

Foreword

By Tony Sheehan, Deputy Secretary, National Security and Criminal Justice Group Attorney-General's Department



"It is with pleasure I contribute for the first time to the AJEM in my capacity as the incoming Deputy Secretary of the Attorney-General's Department (AGD), with responsibility for National Security and Emergency Management matters, and as Chair of the Australian Emergency Management Institute (AEMI) Board, publishers of the journal on behalf of the Department and the Attorney-General."

Having joined AGD from the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, where I headed Homeland and Border Security Division, through working closely together I was already aware of the important work of AGD and AEMI specifically on Emergency Management and Disaster Resilience.

The impact of the summer season of natural disaster events has made a big impression on us all. The response by Emergency Management agencies, volunteers and at all levels of government in the face of these events has been crucial to the nation. And the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) endorsement of the National Strategy for Disaster Resilience provides essential directions to our forward work.

For the AEMI this means new focus in education/curriculum, training, research and publications including AJEM. Some of our national capacity building business will shift in orientation towards Business Continuity, Risk Management, Organisational Resilience, Resilience Leadership, Youth and New Media, Multicultural Resilience, Knowledge Hub building and sharing and

all involving Strategic Partnerships. In short, centre of excellence thinking, and related practical action, will be our focus.

In this edition we feature a handful of "stories" which reflect personal experiences in the devastating summer that was. The stories are quite short but certainly evocative and inspiring. For example, Lockyer Valley Mayor Steve Jones says after the flooding of Grantham "If you're ever going to make a change, now's the time to do it". Reading Councillor Jones's story and his plans for the rebuilding of his town, exemplifies the 'can do' attitude and true Aussie spirit.

Rebecca Burt's story of her West Australian cattle station provides an insight into the plight of a remote and geographically dispersed community during the December 2010 flood events. It tells of the amazing resilience and the strength of individuals, families and communities.

Also in this edition of AJEM are a diverse range of papers across the all-hazards and national security space. I trust you will find this an enjoyable and valuable edition and encourage letters to the editor with your comments and feedback.

