

Notes from the field



Emergency Management Australia's Connection! 2014 event (14–18 July)

The Australian Emergency Management Institute (AEMI) was buzzing with a full week of workshops, forums, masterclasses and expert panels that brought together national and international thought leaders on strategic foresight and social media trends in emergency management.

Delegates were drawn from across Australia from the emergency management, government, non-government organisations, academia and private sectors. They discovered, networked, and discussed cutting-edge topics from their emergency management perspectives.

Delegates had the opportunity to learn about horizon scanning for emergency management trends over the next 30 years and how the emergency management landscape is changing dramatically in this world of real-time data and rapid technological advances.

Highlights of the Connection! 2014 program included:

Strategic Foresight Forum and Masterclass

The Strategic Foresight Forum and Masterclass was hosted by Mike McAllum and Liam Egerton who led participants through the strategic foresight process and applications in a practical interactive environment. Topics related to how rapidly changing political, economic, technological and social environments can create significant new pressures and challenges for emergency management planners.

'Strategic foresight' is an approach that explicitly aims to disrupt the thought patterns that frame people's current worldview and inhibit their ability to foresee and adapt. This aspect of the program looked at how strategic foresight enables people to distil the capabilities required to meet future challenges and design a strategy that is fit for a particular purpose.

There were discussions about how the sector needs to build a shared vision of the future, be prepared, and adapt to meet the challenges that the future will hold.



Connection! 2014 presenters, Strategic Foresight: Dr David Connery, Ms Carolyn Thompson (Director, Education, Research and Training, AEMI), Mr David Parsons, Mr Michael McAllum, Mr Peter Hayward, Ms Dianne Cooper (Connection! 2014 Coordinator), Mr Mark Crowweller AFSM, Col. Joseph Booth, Ms Raelene Thompson (Executive Director, AEMI), Mr Liam Egerton.

Presenters included:

- Mr Mark Crosweller AFSM, Director-General, Emergency Management Australia
- Col. Joseph Booth, Executive Director, Stephenson Disaster Management Institute, Louisiana, USA
- Dr Peter Hayward, Program Coordinator, Master of Management (Strategic Foresight), Swinburne University
- Mr David Parsons, Manager, Emergency Management, Sydney Water
- Dr David Connery, Senior Analyst, Australian Strategic Policy Institute
- Mr Liam Egerton, Future Analyst, Global Foresight Network
- Mr Michael McAllum, Founder, Global Foresight Network
- Dr Ray Canterford PSM, Division Head, Bureau of Meteorology

Social Media Masterclass and Forum

The Masterclass exercises demonstrated the essential role of social media in effective emergency management communication. Discussions highlighted the importance of community engagement before, during and after a crisis.

The Forum explored how the emergency management sector and communities can work together to exchange information, validate data and incorporate social media intelligence into business-as-usual practice.



Col. Joseph Booth presenting on Strategic Foresight: USA perspective.



Social Media Masterclass with conference attendees and guest presenter, Mr Craig Thomler.



Mia Garlick, Facebook, presenting during the Social Media Masterclass.

Presenters of Connection! 2014 included:

- Mr Craig Lapsley PSM, Fire Services Commissioner Victoria
- Mr Craig Thomler, Managing Director, Delib Australia
- Ms Mia Garlick, Head of Policy, Australia and New Zealand, Facebook
- Mr John Sheridan, Chief Technology Officer, Australian Government
- Ms Jeanette Gray, Regional Director, Strategic Accounts, Asia Pacific Region, Hootsuite
- Mr Danny Keens, Director of Media, Twitter
- Ms Kym Charlton, Assistant Secretary, Australian Department of Agriculture
- Mr Tim Gerritsen, Executive Producer, ABC
- Mr Darren Whitelaw, Assistant Director, Strategic Communication and Protocol Branch, Department of Premier and Cabinet, Victoria
- Ms Caroline Milligan, Social Media and Emergency Management Consultant, NZ
- Mr Martin Anderson, Digital Media Manager, Country Fire Authority, Victoria

- Mr Michael Turnley, National Manager, Digital Media, Australia Red Cross
- Mr Jason Pemberton, Co-Founder, General Manager, Volunteer Army Foundation, New Zealand
- Ms Melanie Irons, Founder of the 'Tassie Fires – We can help' Facebook page

Thanks to all Connection! 2014 attendees, presenters and facilitators who offered lively and stimulating insight. The shared resources, tools, and information will benefit the emergency management community.

