach' and 'Community Resilience'.

National Emergency Risk Assessment Guidelines (NERAG), 2010-2012
The Resilience Strategy's '*National Disaster Resilience Framework*' (also released in early 2011) indicated that eight separate 'action plans' were to be developed to support the Strategy. Most activity at national level focussed on the implementation of that strategy and on the further development of the 2010 National Risk Assessment Framework that have been developed to produce the National Emergency Risk Assessment Guidelines (NERAG) Handbook (AIDR 2015). Subsequently, various government agencies charged separately with their development made a number of policy statements and proposals, but there has been little in the way of specific plans and programs signed off by the new ANZEMC and funded by governments.

Where are we now? 2015
My contention is that, particularly in comparison with a good deal that is going on in the 'emergency management space' overseas, Australia is dragging its feet concerning our primary concern, the safety of our communities.

In the states and territories
The 2002 NEMC COAG review, subsequently endorsed by COAG, had in a separate review found a considerable degree of commonality in State/Territory emergency management legislation and arrangements at that time and conformity to the 'list of desirable features' agreed by NEMC in 1993. It has already been noted that following recent major events and post-event commissions and inquiries quite significant changes in legislative and administrative arrangements have occurred in a number of states and territories, but there has been no recent formal survey of those arrangements.

In conjunction with work I've been doing with Monash University, I undertook a replication of that 2002 survey (unpublished), and preliminary findings indicate there has recently been an increasing differentiation in emergency management arrangements and plans between the States and Territories. This might be no 'bad thing', but it does certainly raise issues of state/state interoperability and of what might happen if an event such as Cyclone TRACY - which required a considerable multi-state effort and national coordination in both the response and relief/rehabilitation phases, were to occur.

There also appears to have been an increasing complexity of those arrangements and in some cases a remarkable increase in size of the pieces of legislation themselves. Additionally, there is some evidence that giving priority to getting 'command and control' and administrative issues at state/territory and regional levels sorted out has led to giving a lower priority to arrangements and planning at local government and community levels.

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[28] Progress toward Shared responsibility was later reviewed by RMIT researchers (Mclennan et al, 2014) and (Goode et al 2015)

In view of the current diversity in state/territory legislation and plans, there is clearly a need for an early review of the viability of existing federal arrangements for managing a major national emergency, such as those currently embodied in the *National Catastrophic Natural Disaster Plan* (NATCATDISPLAN) (EMA 2010). But there is also a need for urgent reconsideration of a number of existing policies, programs and issues which have been left on the 'backburner' for far too long. For example:

- Particularly in the light of current international understandings of the key role of disaster risk reduction in reducing the risk to communities, it is clear that responsibility for community safety at any level of government is a 'whole-of-government responsibility'. As suggested earlier by the Senate Committee and the Commonwealth Auditor-General, the responsibility for such multi-agency policies and programs should perhaps more properly be vested in the department of the Prime Minister rather than that of the Attorney-General.

- In 1992 the National Emergency Management Committee agreed to the concept of 'comprehensive and integrated emergency management (CIEM)', which included a revision of the late-1980s US State Governors report formulation of MPRR to PPRR (which changed the original US M = 'mitigation' to P = 'prevention' and in the process overlooked the US recognition that the US P = 'preparedness for response, makes it clear that their original M was intended to mean 'prevention and mitigation – a somewhat broader risk management approach than our initial P = prevention! It is clear, however, that even PPRR itself is not the sole concern of the 'emergency manager' or of a Department of Police and Emergency Services (or equivalent) to which it is usually allocated. In 1993 NEMC also proposed a 'list of desirable features' in state and territory emergency management legislation, which had been at least partially achieved by 2002, but as noted above there has been no recent formal survey, with considerable evidence of an increasing complexity and diversity.

Closure of AEMI
This era ended with the closure of Australian Emergency Management Institute in 2015.

The next section provides a brief post-script covering the period 2016-2019.

Post Script, 2016-2019

I chose to close my chronological study at 2015 for a number of reasons. The closure of the Australian Emergency Management Institute in that year represented a significant personal and professional milestone, the consequences of which have still not completely played out. This was a personal, professional and national disaster, bringing to an end a long history of ever-increasing improvement in national capacity and capability in the Australian emergency management sector. 2015 was also the year that I began to scale back my own engagement with and contribution to emergency management, the year when I commenced my MPhil research.

Nevertheless, I am aware that between 2015 and 2019 there have been some significant initiatives, which have given me some hope that 'all is not lost'. Those initiatives include:

- The creation within Emergency Management Australia of the National Disaster Resilience Task Force[29]. Headed by the former Director General of EMA, this body carries the Federal Government's mandate (in company with the States and Territories) to pursue, for the first time, national disaster risk reduction and mitigation initiatives.
- The establishment of the Australian Institute for Disaster Resilience, who has responsibility for the definition and updating of EM doctrine – taking responsibility for many of the 'information' roles lost at the demise of AEMI.
- The imminent hosting in Australia by the Federal Government of the Asia Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (AMCDRR) for the first time in 2020, anticipating a focus on the Pacific and the work of Australia's recently announced National Resilience Taskforce. This high-profile engagement with the international EM community will constitute a high-profile watershed in Australia's EM journey of engagement with the international humanitarian sector.
- In a nice irony, from its earliest manifestation within the Department of Home Affairs, the national emergency management authority is now a Division of the 'new' Department of Homeland Security. *"Plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose!"*
- A recognition at all levels that emergency management is a coordinated process of supporting affected communities in the reconstruction of communities' environment (social, natural, built and economic) and the development and restoration of community resilience and wellbeing - the prepared community as demonstrated in Emergency Management Victoria's Community Resilience Framework for Emergency Management[30] and Victorian State Emergency Service's Community Resilience Strategy[31].
- Establishment of the Bushfire and Natural Hazards Cooperative Research Centre to replace the previous Bushfire Cooperative Research Centre.
- The outputs of the reviews of Black Saturday (2009) and severe floods (2009-10) LED TO Victoria's Emergency Management reform, including the creation of Emergency Management Victoria (EMV)[32] and the Inspector General for Emergency Management (IGEM)[33], institutions which have formed the models for similar bodies in other States.
- From 2019, Australia and other signatories to the Sendai Framework (United Nations 2015) will be required to report on progress towards achieving the Framework's goals.
- There are small but increasing signs of the growth of professionalisation of the emergency management sector.

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[29] https://www.governmentnews.com.au/new-body-to-coordinate-natural-disaster-recovery/
[30] https://www.emv.vic.gov.au/CommunityResilienceFramework
[31] https://www.ses.vic.gov.au/documents/112015/128034/VICSES+-+Community+Resilience+Strategy+2016-2019-pdf+-print+friendly+version+-+2MB-/689981bc-4125-4ed7-9f35-c25b8743e451 I had some oversight of this document as it was finalised towards the end of my tenure as a member of the VICSES Board.
[32] https://www.emv.vic.gov.au/
[33] https://www.igem.vic.gov.au/

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION

My autoethnographic research has taken me on the journey from Civil Defence to modern-day emergency management in Australia over an eighty-year period. This period has seen some outstanding changes in both capacity and capability, not to mention the numerous changes in government involvement, at all levels, particularly in the areas of legislation and doctrine.

Probably the most significant aspects of this journey can be considered in four main areas:

- The long journey - resolving the responsibilities of the various levels of government,
- The adoption of disaster risk reduction and mitigation as major parts of EM,
- The recognition that we have much to learn from and contribute to disaster management in the international arena, particularly in the Pacific, and
- The importance of community involvement, engagement and, above all empowerment in improving the resilience of Australians in the face of disaster.

This chapter will draw together the threads of those influences and what they mean for the future of EM in Australia.

The Long Journey - Resolving the Responsibilities of The Various Levels of Government

There are still some around who can recall the heady days in 1974, when the new NDO, with some tenuous links with the former Commonwealth and State civil defence organisations, set itself up with a scrappy organisation diagram and a none-too-clear functional statement on the sixth floor of its new accommodation in Northbourne House.

Those who do will recall late night meetings to map out the organisation's directions, train volunteers and argue through many and varied problems. By day, an inexhaustible array of issues had to be dealt with, not the least being forging the necessary management, communications and liaison connections with NDO's Defence masters on the one hand and its somewhat suspicious State and Territory clients on the other.

And over the top of all this, of course, came Cyclone Tracy, which can in every respect be regarded as the organisation's baptism of fire. Much was learnt from and during Tracy, many assumptions were proven misleading or even false, and there was an inevitable legacy of rethinking, redesign and restructuring. On most counts, NDO can claim to have acquitted itself well, and it entered 1975 with some degree of confidence that it could face the worst that man or nature could offer.

Yet in the uncertain and often turbulent waters of Commonwealth-State relationships there were hidden reefs. In the area of civil defence, some of these were laid down in the acrimonious debates of the 1950s and 1960s; in the area of emergency management, as it came increasingly to be called, many of the reefs were not simply hidden but actually

uncharted - it was a completely new area for Commonwealth-State relations, and few bearings were available. Many issues had to be dealt with on the basis of first principles, with few precedents, not the least of which were the respective financial responsibilities. There were few other agencies at Commonwealth level which had to develop the kind of relationships which NDO had to build up with its State and Territory clients, and on occasion the Department of Defence itself seemed to be somewhat unsure as to how the new organisation fitted in to its own pattern of relationships with the States and Territories. And NDO's clients - were they State and Territory governments, or simply the particular organisations within those States and Territories with whom NDO had a 'special relationship'?

Over time, and in particular since the watershed Program Evaluation Review report in 1992, most of these problems have been resolved, but not without some occasional heartburning and a great deal of collaborative effort between NDO/EMA and the States and Territories. With its activities now firmly based in a definitive Commonwealth Policy Statement on Emergency Management which had been welcomed by all States and Territories at ministerial level, with clear guidance in the field of civil defence, with a strong regional presence (its work in IDNDR being recognised by a prestigious international Sasakawa Award in 1998), with a new relationship forged with New Zealand and with a proven track record in providing Commonwealth assistance both nationally and internationally the latter in co-operation with AusAid, EMA could look forward with greater confidence to the future.

More particularly, it can surely claim credit for having lifted the Commonwealth focus from its former narrow approach to disaster preparedness and response to its current broader approach to 'comprehensive and integrated emergency management' and 'the prepared community'.

These achievements provided a solid basis for EMA's future activities, and some of the challenges in that future have already been discerned.

Just as the older concepts underlying civil defence preparedness have been superseded by the new approaches to emergency management, emergency management itself is increasingly being seen as a sub-set of a broader issue - that of 'civil protection', 'public safety' or 'community safety', to use only some of the terms in increasing international and national usage. There are many more players in this broader field than emergency managers have become accustomed to deal with, and ultimately this function, however it may be called, can be seen as a responsibility of governments, not just of those who would regard themselves as the 'managers of emergencies'.

There are parallels here in the area of risk management, the new principles and processes of which are being absorbed progressively into emergency management policy and practice both in Australia and abroad. Risk management can no longer be regarded as the sole responsibility of those who wear the organisational title of 'risk manager'; the management of organisational risk and of the impacts on the community which might result from neglect or failure to deal effectively with such risks is now seen to be the responsibility of the whole organisation and its senior management. The difference here between organisational risk

management and community emergency risk management is that the 'stakeholders', indeed the 'shareholders', in community emergency risk management are all the members of the community itself. In this sense, governments represent the ultimate managers of community emergency risk management, and bear a management's responsibility to its 'stakeholders' and 'shareholders'.

Taking national emergency management into the 21st Century, given such new understandings and influences, undoubtedly presented EMA with challenges. The issues raised, once again, are mostly ones which must be resolved consultatively and collaboratively between the Commonwealth and the States and Territories, working within the realities of our federal arrangements. However, the events of the last 40 years, culminating in the significant consolidations and developments achieved over the last five years in particular, demonstrate that there should be continuing confidence in EMA and the sector's ability to work through these challenges.

Where Should Commonwealth Responsibility for Civil Protection Rest?
Civil Protection and National Defence
The Scandinavian 'fourth arm' concept of civil defence was widely accepted in the Western world after World War II, seeing civil defence as capable of making a direct contribution to defence capability as the 'fourth arm' of total national defence, in association with military, economic and psychological defence. With a role for civil defence in the national administrative arrangements in time of defence emergency or war, there was logic in making civil defence a direct Defence responsibility, as was the case in the US, Canada and many European countries.

In the UK, however, civil defence has always been a Home Office responsibility, although civil defence measures have been subject to Defence appreciations and funding. This was the model adopted in Australia after World War II, with the Department of the Interior having civil defence responsibilities similar to those of the Home Office until that Department was abolished in 1972 and the function was transferred to the Department of Defence.

However, Australia's national administrative arrangements in time of defence emergency or war, which have been assumed to include civil defence, have been strongly criticised over the years:

- In 1982, the Defence Review Committee set up at the direction of the Prime Minister drew attention to the absence of effective planning and coordination in the area and questioned whether Defence was the appropriate body to have that responsibility, given the need to involve other Commonwealth departments and agencies as well as the States and Territories (Defence Review Committee 1982).
- Similar criticisms were voiced by advisors such as Paul Dibb in 1986 (Dibb P. 1986) and by parliamentary committees such as the Joint Committee on Defence, Foreign Affairs and Trade in 1987(Joint Committee Defence, Foreign Affairs and Trade 1987).
- A special adviser to the Minister of Defence, Alan Wrigley, in a major report published in 1990, summarised the criticisms and the various proposals for reform put forward in such reports but noted 'These proposals ... have come to naught' (Wrigley, 1990).

Wrigley concluded that, given the prominence of inter-government and inter-departmental issues in planning for national administration in the event of defence emergency and war, responsibility for coordinating such planning should be placed within the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (Wrigley, 1990).

Curiously, such criticisms echo the response of Prime Minister Menzies in November 1952 to a protest by the then Minister for the Interior, the Hon. W. S. Kent Hughes, in relation to his civil defence responsibilities, that he 'would prefer not to have the responsibility for administering a Department which controls neither its own appreciation of the situation nor the sum of money to be expended in respect of its organisation'. The Prime Minister replied in part, having referred to committees then considering medical planning for a war situation:

If the view were accepted that all such committees should function under the Department of Defence, it would mean that the Department of Defence in wartime would carry a weight of administrative responsibility which would be completely inconsistent with efficiency ... I do not think that the Department of Defence can itself be administratively responsible for every activity related to war preparations and the conduct of the war (Jones, 1995).

There is some irony, then, in the transfer of the Commonwealth Directorate of Civil Defence to the Department of Defence in 1972 and the subsequent 'absorption' of the responsibilities of that Directorate into the Natural Disasters Organisation when the latter was created within the Department of Defence in 1974. The irony deepens when it is recognised that, with its ratification of the 1977 Protocols Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 1949, Australia now subscribes to a definition of civil defence and civil defence functions which clearly rejects any direct civil defence/national defence nexus.

There is evidence that the implications of the situation have been acknowledged even within the Department of Defence, although not without some ambiguity. An extensive departmental Program Evaluation Review (PER) in 1991/92 recommended that:

The Government decide whether civil defence should remain closely identified with the military function, whether it is appropriate that the Minister for Defence retain Cabinet responsibility for civil defence and whether the function should remain within the Defence portfolio' (emphasis added) (Department of Defence, 1992)

Having recognised that responsibility for civil defence policy within the department seemed to be split between the central policy division and NDO, it also recommended:

Responsibility for civil defence policy be allocated to NDO so that one agency has complete authority for the function. (Department of Defence, 1992)

It is not known whether the matter of the ministerial allocation of the civil defence responsibility at Commonwealth level has subsequently been debated by Cabinet. However, later in 1992, by an administrative decision, the Department allocated the full responsibility for civil defence policy to NDO in the process of redesignating the organisation as 'Emergency Management Australia'. This allowed the Department to respond to a recommendation in the 1994 report on 'Disaster Management' by the Senate Standing

Committee on Industry, Science, Technology, Transport, Communications and Infrastructure, a report which within its terms of reference gave little direct regard to civil defence issues, that 'Because the Commonwealth is required to put in place effective civil defence planning the Committee recommends that this responsibility be given to EMA' (Senate Standing Committee, 1994) such action had already been taken.

At the practical level, a series of the KANGAROO exercises conducted by the Australian Defence Force in north-west Australia in the 1980s and early 1990s highlighted the need to address public administration aspects of the Commonwealth/State relationship in defence emergencies and war, including responsibilities for civil protection in the context of the 1977 Protocols Additional. Again, it is not known whether the problems revealed during these exercises in this regard have been effectively resolved.

Overall, the Commonwealth's record in its treatment of issues of the national administrative arrangements in time of defence emergencies and war, including the issue of civil protection, can be shown to be fairly dismal. That the issues are complex is not doubted; whether the issues can be satisfactorily addressed while the responsibility for addressing them appears to rest primarily with the Department of Defence must also be doubted - as clearly recognised by Prime Minister Menzies in 1952, when pressures to resolve them were much greater.

Civil Protection and Emergency Management
The Commonwealth's exclusive defence power, which has to date been assumed to extend to civil defence within the limits of the Commonwealth/State arrangements, is explicit by virtue of the Constitution [s. 51. (vi.)]. In contrast, the Commonwealth has no specific responsibility for the protection and preservation of civilian life and property in general, or in regard to emergencies and disasters in particular. That responsibility rests with the States and (where so legislated) the Territories, and is discharged through a variety of legislative arrangements dealing with public safety (law and order, health, fire services, etc.). If an emergency was serious enough, however, there are a number of justifications for Commonwealth involvement:

First and most obviously, Commonwealth assistance is likely to be necessary if significant funding is required, because the Commonwealth imposes most taxes and therefore is most likely to be able to meet such a need. Commonwealth involvement also is likely to be necessary if an emergency crosses State or Territory boundaries; when the armed services are required to assist; or when the emergency is such that it is perceived, politically, to be 'national' in character[34].

The Commonwealth's financial arrangements for post-event support to the States and Territories are embodied in the Natural Disaster Relief Arrangements (AIDR 2014), administered by the Department of Finance. These arrangements are limited to personal hardship and infrastructure replacement grants in a specified range of natural disaster

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[34] Prof. Cheryl Saunders, Director, Centre for Comparative Constitutional Studies, Law School, Melbourne University and author of *The Australian Constitution* 1997, in personal correspondence with the author dated 27 April 1998.

events and are 'subject to certain conditions' including being assessed in relation to the extent to which State and local governments have taken prior mitigatory action.

The Commonwealth's arrangements for the physical support of the States and Territories in dealing with emergencies and disasters, both in assisting in the development and maintenance of their emergency management capabilities, including education and training and in providing physical support during and after major events, are coordinated through Emergency Management Australia. As has been noted, these arrangements have grown out of the earlier civil defence organisation at Commonwealth level, although the provision of support to the States and Territories for the development and maintenance of their emergency management capability contrasts with the situation in 1967 where the States 'walked away' from the national civil defence arrangements when the Commonwealth refused similar support.

But apart from that physical support which is provided by elements of the Australian Defence Force under the 'Defence Aid to the Civil Community' (DACC) arrangements, the Department of Defence's formal involvement in peacetime civil protection is limited to the allocation of the portfolio to the Minister.

The Department's own argument in its 1983 paper on 'Civil Defence Policy and Planning' that civil defence in the post-Protocols context could no longer be considered a matter of exclusive Defence concern if, indeed, it ever could be holds even more strongly in regard to the protection and preservation of civilian life and property in situations short of defence emergencies and war.

It should be no surprise, therefore, that the Department of Defence has found the whole civil defence/emergency management area problematic and difficult to administer, particularly in the post-Protocols environment.

This has been evident at the highest levels of management within the department. When NDO was established in 1974, the appointment of Director-General was filled by a serving military officer in the rank of major-general, and the justification for this was the new government's expressed desire, in the post-Vietnam period, to see the Defence Force more involved in community-support activities (Beazley, 1983). The Minister for Defence at the time insisted that the appointment would remain outside the normal military 'chain of command' and the organisation itself was lodged within the Secretary's Branch of the Department. However, in 1989 a departmental re-organisation resulted in the downgrading of the military position and the relocation of the organisation within the military 'chain of command' under the Vice Chief of Defence Force; subsequently, the position was 'civilianised' and the organisation has slipped further down the Defence 'tree', no longer being even a sub-program.

The organisation has been subject to continuous and intensive scrutiny. Since its earliest days, both its Canberra headquarters but more particularly its 'teaching arm', AEMI at Mount Macedon, have been subject to any number of internal reviews including the extensive Program Evaluation Review referred to earlier. The problem seems to be that the organisation is not seen as Defence 'core business'.

The recent disposal of the Mount Macedon property and relocation of AEMI 'elsewhere' is simply the most recent expression of this long-standing Defence attitude, almost in defiance of the 1994 recommendation of the Senate Committee referred to earlier that:

The Committee recommends that the Commonwealth Government make a clear commitment to the retention of AEMI at Mount Macedon. The Committee regards the location of the Institute outside Canberra as an advantage and cautions against calls for its relocation on the basis of cost-cutting. (Senate Standing Committee 1994)

Indeed, it was the same Senate Committee report which found cause to make recommendation that the organisation be removed from the Department of Defence, in terms and for reasons remarkably similar to those used earlier by Wrigley in 1990 and by the department's own Program Evaluation Review in 1992:

The Committee recommends that EMA be removed from the Defence portfolio and that it be placed administratively within the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet. The Committee further recommends that EMA be set up as an independent body with its own legislation and funding through a separate budget program. (Senate Standing Committee 1994)

In the absence of a Commonwealth department with a role and responsibilities similar to those of the old Department of the Interior, and given the inter-governmental and inter-departmental nature of the national administrative arrangements which are necessary to ensure public safety both in times of defence emergency and war and in times of emergencies and disasters, it is difficult to look beyond the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet as a future 'home' for EMA with its civil defence and emergency management responsibilities.

In any case, the evidence supports a contention that only by moving EMA out of the Department of Defence could there be a possibility of ending fifty years of Commonwealth fumbling in the whole area of civil protection. As noted in the Post Script, at the end of my MPhil studies, EMA has been split into two elements: one with similar operational responsibilities for response; and the second, the new National Disaster Resilience Task Force with a focus on mitigation – and both moved to the Department of Home Affairs.

Disaster Risk Reduction/Mitigation

In 2002, COAG recommended 'a fundamental shift in focus towards cost-effective, evidence-based disaster mitigation', yet Victoria's '*Emergency Management Strategic Action Plan 2015-2018*' still seems to be much more concerned with <u>managing disasters and their consequences</u> than with <u>reducing the risk of disasters occurring</u>. Given the almost equal emphasis being given internationally to both disaster risk reduction and disaster management, this is clearly a matter for concern in a 'climate-changing world'.

Emergency Risk Management concept and process.
In November 1995 Standards Australia and Standards New Zealand collaborated in publishing a new *Australian/New Zealand Standard, AS/NZS 4360 – Risk Management*. This new standard was recognised in Australia as having application to the management of the

risk of emergencies, and in 2000 a new '*Emergency Risk Management – Applications Guide'* was produced by Emergency Management Australia for use in the identification, assessment, evaluation and treatment of community safety risk (EMA 2004).

Interestingly, the precursor to such an arrangement was trialled during a Flood Risk Study undertaken in 1997 on behalf of the Queensland Government in Murweh Shire, following major flood events in the towns of Charleville and Augathella. Using a model drawn from AS/NZS 4360:1995 and an early draft version of EMA's Emergency Risk Management – Applications Guide, Murweh Shire Council set up Community Reference Groups to develop input into a flood risk reduction intervention plan involving both risk reduction and emergency management elements. Council supervised the consultative process and then made appropriate recommendations to the State Government[35]. It is of interest to note that following severe flooding in the same Queensland area some years later a number of the recommendations resulting from the 1997 trial have now been adopted[36].

A basis for a new approach to the management of community safety risk
After the 1983 'Ash Wednesday' bushfires and drawing upon an extensive series of reviews and public consultations, Victoria established an emergency management system which has been demonstrated to be effective in coordinating the inter-agency response to large-scale events. This thesis suggests, however, that particularly at community level the system has failed to accommodate fully the concept of 'a comprehensive and integrated approach' to emergency management on which the 1986 legislation was clearly based. In particular it has failed to provide effectively for the necessary integration of disaster risk reduction and disaster/emergency management policies and programs. This belief is supported by the range of criticisms in the post-Black Saturday inquiries.

A number of practical models have been developed in international and Pacific regional practice to integrate disaster risk reduction and disaster/emergency management activities at national level. One of the most useful, and one most recently having been applied in Australia's regional area of interest in the Cook Islands, is the following (NDRMA 2009):

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[35] See The Geo-Eng Group (1998), Flood Risk Study for Murweh Shire - Final Report, Queensland Department of Emergency Services, Brisbane (Report 1939/50052/182 of 7 May 1998).
[36] Subsequently EMA produced a supporting publication 'Implementing Emergency Risk Management – A facilitator's guide to working with committees and communities' (Manual 6 in the Australian Emergency Manuals Series). As the opening section makes clear, however, the guide is primarily concerned with the facilitation of community consultation processes in support of ERM.
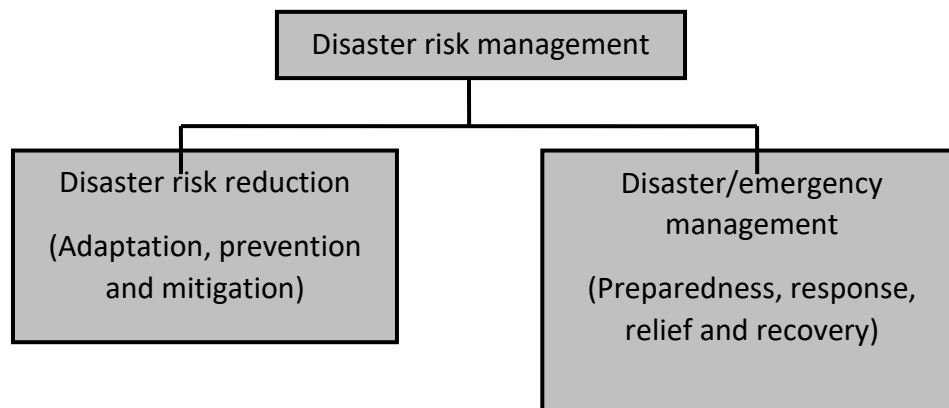
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│ Disaster risk   │   │ Disaster/emergency│
│ reduction       │   │ management        │
│                 │   │                   │
│ (Adaptation,    │   │ (Preparedness,    │
│ prevention      │   │ response,         │
│ and mitigation) │   │ relief and        │
│                 │   │ recovery)         │
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Figure 1 A generalised disaster risk management organisational model

a. *Disaster risk management* refers to 'all forms of activities, including structural and non-structural measures, to avoid (prevention) or to limit (mitigation and preparedness)' risks so as to 'lessen the impacts of natural hazards and related environmental and technological disasters'.

b. *Disaster risk reduction* refers to 'minimizing vulnerabilities and disaster risks … (to lessen) the adverse impacts of hazards within the broad context of sustainable development'.

c. *Disaster management* (also known as '*emergency management*') refers to 'the organization and management of resources and responsibilities for dealing with all aspects of emergencies/disasters, in particular preparedness, response and (relief/rehabilitation)'.

Applying the Model in Australia

Translating the model to a generalised Australian public administration structure at State/Territory and local government levels is relatively easy in relation to the two lower levels in Figure 1 above:

- The Disaster risk reduction level clearly would comprise officials concerned with such functions as land use management and zoning, building codes and regulations, general safety issues (including public education and information), environmental health and the like.
- The Disaster/emergency management level would comprise officials with responsibility for preparedness, response, relief and recovery issues, dealing with local police, fire, ambulance, volunteer emergency service agencies and representatives of non-government agencies.

There is a degree of overlap between the two groups - some officials whose primary responsibilities may be seen to lie in *disaster risk reduction* may have specific roles in preparedness and/or response/relief, safety and environmental health officials, for example, while some of the *disaster/emergency management* group can have clear risk reduction roles e.g. police and fire authorities in undertaking community safety risk reduction activities. This helps to point up the need for mechanisms which can coordinate policy formulation and program development between the two.

However, it is in the model's upper level, that of *disaster risk management*, that we find some difficulty in alignment with the Australian public administration structure. It is clear that it assumes the existence of a policy and senior management level of management to ensure the necessary coordination of risk reduction and disaster management programs - and it would appear that such a level does not commonly exist in Australian practice.

The justification for the establishment of such a *disaster risk management* coordination mechanism at State/Territory and local government level in Australia lies in the Australian/New Zealand risk management Standard AS/NZS 4360 itself (Standards Association of Australia 1999), and the need for such a mechanism has already been amply demonstrated in Australian commercial practice. A pertinent example lies in the National Australia Bank's handling of its 2004 foreign currency transactions crisis, which reinforced the Standard's own dictum that within any organisation the responsibility for risk management policy and oversight lies at the highest level of administration and must be recognised as 'an integral part of good management practice' (Dellaportas S. et al 2007). The NAB Board, and not just the appointed risk managers within the organisation, had to accept responsibility for the bank's failure to manage the organisation's risks.

On the same principle, State/Territory governments and, more particularly, local/municipal councils, must ultimately accept responsibility for the effective management of risks to community safety. In the case of a local/municipal council, this means that it is council itself which bears responsibility for community safety policy within guidelines determined by the appropriate State/Territory government and for oversight of the community safety risk management process.

Once an appropriate community safety risk management program and process can be established, that principle requires that some organ of council itself, and not just the CEO or other officer, coordinates that process on behalf of the community the council represents. This organ - whether council itself or some council committee chaired by a councillor with appropriate community and expert officer representation - is needed to perform the *disaster risk management* function in ensuring the oversight and coordination of the *disaster risk reduction* and *disaster/emergency management* activities indicated in Figure 1 above.

Establishing a new community safety risk management program
The national guidelines on 'emergency risk management' - *EMA's 'Emergency Risk Management – Applications Guide'* (Manual 5 in the Australian Emergency Manuals Series) - had overlooked or ignored some key principles and elements of AS/NZS 4360 in their application to risk management at community level. One major omission from that publication was any detailed discussion of how an emergency risk management program should be developed and implemented - the publication was focussed almost entirely on the process of 'emergency risk management' within such a program.

A prerequisite for establishing a new and effective community safety risk management program is the development of 'a guide to developing, establishing and sustaining a community safety risk management program' similar to that contained in the 'Embedding

Risk Management' section in AS/NZS 4360:2004. Such a guide would need to be developed consultatively, as indeed is the process for the development of Australian Standards themselves; it is clearly not for this Submission to offer advice in isolation.

However, evidence that it <u>can</u> be done is provided in *Steps In Developing And Implementing A National Comprehensive Hazard And Risk Management Program*, (SOPAC 2005) which was developed consultatively as a basis for implementing at national level the Pacific Forum-endorsed 'Disaster Risk Reduction and Disaster Management: A Framework for Action 2005-2015'.

Once the <u>program</u> has been designed and is ready for implementation, there is a need to adapt the basic AS/NZS 4360 risk management <u>process</u> model for community application, and consider the involvement of municipal government and the community in that process.

Subsequently, between 2000 and 2006 a strengthened but simplified emergency risk management methodology was developed and trialled satisfactorily in a number of nations in the Pacific. This methodology is now available for use, having indeed been strengthened by the fact that the most recent revision of the Australian/New Zealand risk management standard (Australian/New Zealand Standard 2009) has now been adopted as the basis for the new international risk management standard ISO 31000:2009.

So Australia has already developed a methodology for ensuring effective community engagement in a local emergency risk management process. And it also has potential application internationally, in that following the 2nd World Conference on Disaster Reduction held in 2005 in Japan there is a world-wide demand for such an integrated disaster risk reduction and disaster management methodology. The recent National Disaster Resilience Task Force and its focus on mitigation provides direction for the future.

International Engagement

Over the last quarter of the 20th century, international research in fields such as sociology, psychology and organisational behaviour shed much new light on the environments in which emergency managers operate, and in the area of risk management generally Australia led the way in helping to set an international standard for the management of organisational risk (ISO 31000:2009 – Risk management).

Overseas there was increasing recognition of the need for policies and programs for disaster risk reduction. The *Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction* was developed by the 3rd UN Conference on World Disaster Risk Reduction held in Sendai, Japan (and successor to the 1994 Yokohama and 2005 Hyogo conferences), with the goal being to '*prevent new and reduce existing disaster risk … to prevent and reduce hazard exposure and vulnerability to disaster, increase preparedness for response and recovery, and thus strengthen resilience*' It established seven specific targets and four priorities for action. It is noteworthy that the first three of those priorities for action relate to better understanding disaster risk, strengthening disaster risk governance and investing in disaster risk reduction - it is the fourth priority which calls for "*enhancing disaster preparedness for effective response, and to 'Build Back Better' in recovery, rehabilitation and reconstruction*".

The United Nations General Assembly declaration of the 1990s as the 'International Decade of Natural Disaster Reduction (IDNDR)' and its mid-point 1st World Conference on Disaster Reduction in Yokohama in 1994 stimulated much research into aspects of disaster risk reduction, in particular into issues of community vulnerability and resilience. In preparation for the 2nd World Conference in Kobe in January 2005, which provided for a review of progress since Yokohama, a compendium of such research, which included much material specific to disaster preparedness and emergency management, was produced[37].

The Hyogo conference in 2005 adopted the Hyogo Framework for action 2005-2015, '*Building the resilience of nations and communities to disasters*'. The Framework clearly linked disaster risk reduction and disaster preparedness in its strategic goals and priorities for action. Since the Hyogo conference, considerable progress has been made in a number of regions in developing tools which assist in the practical application of a comprehensive and integrated approach to emergency management to which Australia - and Victoria - subscribes in theory but has so far largely failed to apply.

In recent years much international research and effort has thus gone into the area we call 'emergency management' and is now generally regarded as disaster risk management, requiring coordinated action in two separate areas - that of disaster risk reduction and that of disaster management, together comprising the whole spectrum of risk assessment, prevention/mitigation, preparedness and response to risk, and recovery (including the reduction of future risk, in recognition of the increasing evidence of climate change). It is now generally accepted that the total 'envelope' is a 'whole-of-government' responsibility, not purely that of the emergency manager. However, it seems curious that there are still few if any references to disaster risk management in any Australian or state/territory government statements or publications on 'emergency management' issues.

The 2002 COAG report provided an opportunity for a significant rethinking of Australia's approach to community safety in the context of a perceived increased threat from issues such as climate change and in the context of these international initiatives. Yet positive action on the COAG report seems to have become bogged down in the usual play of federal/state relations and resourcing issues, while considerable developments in relevant areas have been occurring overseas.

More recently in the Pacific region, Australia itself has been involved in supporting the development of a new regional framework for action based on the Hyogo Framework - the Pacific Forum-endorsed '*An Investment for Sustainable Development in Pacific Island Countries: Disaster Risk Reduction and Disaster Management: A Framework for Action 2005-2015*'. A consortium of international and regional partners [38] has been involved in an active

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[37] International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (2004), Disaster Risk Reduction 1994-2004, UN Inter-Agency secretariat of UN/ISDR, Geneva (CDR set of 3 CDs). CD-2 of this 3 CD set contains a selection of material specifically relevant to disaster preparedness and emergency management. A useful additional reference to such information is also contained in United Nations Development Programme (2004), Reducing Disaster Risk: A challenge for development, UNDP Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery, New York, NY10017, USA.
[38] Including the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent (IFRC), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Office of the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA), International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UNISDR), Asian Development Bank (ADB), United

partnership program with the Pacific regional organisation SOPAC (South Pacific Applied Geoscience Commission) in providing regional support for the development and implementation of Strategic National Action Plans and arrangements to implement the Pacific Framework plan of action.

It is of significance to note that AusAID, EMA and AFAC (the Australasian Fire and Emergency Services Authorities Council) are all members of the consortium and presumably support the disaster risk reduction and disaster management framework, but it is disappointing to have to observe that there is no evidence of any acceptance in Australia, at either federal or State/Territory level, of the relevance of such a framework in dealing with increasing issues of community safety.

Implications for our current approach to 'emergency management'.
The international emphasis now being given to DRR (disaster risk reduction)[39] has led to some challenge to our current 'comprehensive and integrated' approach to emergency management, in particular to its emphasis on PPRR (prevention/mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery), as a result of a new approach to 'disaster risk management'. The requirement on Australia to report on its progress towards the Sendai goals and targets from 2019 provides direction for the future.

Community Resilience

The National Disaster Resilience Strategy itself (COAG 2011) identifies the four characteristics of 'disaster resilient individuals, organisations and communities' as 'functioning well while under stress, successful adaptation, self-reliance and social capacity' but has failed to date to expand on what these characteristics imply, how initiatives could be designed to ensure that they can be developed or how progress towards resilience could be measured (Goode *et al,* AJEM, Vol 30 No 3, July 2015, p.42). Thus, it is currently difficult to assess resilience capability in any of these four critical characteristics areas.

There is clearly a case for the ANZEMC to revisit all of these matters. However, in recent years the Commonwealth appears to have shown little interest in following up on the many official reviews and reports on emergency management matters, and has wound back on critical state/territory support areas such as AEMI while seemingly prepared to put apparently-limitless effort and funding into counter-terrorism.

Australian usage of the 30-year-old formulation which bases 'emergency management' on PPRR at least <u>implies</u> that prevention, defined in the Victorian EM Act as 'the elimination or

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States Agency for International Development (USAID) / The Asia Foundation (TAF) / Office of United States Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA), United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific / Pacific Operations Centre (UNEPOC), Pacific Disaster Center (PDC), South Pacific Tourism Organisation (SPTO), University of the South Pacific (USP), Fiji School of Medicine (FSM), Australasian Fire Authorities Council (AFAC), Emergency Management Australia (EMA), New Zealand Ministry of Civil Defence and Emergency Management (NZMCDEM), World Bank (WB), European Union Commission for the Pacific (EU), Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID), New Zealand's International Aid & Development Agency (NZAID) and The Foundation of the Peoples of the South Pacific International.

[39] For example, see the extensive discussion of DRR and related issues in Wisner, B, Gaillard, JC and Kelman, I (2011), 'The Routledge Handbook of Hazards and Disaster Risk Reduction' , Routledge, Oxford

reduction of the incidence or severity of emergencies and the mitigation of their effects', is a function for which 'emergency managers' are responsible. In disaster risk management terms it is recognised that 'emergency managers' certainly have a degree of management responsibility in relation to 'residual risks' which are not amenable to treatment through the traditional risk management treatments of 'reduce likelihood, reduce consequence, transfer or avoid risk'.

As a corollary, it might also be worth considering the question of the extent to which 'emergency managers' bear responsibility for the management of recovery - and even of outcomes of the application of the emergency management process which might result in, for example, extended relief and 'internally-displaced population' outcomes. Such questions go to a fundamental governance issue of where responsibility lies for over-arching disaster risk management policies and programs.

This leaves questions such as where to from here and what about the future which will be addressed in the conclusion.

Limitations

As with any research, there are potential limitations in this study.

My adoption of an autoethnographic approach has attempted to interact my lived experience with the literature and documentation available to me. However, I recognise that this literature is not an exhaustive collection but is nonetheless a unique asset to inform this research.

My own journey has influenced the story that this research tells and others may interpret the same material through a different lens suggesting alternative interpretations.

CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSION

So, Where to From Here?

At this point, already 15 years into the 21st Century, there must be some doubt as to whether Australia has capitalised fully on the advances that had been made in its emergency management policy, concepts and arrangements by the end of the 20th Century.

By the end of the 1990s, for example, there appeared to be some consensus between the Commonwealth and the States and Territories on their required directions in this critical field. However, there currently appears to be some confusion as to the arrangements at the highest level of national coordination in the event of a major national emergency, the earlier Commonwealth Counter Disaster Task Force now appearing to have been replaced by separate, large but significantly overlapping Australian Government and National Crisis Committees.

Additionally, it is clear that the present *National Disaster Resilience Strategy*, which is essentially 'event-centred' and seems to indicate a return to the old 'preparedness and response' stance has evolved primarily from the national government's concern with external threats and terrorism, and may not be sufficient in addressing the needs of our communities in the face of the obvious challenges of future risk (including climate change).

There is some irony in all this, as this paper itself provides ample evidence of Australia's past early and active involvement in issues such as command, control and coordination arrangements, emergency risk management and relief, recovery and reconstruction policy and arrangements.

But currently the most notable deficiency in Australian emergency management concepts lies in its failure to recognise that effective disaster management in the modern world requires effective policies and arrangements for both disaster risk management and emergency management, which can only be achieved in a 'whole-of-government' context.

There is thus an urgent requirement for Australia to draw on overseas experience, developments and practices in disaster risk management, while ensuring that our own achievements in developing effective emergency management arrangements are maintained. Both clearly require continuing and professional research effort - and with the recent closure of AEMI, and the out-sourcing of its remaining programs, there is a real need for active sponsorship of such research within the academic community.

This closure will mark the end of 40 years of dedicated work by many dedicated emergency management teachers and practitioners. More significantly, however, and from a national viewpoint, we may be losing the capacity and capability for the development and maintenance of national emergency management and disaster risk reduction programs specifically designed to assist our States and Territories in meeting their constitutional responsibilities for the protection and preservation of the lives and property of their citizens.

The recognised national, regional and indeed international reputation of this Institute had been built as much on the *learning* environment which it had been able to provide as it had on the knowledge and information it has been able to impart, and in this context, it is proper to recognise the contribution made by the administrative and household staff over the years to the development and maintenance of that environment.

While acknowledging that the primary responsibility for the protection and preservation of our citizens rests still constitutionally with the individual States and Territories, I know that I speak on behalf of the majority of professional emergency management practitioners in asking that the continuing Commonwealth support for professional development in our national disaster management capabilities should include some provision similar to that which was offered at AEMI over the last six decades.

Looking Forward

We're arguably getting better at risk management but we need to get much 'more better' at risk reduction - causes of risk, identification and practical reduction.

In one sense, risk itself potentially offers opportunity for and through the creation of wider community involvement in risk identification, specifically to encourage greater public safety activity with community involvement.

Could households themselves be encouraged, e.g. by insurance benefits, programs etc. to see active risk reduction programs as both a personal and a community asset? Note: EM practitioners could help develop/implement such programs.

There is a potential issue in the tendency for emergency management practitioners to 'own' risk issues, by regarding that 'ownership' as requiring the development of policies and practices reserved to those practitioners i.e. as 'specialised' knowledge and concepts, which are primarily owned and fostered by the practitioners themselves. There are clearly some potential benefits in this, one of the most obvious being that it focusses attention on the need to develop such policies and practices! However, the most evident danger is that the knowledge gets locked up as a sort of 'professional secret'.

Admittedly, every profession has its secrets – the knowledge that is regarded by the professionals as immutable and special to the profession itself - but emergency management risk has the potential for dire impacts on the broader community. Thus, there is a case for the development of a wider community undertaking of awareness of emergency management risk and the need for risk reduction policies and practices.

In parallel with these understandings, there is a need for the development of programs designed to offer higher-level training courses for practitioners, which would in the process, assist in the development and promulgation of new concepts and understandings. There is also a strong case for the development of a range of 'professional development' short courses and seminars, which in themselves both widen and deepen the discussion of such matters amongst emergency management practitioners.

The bulk of available evidence indicates that extensive international research and action in developing new approaches to disaster risk management, including DRR, has almost entirely bypassed Australian States and Territories and been neglected at federal level, and some promising pre-2000 initiatives undeveloped - nationally, EM in Australia seems to be in a state of 'arrested development'.

Thus, it is argued that there is currently a clear need for:

- a new 'national stocktake' of current disaster management policies, practices and capacities preferably undertaken independently of COAG but with Terms of Reference and scope similar to that commissioned by COAG in June 2001 and reporting in 2002;

- effective re-engagement with relevant international and regional organisations and agencies such as UN/ISDR, GP-DRR and the 'Pacific Disaster Risk Management Partnership'; and

- redevelopment of a revised Emergency Risk Management concept and its application at community level as a major contribution to national, regional and international disaster risk management programs and processes.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1

In search of the 'prepared community': the way ahead for Australia?

Roger Jones

Peer-reviewed Article

Introduction

Since the late 1980s, a key concept in Australia's approach to emergency and disaster management has been the need to develop 'the prepared community', whose basic requirements are summarised as:

- 'an alert, informed and active community which supports its voluntary organisations
- an active and involved local government, and
- agreed and co-ordinated arrangements for prevention, preparedness, response and recovery' (Natural Disasters Organisation 1989).

The most recent statement of national emergency management concepts and principles still refers to the 'prepared community' as an *element* in Australia's 'integrated approach' to emergency management, with that approach requiring co-ordination between the 'prepared community' and the 'efforts of governments, all relevant organisations and agencies' (EMA 2004).

This paper argues that:

- While considerable early effort between 1994-2004 was devoted to the development of an effective emergency risk management tool which had application in Australian communities, that earlier work has been effectively abandoned.
- While there have been significant international developments promoting the concept of the 'prepared community' as central to effective national emergency management policy, more recent developments have focussed largely on the community's 'shared responsibility' for responding to events.
- There is a clear and urgent need, both in Australia and overseas, for the development of a new and effective 'prepared community' concept and methodology.

An early Australian approach to community emergency risk management

In 1996 Emergency Management Australia (EMA) convened a workshop at its research and teaching establishment, the Australian Emergency Management Institute, to consider the application of the risk management standard and concepts to emergency management. This followed new international studies into the management of risk factors in disasters

(Blaikie *et al.* 1994) and the publication of a new Australian/New Zealand Standard, AS/NZS 4360:1995 – Risk Management[1].

The three-day workshop concluded that effective risk management at community level is fundamentally about *managing the vulnerability of communities to risks*, recognising that 'vulnerability' is a function of community susceptibility and resilience to hazards. It was agreed that a variety of indicators were required when assessing vulnerability (e.g. demographic, health, economic, societal/cultural and physical factors). The workshop's principal recommendations were that:

- Australian emergency management embody a risk management approach, and
- guidelines (based on the Standard) be developed appropriate to the Australian 'emergency management industry' (EMA 1996).

The workshop outcomes were accepted in 1997 by the then National Emergency Management Committee (NEMC) and in 2000 EMA published the *Emergency Risk Management – Applications Guide* (revised and reissued as EMA 2004), as part of its Australian emergency management series of publications and resulting from studies by a national working party. A guide to emergency risk management for facilitators working with committees and communities was produced by EMA in 2001.

Severe flooding in central Queensland in 1997 led to the Queensland Department of Emergency Services (QDES) commissioning a flood risk study in the rural Murweh Shire, a particular requirement being that it should be undertaken in the context of the risk management standard, AS/NZS 4360:1995. For the purposes of the study EMA authorised the use of material developed in the 'Applications Guide' working party process. The study's final report (Geo-Eng Australia Pty Ltd 1998), published in May 1998, included the outcomes of community consultation processes and vulnerability profiles based on the EMA workshop material.

The Queensland Government later commissioned a further study in three largely-urban coastal environments, using the process and methodology developed for Murweh Shire but in a multi-hazard application. The outcomes of both sets of studies were reported in the Winter 2001 issue of this journal (Durham *et al.* 2001). On the basis of these studies a refined community emergency risk management methodology and process was made available to all local governments in Queensland (Zamecka and Buchanan 1999).

It appeared that Australia was entering the first decade of the 21st Century well placed to develop a new approach to the concept of 'the prepared community' with the EMA and QDES community emergency risk management publications, both based on verifiable field practice, freely available.

Meanwhile, a new paradigm was developing internationally

During the 1980s and 1990s, the dominant paradigm in international emergency management theory had developed from a 1979 US National Governors Association workshop which identified the key emergency management elements as *mitigation, preparedness for response, response and recovery* (National Governors Association 1979).

In 1994, the mid-point of the International Decade of Natural Disaster Reduction (IDNDR), an international conference in Yokohama, Japan agreed the *Yokohama Strategy and Plan of Action for a Safer World*. The subsequent World Conference on Disaster Reduction was held in early 2005 at Kobe in Japan's Hyogo Prefecture. The conference produced the *Hyogo Framework for Action 2005–2015: Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters (HFA)*[2] which, having identified specific gaps and challenges in existing programs, adopted three strategic goals and five related priorities for the 2005-15 period.

The HFA follows in the footsteps of IDNDR in focussing on disaster risk reduction within the context of 'building resilience to hazards'. It clearly incorporates risk reduction processes into the full range of emergency management program areas—prevention, preparedness, response and recovery.

One of the outcomes of HFA was the formation of the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction forum which meets every second year. The forum brings together national governments, relevant UN and regional agencies, and the non-government sector to maintain 'the world-wide momentum of disaster risk reduction'.

By late 2012, under Global Platform arrangements, 78 countries had nominated National Platforms and Focal Points for disaster risk reduction. A National Platform was defined as 'a nationally owned and nationally led forum or committee for advocacy, coordination, analysis and advice on disaster risk reduction', while National Focal Points are the designated national government agencies responsible for national DRR policies and programs[3]. Some regions have also established Regional Platforms and Focal Points.

At its 2009 meeting, the Global Platform group considered a detailed report, the *Global Assessment Report (GAR)*. Based on evidence from reviews conducted in some 62 countries and on additional commissioned research, GAR highlighted what it identified as 'the need to strengthen capacities to address three disaster risk drivers: poor urban governance, vulnerable rural livelihoods, and ecosystem decline'.

The 2009 meeting concluded that 'most countries still lack a determined and focussed high-level policy framework that addresses these drivers' and that 'the institutional and administrative responsibility for risk reduction has to be vested at the highest possible level of government, in order to have the necessary political authority and resources to influence development policy'.

The Global Platform report of its meeting in 2011[4] identified that there has been only marginal improvement in disaster risk reduction on a global scale, in spite of the hard work and good intentions of UN agencies and the 168 nations which endorsed the Hyogo Framework in 2005 and a number of significant initiatives which had been undertaken by some regional and national entities. The main aim of the 4th Session of the Global Platform to be held in Geneva in May 2013 seeks to '…continue the effort from all sectors … to take shared responsibility in reducing risks and reinforcing resilience in our communities'[5]. It is anticipated that it will also provide an opportunity to consult on and progress the development of the successor to the *Hyogo Framework for Action 2005–2015*.

There is growing acceptance within the international community over the relationship between disaster risk reduction (DRR) and disaster management (DM)[6]. Disaster management (or emergency management in US, Australia and some other jurisdictions) is defined as 'concerned with organising and managing the impacts and consequences of disasters and emergencies if and when they occur'. There has also been some support for the use of the term disaster risk management (DRM)[7] as the higher-order term embracing both the disaster risk reduction (DRR) and disaster management (DM) functions.

Thus, following the declaration of IDNDR in 1989, there has been an almost unbroken 20-year period of development of a new approach to disaster risk management, an approach which sees a direct linkage between disaster risk reduction (what we currently term as 'prevention' or 'mitigation', the first P in PPRR) and preparedness for and management of emergency and disaster events (the central PR). Clearly, however, some issues of policy and methodology in the current international approach need to be resolved.

In Australia, not much has changed

Australia had been an active participant in the 1990s IDNDR program, one of its primary roles being to facilitate DRR in the Pacific[8], and has been a participant in both the 1994 Yokohama and 2005 Hyogo disaster world conferences on disaster reduction. It has also participated in the three sessions of the Global Platform. In general terms, the focus of most academic interest and research in the field of emergency management in Australia has paralleled the international recognition of the inter-relatedness of disaster risk reduction and disaster management.

Since 2004, however, in terms of policy and program development, there has been little evidence that the EMA's 'emergency risk management' process has been taken up either theoretically or in substance in application to the management of community safety risk in any jurisdiction (in spite of the earlier cited programs in Queensland in the late 1990s) or in any of the currently-advocated 'emergency risk management models', such as NERAG and CERM[9]. While those models themselves, and many of the published local government emergency risk management reviews and plans drawn from them, generally recognise communities and individuals as 'stakeholders' in the process and as necessary elements in the standard 'communication and consult' step, the treatment of communities and individuals is cursory and often limited to a listing of 'at risk' facilities and lifeline elements without much detail.

It is also noteworthy that other than in a brief discussion of 'improving community resilience' there is no direct reference in the Victorian Government's Green Paper to current comprehensive risk-based disaster management concepts, while in the current Australian *National Strategy for Disaster Resilience (NSDR)* they warrant only an indirect reference (COAG 2011). The *2009 COAG National Disaster Resilience Statement* on which NSDR is based, acknowledges that 'a national, coordinated and cooperative effort is required to enhance Australia's capacity to withstand and recover from emergencies and disasters' (*ibid*., p. iv), but neither suggest specific and agreed arrangements to enable that effort effectively.
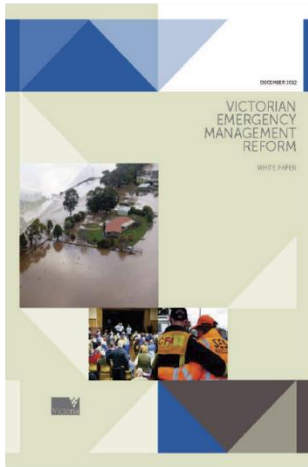
The Victorian Emergency Management Reform White Paper is an extensive overhaul of Victoria's emergency management system.

Again, neither the NSDR nor the COAG statements address the *issues* which need to be dealt with in developing that effort and the resultant resilient capacity. They are both silent on the *processes* by which that capacity might be attained. The NSDR suggested priority outcomes (*ibid.,* pp. 10-11) compare poorly both in scope and quality with the goals, priorities, key activities and implementation recommendations detailed eight years ago in the HFA. It is also clear that both are still significantly influenced by the response-focussed 'crisis and contingency management' approach which has dominated much of emergency management policy both in Australia and overseas since 9/11.

Australia and the US now appear to be among a number of countries diverging from the disaster risk management paradigm which has been developing internationally since the middle of the 1990s.

Where are we headed?

There is little doubt that today, as in the 1980s and 1990s, the international community remains concerned with the rising cost of disasters in terms of lives, property and national development, and that this concern has now been exacerbated by increasing anxiety about the likely effects of climate change. Some of the more recent international conferences seeking to renew political commitment to sustainable development, such as the June 2012 Rio+20 Summit held in Rio de Janeiro, have managed to obtain minor advances but have not significantly contributed to the reduction of community safety risk[10].

One reason for the lack of progress in global disaster risk reduction is undoubtedly that the three major drivers of disaster risk worldwide, identified in GAR as 'poor urban governance, vulnerable rural livelihoods and ecosystem decline', still remain the most intransigent problems faced by all countries, but especially by under-developed and developing nations.

A key factor contributing to this lack of progress has been the almost universal focus in the post 9/11 world on preparedness for and response to specific natural and man-made disaster events (which, of course, the UN itself now defines as *disaster management*). Much of this new focus has clearly arisen, particularly in many western nations, in the tendency to see terrorism as a primary threat to national stability and security, and in consequence to devote a disproportionate degree of attention to that threat. In Australia's case the 2002 Bali bombings could be seen as an additional factor in this, helping to promote a disproportionately heavy focus on anti-terrorism legislation and resource allocation (Roach 2011).

An additional issue arises out of varying uses of terms such as *prevention, protection, mitigation, resilience and vulnerability*, which is causing confusion in the current international DRR/DM dialogue.

As noted in the earlier section on international developments, however, while there has been growing acceptance of the necessary connection between DRR and DM, there are continuing difficulties in and disagreements about how that connection can be made effective at both policy and program levels. One of the countries recognised as having been the first to enshrine that connection in legislation is South Africa[11]. That country is reviewing its disaster management arrangements as its implementation has posed significant challenges, particularly at the level of local municipalities. Pacific countries, such as Samoa, have recently included disaster risk reduction in legislation[12], and have also experienced difficulty in its implementation at community level.

In countries such as Australia and the US, the theme of 'shared responsibility' in developing the capacity for 'resilience' has featured strongly in recent years, and consistently advocates a direct role for the individual and the community in disaster risk management. But other than in development of numerous 'self-help' or small-scale community resilience planning guides (e.g., Queensland's *Harden up* and Chapter 4 in UK's *National Risk Register*) there appears to be little real attention to the provision of effective guidance in the practical development of such a role.

At issue is the extent to which, since 9/11, national governments in western countries in particular, have been pursuing top-down disaster management policies and methodologies. This is perceived as in 'the national interest', while individual communities live with risks which are peculiar to, and only capable of management within those communities. These issues can only properly be addressed within those communities themselves.

Is this what 'the prepared community' should be about?

The way ahead for Australia?

In a recent opinion piece in this journal, headlined *Prevention is no longer a useful term in emergency management*, its author, Stuart Ellis AM, stated that current Australian doctrine 'ignores the reality that PPRR is out-dated' (AJEM 2012). Our PPRR concept, now over 30 years old, is hardly relevant to current international and Australian understandings of the purpose and scope of 'emergency management'[13].

Indeed, not only does 'prevention', as disaster risk reduction, lie outside the remit of today's emergency managers, but that can also be argued in relation to 'recovery', the long-haul process of restoration and reconstruction which can extend up to 10 years after disaster impact - although a proper linkage between the relief phase of response and recovery is vital (Burton *et al.*, 1978). There is clearly a need for revision to the existing Commonwealth Government publications dealing with emergency management concepts and principles (Australian Emergency Management Series No. 1) and emergency risk management (Australian Emergency Management Series No. 5) to ensure that they address the purpose and scope of emergency management as is now defined.

Ultimately the goal must be, as recognised in both the 2009 COAG Statement and the 2011 NSDR, the development of *Safer, Sustainable Communities* (a motto until recently used by EMA). Promoting 'resilience' of itself neither addresses the *issues* which need to be dealt with nor puts in place the *processes* necessary to the development of that greater capability and capacity at community level.

Given constitutional arrangements for the division of powers between the Commonwealth and the States and Territories, these are tasks which fall to the latter, but certainly it is clear that COAG and the Attorney-General's Department could take a more active role in providing guidance and assistance in defining national aims and objectives. A useful start would be the development of a practical and community-based successor to the present emergency risk management concept and documentation.

At a recent Monash University Disaster Resilience Initiative Forum on 'Strengthening Community-Based Resilience', a noted Australian authority on emergency management issues suggested that we can only achieve community resilience by ensuring that communities 'are cognisant of the risks they face and the limitations of emergency service organisations', and concluded that 'communities that have involvement in and ownership of plans for their safety have a greater capability and capacity to look after themselves'[14]. We also need to note the Global Platform's 2009 statement of the need for 'constitutional and administrative responsibility for risk reduction … to be vested at the highest possible level of government, in order to have the necessary political authority and resources to influence development policy'.

As noted earlier, Australia entered the first decade of the 21st Century well-placed to develop a new approach to emergency management. It is now time for us to review the stage we had reached in the development of that approach and to recognise that real 'resilience' needs to be based on 'the prepared community'.

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About the author

Roger Jones has practised in the field of emergency management for more than 35 years, joining the Australian Natural Disasters Organisation (later Emergency Management Australia) in 1974 as its inaugural Director, Operations and Plans. Roger was the Director of the Australian Emergency Management Institute from 1987 to 1994 and is currently a director and deputy chair of the Board of the Victoria State Emergency Service Authority. He has worked in the field internationally, regionally, nationally and at State/Territory and community level in Australia.

Footnotes

1. It needs to be recognised here that AS/NZS 4360:1995 (and its current version, AS/NZS ISO 31000:2009) is essentially a process for managing risks within an *organisation*, and thus needs interpretation and modification in order to be applied to the management of *community safety risk*.

2. UN A/CONF.206/L.2/Rev.1 (22 January 2005)

3. http://www.preventionweb.net/english/hyogo/national/list/

4. http://www.iisd.ca/ymb/gpdrr/2011/html/ymbvol141num6e.html

5. http://www.preventionweb.net/globalplatform/2013/

6. Definitions of these terms are
in http://unisdr.org/files/7817_UNISDRTerminologyEnglish.pdf

7. 'Disaster risk management (DRM)' is defined as 'the systematic process of using administrative directives, organizations, and operational skills and capacities to implement strategies, policies and improved coping capacities in order to lessen the adverse impacts of hazards and the possibility of disaster'.

8. See EMA 1999, Final Report of Australia's Coordination Committee for IDNDR, Canberra (ISBN 0642704724)

9. NERAG (http://www.em.gov.au/Publications), the 'National Emergency Risk Assessment Guidelines', is the current Commonwealth publication and CERM (http://www.ses.vic.gov.au/prepare/em-planning) is Victoria's 'Community Emergency Risk Management' guideline (drawn primarily from NERAG) – both publications are currently still in draft form.

10. See for example statements by a number of international leaders on www.bbc.co.uk/news/science-environment-18546583 and from the Australian Prime Minister on www.abc.net.au/news/2012-06-23

11. In its *Disaster Management Act 2002*

12. In its *Disaster and Emergency Management Act 2007*

13. Yet PPRR terminology is still used in the recent Victorian Government's 2011 Green Paper and 2012 White Paper – and in the US has recently been expanded into 'PPMRR' – prevention, protection, mitigation, response and recovery (National Planning Frameworks developed following 'Presidential Policy Directive 8 and the National Preparedness System')

14. Monash University Disaster Resilience Forum, Melbourne, 15 August 2012 transcript, Neil Comrie presentation

MUDRI FORUM, THURSDAY 26 MARCH 2015
Session 1: A Tribute to AEMI

<u>The Early Years – 1970s to 1990s</u>   **Roger T. Jones**
Presentation Notes

<u>Introduction – A brief background</u>

Not generally known – 1939 preparedness for CD – by 1941, all states/Cw terrs had nucleus ARP/CD (Cw policy, coord trg/pubs, but S for organisation, programs

Show old CD logo

By 1950, generally in abeyance – 'Cold War'/Bomb, but inevitable disagreements Cw/States on priorities, <u>funding</u> (ctees). Fed Cab agrees 1954 to funding parts of S progs (incl some FT staff salary subs), offers a new ACDS.

<u>Beginnings</u>

Bit of mystery about choice of site – attractive/depressed prop at MT MAC, 'Golf House', accomp. 9-hole course (built 1919 as guest house –pre-WW repute?). In Jan 55 DoI purchased whole 95a. property for £32,840, instr staff (mainly exserv.) recruited, trained at UK CD School at Easingwold in Yorks, school opened residentially in 1956 with AirComdr Knox-Knight with curric., references closely aligned UK.

Jones visited 1962; Show air photo c. 1972 – note Knox Knight Hall already existed then

The 1960s-70s were generally regarded as the 'disaster decade' in Aust – NSW floods, Tas bushfires, Qld/NT cyclones … Whitlam Govt in Dec 72 – Lance Barnard (Tas MHR involved in 1967 Hobart bushfires, appt. DepPM and MinDef) announced on 19 Dec a proposed reorganisation of the nat. CD org:

'The Civil Defence Directorate has been transferred from DoI to the Dof D. There will later be created a National Disaster Org in association with it to cope, in co-operation with other civil authorities in Australia, with the effects of natural disasters.'

Feb 74 Cabinet agreed to the est. of the '**<u>Natural</u>** Disasters Org' (!); Jun 54 first conf of State Ministers and Directors of CD/ES Orgs since WW2 endorsed the decision and agreed on coord/support arrangements.

Jones joined the staff of NDO in Jul 54 as Colonel, Dir Ops/Planning

Initially some discussion on title of school – NESC chosen but questioned as suggesting Cw takeover, so became ACDC (CD as in logo!). Knox-Knight had retired in Feb 69, succeeded as Dir by AVM Nick Carter, who post 72 began task of developing a new curriculum, being aided by new staff such as instructor Alan Cameron (from CFA) and planning officer Gayle Paltridge (later a Dir of Tas SES). CD-type courses and briefings continued while a new set of 'counter-disaster guidelines' was prepared.

While this was going on, a major restructure of the site – involving demolition of GH (hardly fire-resistant!) to establish a new accommodation block and improved admin and instr facilities – was being undertaken, and in 1976-77 students were accommodated at 'Braemar College' (old, elite XXX School on other side of MM) and bussed to/from daily.

Lack of real library major deficiency – first Librarian (Rob Fleming) was appointed and new material (largely from academic sources o'seas) sourced. Original CD preparedness guidelines on planning, org, trg, ops & comms developed, became part of an official 'Aust Counter Disaster Handbook' issued in 1980 (in regime of RAdm Rothesay Cathcart Swan), cont. info on CW and S/T CD arrangements but incorp detail of the new DFAC and NRIS policies/systems developed after TRACY. Also cont. some gen mat on nat haz such as fire, flood etc, and warning/info systems (but ch. on 'Human and Social Impacts of Disasters' never completed).

Main reasons for latter – instr. staff were on a very sharp learning curve about HSI, especially now (library!) from US sources (esp. Defence Civil Prep Admin – number of distinguished researchers), widening of studies and seminars program leading to variety of inputs (e.g. disaster medicine – Vietnam, DVI – UK air crashes etc., first major seminar on post-disaster mgt held Nov 1981) and new concepts abt, dis and disman evolving (US MPRR becomes PPRR, 3Cs etc.), wider contact with CD community through Mac Papers, Mac Digest which led to AJEM.

The 1980s - Developing EM Concepts, Programs

So the early 80s opened with real feeling of 'new directions' – our regular CD courses continued to be refined, but the studies and seminars programs led us into such fields as the handling and treatment of mass burns casualties, problems of managing major exotic animal diseases outbreaks and the coord of disaster welfare planning and response. Towards the end of 1982, a new Course Design and Doctrine section was added to the College estb.

16 Feb 1983 – course farewelled at 1.30pm, at 8pm College opened to shelter 300+ locals and their pets from the onslaught of the **'Ash Wednesday'** fires. 5 staff members lost homes, much damage to property; ACDC closed 1 month.

Jones seconded Vic Min P&ES late 1983; joined Min in1984 and returned AEMI 1987 as Director

Over following years, a variety of new courses developed and tested (including 'field testing' in S/Ts), which led in 1988-89 to an increase in 'extension courses' – modified ACDC courses conducted by small ACDC teams supplemented by trained S/T staff; a 'Disaster Services Administration Certificate' course was designed and managed by ACDC to assist in developing disaster management professionalism.

But towards the end of the 1980s it was clear that problems were developing – the EMA/EMAI relationship with 'host' dept Defence had always been delicate, but the whole organisation came under increasing pressure to 'justify its existence' in a budget-tightening environment (PERs – **Program Evaluation Reviews**), and there was some discontent with EMA's increasing calls on Def support. Fed/State relations – strong feelings at S/T level that AEMI should focus on **preparedness and response** (influence of

annual Conf of S/T Directors of SES), but there was constantly-increasing demand from the many other contributors to the national EM arrangements. Not easy years for ACDC, but my DG at the time, **MajGen Horrie Howard, was a great innovator and supporter in those leaner years**!

The 1990s – Into Emergency Risk Management

In the early 1990s, new Commonwealth initiatives resulted in estb a rep National Emergency Management Committee in 1993 as an EM consultative forum on national policy issues, and **ACDC renamed as Aust Emergency Management Institute**. Later that year, an independent consultancy for a National EM Training Market Survey was conducted, and under auspices of the C'wealth Training Reform Agenda competency-based standards and a competency-based training curriculum were developed.

Competency standards and related training became a major theme early in this decade, and involved much Institute effort before the new NEM Competency Standards were ratified nationally in 1994. Following ratification, a **National EM Curriculum Advisory Group (NEMCAG)** was established and early steps taken towards the development of a new EM curriculum framework, with learning outcomes aligned to the new competency standards.

The 1990s – Into Emergency Risk Management (cont)

A program to produce accredited 'bridging courses' to allow successful students to be assessed for articulation into other tertiary institutions. AEMI also received **accreditation as an RTO**, and its Exercise Management and Evacuation Management courses were also accredited.

The mid- to later 1990s saw the Institute's commissioning and development of the authoritative **Australian Emergency Management Manual series**, and an EM glossary and thesaurus were published in 1998.

But perhaps an equally important activity undertaken in 2nd half of the 1990s, and **one which in MY view may come to have the greatest implications for future development in EM, was the Institute's involvement in the field of EMERGENCY RISK MANAGEMENT**.

You might recall that in 1995 AS/NZ standards orgs collaborated in launching **AS/NZS 4360: Risk Management**. As it happened, AEMI had some direct involvement in this – one of its senior instructors had represented the Dept of Defence in the AS advisory committee. In 1996, an Institute workshop studied the new standard and recognised its EM significance (this also coincided with the Institute's own interest in community risk management, and the 1994 UK publication of the seminal 'At Risk' (Blaikie *et* al).

Show Routledge 2012, Wisner *et al;* COMMENT? Re current 3rd WCDR in Japan

In 1997/98, AEMI Library was fully developed as the AEM Information Centre with full electronic access, a function still being performed today at the Institute in Mt Macedon.

But the late 1990s were to become critical to the future of AEMI. While still maintaining a full annual program of research as well as the normal courses, studies and workshops, a number of its products were being devolved to S/T authorities, and an internal review of EMA led to transfer of the Information Centre to the Defence Library Service (while

still physically located at AEMI) and there was a Defence review of the cost-effectiveness of the Mt Macedon site. These reviews were to continue into 2000 …

Into an Uncertain Future
Post 9/11, AEMI 'transferred' from Defence to AGD, as forerunner to devt of Aust 'Dept of Homeland Security', which never transpired …

A Concluding Observation

Appendix 3

COMMONWEALTH POLICY STATEMENT ON EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

1.   While recognising that the Constitutional responsibility for the protection of lives and property of Australian citizens lies predominantly with the States and Territories, the Commonwealth accepts that it has a broad responsibility to support the States in developing emergency management matters through Emergency Management Australia.

2.   Comprehensive and integrated emergency management is based on a partnership between the Commonwealth and the States and Territories. In the development of Commonwealth capabilities the principles of the All Hazards Approach, the Comprehensive Approach, the All Agencies Approach and the Prepared Community will be followed.

3.   On request, the Commonwealth will provide and coordinate physical assistance to the States in the event of a major natural, technological or civil defence emergency. Such physical assistance will be provided when State and Territory resources are inappropriate, exhausted or unavailable.

4.   The Commonwealth recognises that the effects of emergencies last long after the immediate effects of the physical impact have been relieved. Through the Counter Disaster Task Force and the multiplicity of Commonwealth agencies, it will support State and Territory measures to facilitate the recovery of communities from these effects. It will also provide assistance to the States and to individuals to assist in the recovery of communities from these effects. It will also provide financial assistance to the States and to individuals to assist in the recovery from disasters under arrangements which will be determined from time to time.

5.   The Commonwealth will continue to provide support to the States and Territories with the development of emergency preparedness and mitigation activities. In particular it will facilitate education, training, research, public awareness, information collection and dissemination activities. It will also provide specialised warning and monitoring services for meteorological and geological hazards as appropriate.

6.   The Commonwealth recognises the necessity of cooperating with the States and Territories to encourage further standardisation of emergency management procedures and equipment. Through Emergency Management Australia and other organisations the Commonwealth will encourage and facilitate such standardisation.

(Sourced from *Emergency Management Australia Corporate Plan 1998 – 2000* and https://www.anao.gov.au/sites/g/files/net4981/f/anao_report_1999-00_41.pdf)