



Lessons Management Forum – 2022

What does success look like?

Delegate Handbook

The organisers of the Lessons Management Forum respectfully acknowledge the Turrbal and Yuggera people as the Traditional Owners of the land on which this event is being held.

We acknowledge and pay our respects to all Elders past, present and emerging.



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Program Day One

Tuesday 22 March

Time	Presentation
9.00 am	Registration opens
	Setting the scene
10.00 am	Welcome and opening Welcome to Country, introduction
10.15 am	Opening address Mike Wassing, <i>Deputy Commissioner, Queensland Fire and Emergency Services</i>
10.30 am	Releasing lessons in a complex environment Mark Jones, <i>Chief Officer, South Australian Country Fire Service</i> and Mark Ryan, <i>C3 Resilience</i>
11.00 am	Morning tea
	Learning from lessons
11.30 am	Lessons management: an important enabler for change Josipa Matesa, <i>Resilience NSW</i> and Scott Colefax, <i>NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service</i> Presenting on behalf of the NSW SEMC Lessons Management Advisory Group
12.00 pm	The learning process: what's missing? Mark Thomason AFSM
12.30 pm	Regaining trust in debriefs Ian Phipps, <i>Queensland Fire and Emergency Services</i>
1.00 pm	Lunch
	Lessons management recognition
2.00 pm	Lessons Management Award, sponsored by C3 Resilience Announcement of the Lessons Management Awards and presentation from award winner
2.30 pm	Selling the need for lessons management: bringing the workforce along Dan Meijer and Josh Atkins, <i>NSW Rural Fire Service</i>
3.00 pm	Afternoon tea
	Community driven lessons
3.30 pm	Community centred learnings from the K'gari (Fraser Island) Bushfire Review Kylie Mercer, <i>Office of the Inspector-General of Emergency Management</i>
4.00 pm	Success: a great reality check Janelle Wheatley and Scott Hanckel, <i>ACT Emergency Services Agency</i>
4.30 pm	Success is learning from and with our communities Mike Wassing, <i>Queensland Fire and Emergency Services</i>
5.00 – 7.00 pm	Networking function Available to those attending in person

Program Day Two

Wednesday 23 March

Time	Presentation
9.00 am	Registration opens
	The future of lessons
10.00 am	Recap: Lessons Management Forum Day One Forum Host
10.15 am	Closing the loop: moving from lessons we don't learn to lessons we do Alistair Dawson, <i>Office of the Inspector-General Emergency Management</i>
11.00 am	Morning tea
	COVID-19 lessons
11.30 am	Lessons from a unique response Joe Buffone, <i>Emergency Management Australia</i>
12.00 pm	Defence lessons identified from COVID-19 Geoff Cooper, <i>Army Knowledge Centre</i>
12.30 pm	A terror attack, a volcanic eruption and COVID-19 Claire Bibby, Claire Pettigrew and Des Hosie, <i>LessoNZ Community of Practice</i>
1.00 pm	Lunch
	Change in lessons perspectives
2.00 pm	Using research to learn future lessons about disaster exercises Mark Ryan, <i>C3 Resilience</i>
2.45 pm	Closing remarks Followed by afternoon tea

Queensland Fire and Emergency Services (QFES)

Queensland Fire and Emergency Services (QFES) is the primary provider of fire and rescue, emergency management, and disaster mitigation programs and services throughout Queensland. We deliver this through our Fire and Rescue Service (FRS), Rural Fire Service (RFS) and State Emergency Service (SES), which are supported by our disaster management and corporate functions.

Queensland is the most natural-disaster-prone state in Australia and the expected increase in severe weather conditions and extended bushfire seasons means it is essential we continue to learn and refine our capabilities. We must challenge how we do business, work with our partners and engage with the community to ensure we remain agile in this evolving environment.

Adaptation wouldn't exist in emergency services if it wasn't for lessons management. For QFES, it is a critical component of continuing to meet the needs of a vast and diverse community.

Adaptation through lessons management

QFES' Lessons Management Program is multi-hazard and functions across all services. It captures local and state-level observations and lessons, which gives us an understanding of how we are meeting our day-to-day obligations. This, in turn, helps us improve our service delivery, providing innovative solutions to real time problems. The program takes a tiered approach to identifying and implementing lessons, from localised solutions through to broad, whole-of-department or sector-wide learnings.

Our lessons management process provides QFES with an understanding of the outcomes of a range of activities, both operational and corporate. We analyse rich data available to us and use it to deepen our understanding of a situation or topic. This takes skill in not only gathering and analysing the data but being able to communicate it effectively, so it is meaningful and easily understood.

Effective response

When we have effective intelligence to guide us, it empowers our people, our partners and the community to make decisions with greater confidence. That, in turn, leads to better decision-making and a more effective response when disasters and emergencies strike.

As emergency responders, we take steps each day to develop and deliver a sustainable approach to disaster management. We learn from every experience and build on these foundations to create a more resilient Queensland, prepared for whatever challenges come our way.

Greg Leach
Commissioner
QFES

Respect

Integrity

Courage

Loyalty

Trust



Abstracts and speakers

Releasing lessons in a complex environment

10.30am | Tuesday 22 March

Mark Jones - Chief Officer, South Australian Country Fire Service

Mark Ryan - C3 Resilience

Taking a true independent approach to reviewing operations has both its advantages and disadvantages. It allows a team without bias to explore the agency's planning and response, capability and capacity. Conversely, with a wide-ranging scope, the agency has limited control as to what it may discover.

On the back of the South Australian Government's commissioning of the Independent Review of the 2019-20 bushfire season, the South Australian Country Fire Service commissioned C3 Resilience to perform an independent

review into the response to the Kangaroo Island Bushfire to identify lessons for the agency.

This presentation will discuss the courageous approach to commissioning an independent lessons process, and why it is important to release these lessons reviews to the community. Whilst it comes with risk, it provides a platform to start discussing change, and how to affect it. It will discuss how the consultancy, and more importantly the agency, dealt with what was a largely critical report when released to the public and the media interest which ensued.



Mark Jones QFSM joined Grampian Fire Brigade in Northern Scotland in 1985 and served in various roles, achieving the position of Assistant Firemaster in 2004. He enjoyed secondments to the national training school as an instructor and to Her Majesty's Fire Service Inspectorate as an inspector.

Mark moved to Essex in England in 2005 as Deputy Chief Fire Officer and became Chief Fire Officer of Buckinghamshire in 2010, leading many improvements in that role. He has been involved in bushfire as a specialist for many years and has served on several committees of experts and working groups. He has made presentations on bushfire to many national agencies and has made speeches on wildfire policy at both the European Union and United Nations Headquarters.

After retiring from the UK Fire and Rescue Service, Mark moved to Australia and served as the ACT Emergency Services Agency's Director of Strategic Reform for two years before returning to the UK. His most recent role there was London Ambulance Service's Head of Resilience and Specialist Assets in which he oversaw the preparations for, and responses to, large scale emergencies, events and terror related incidents. His career has spanned roles in emergency planning and disaster management, operational fire command, fire safety and training.

Mark assumed command of South Australia's Country Fire Service in October 2019.



Mark Ryan has a career spanning 27 years in fire and emergency management across four states and territories. Mark held senior volunteer positions with the NSW Rural Fire Service (RFS) before taking on the role of Inspector, Operations for the ACT Rural Fire Service in 2003, then returning to the NSW RFS taking on a range of operational, management and leadership positions at the rank of Superintendent until 2010. During his time, he performed a range of Level 3 Incident Management Team positions including Incident Controller, Major Incident Management Coordinator Region North, including for the Black Saturday Bushfires in Victoria in 2009.

Mark then moved to Queensland where he worked with Queensland Fire and Emergency Services setting up operational assurance programs, then shifting to lead the Brisbane City State Emergency Service; where he led the State Emergency Service response to the 2014 Brisbane Hailstorm, G20 Summit in Brisbane in 2014 and the Brisbane contribution to the Gold Coast Commonwealth Games and Queens Baton Relay in 2018. Mark has been awarded the Canberra Bushfire Medal, the National Medal, National Emergency Medal and citations from the G20 2014 Summit and 2018 Gold Coast Commonwealth Games.

Mark is a passionate lessons management practitioner. As one of the original co-writers of the original *Lessons Management Handbook* by AIDR, he also participated in the review in 2018. He was awarded the AFAC Lessons Management Award in 2019 for his work establishing a lessons management framework for the Queensland Government Department of Natural Resources, Mines and Energy.

Lessons management: an important enabler for change

Presenting on behalf of the NSW SEMC Lessons Management Advisory Group

11.30am | Tuesday 22 March

Josipa Matesa - Resilience NSW

Scott Colefax - NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service

During the summer of 2019-20, NSW experienced significant impacts from bushfires across broad areas of the state, burning millions of hectares of land and causing destruction to many communities. With resources pushed beyond agency limits, and a response that required interstate and international assistance, many questions were asked about how to better prepare for the next disaster.

Before the last fire was extinguished, the NSW Government committed to the Bushfire Inquiry, with a focus on resolving and implementing change before the next fire season. Likewise, the Federal Government announced the Royal Commission into National Natural Disaster Arrangements. These inquiries were completed under very tight timeframes and required significant agency resourcing and time commitments to contribute to them. With this an accepted approach, how can a lessons management process compliment formal reviews?

This presentation will look at how the outcomes of the lessons management processes undertaken at the state level by the NSW State Emergency Management Committee and by agencies at an organisational level aligned with the findings from the NSW Bushfire Inquiry and the Royal Commission.

Due to the tight timeframes associated with the NSW Bushfire Inquiry and the Royal Commission, collection and collation of data was conducted before state and agency lessons management processes were completed and outputs were able to be incorporated. The NSW state level lessons management process demonstrated that it can provide an evidence base to support reviews, is sustainable, and can be undertaken on a regular basis.

How do we use lessons management as a continuous improvement tool to compliment formal reviews on an ongoing basis?



Josipa Matesa has spent the last five years as Senior Project Officer, Lessons Management and Evaluation at Resilience NSW (formerly NSW Office of Emergency Management). Jo has over 15 years' experience across emergency management, lessons management, continuous improvement, management systems and business analysis.

Jo has been instrumental in leading the development of the *Lessons Management Framework for NSW Emergency Management Sector* and the operationalisation of the framework to support the establishment of an annual state level lessons management lifecycle. She continues to lead the state lessons management program in collaboration with the NSW State Emergency Management Committee's Lessons Management Advisory Group. Jo also led the development of the national level Foundations of Lessons Management online training course in collaboration with a multi-jurisdictional working group.



Scott Colefax works in the Fire and Incident Management Operations Branch of NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) as the Senior Knowledge Content Officer leading the lessons management process for NPWS. Scott also represents NPWS on the NSW Lessons Management Advisory Group and KIRUN.

Scott has been involved in firefighting and incident management for over 25 years both as volunteer for NSW Rural Fire Service and for the past 10 years as an employee in NPWS. Scott continues to undertake roles in firefighting, IMT's, state aviation coordination and other non fire incidents like the recent rat eradication incident on Lord Howe Island. Scott is a keen RPAS pilot and has been leading the implementation of RPAS into NPWS fire operations, including the design and delivery of purpose built RPAS vehicle.

The learning process: what's missing?

12.00pm | Tuesday 22 March

Mark Thomason AFSM

The recurring issue of lessons not being learned continues to be identified in post incident reviews and has been reinforced in several recent reports from the 2019-20 bushfires. The national *Lessons Management Handbook* and agency lessons frameworks describe the process of stakeholder engagement, communication, and what constitutes a learning culture. However, it is not difficult to find similar re-occurring lessons stretching back many decades. Which poses the question- why aren't we learning?

This presentation proposes that the learning concept has not been integrated into the lessons frameworks and is overlooked by organisations. This results in lessons not being learned. The management of lessons has been described as a process that needs to be incorporated into organisations' activities and culture to promote

learning and continuous improvement. The US Centre for Army Learning describes one model of organisational learning as comprising of tacit, explicit, and organisational knowledge. While the interpretation of this may vary between organisations, one concept adopted by a number of agencies with a lessons framework is individual learning, change in doctrine, training, and reporting on implementation. While this concept may appear sound, the learning process has some shortfalls.

This presentation will explore learning strategies that are key to successful learning from lessons. Key aspects explained include the role learnings play in intuitive decision making and why sharing, storage and retrieval of the learning is critical in achieving a lesson learned.



Mark Thomason is currently working as a consultant in emergency management and studying a master's degree in decision making of incident controllers during megafires. Mark previously worked for the South Australian Country Fire Service undertaking roles including Manager Risk and Lessons Management and Manager of Operational Improvement. Highlights of Mark's career include the development of doctrine on lessons management including post incident reviews and storytelling debrief formats. During his career Mark has led Level 3 Incident Management Teams for major fires in South Australia and interstate and has been deployed overseas. Mark has been involved in national lessons management, including contributing to AIDR's *Lessons Management Handbook* and analysis workshops. Mark's operational experience has underpinned his drive to capture and share learnings. He is passionate about improving outcomes not just for firefighters but a variety of organisations, creating learning formats for diverse audiences, and volunteering at his local brigade.

Regaining trust in debriefs

12.30pm | Tuesday 22 March

Ian Phipps - Queensland Fire and Emergency Services

Previously there were three different debrief documents, that in most cases once completed did not really go anywhere, unless someone took ownership of some of the content. The perception of a lack of action following debriefs eroded the trust in formal debriefs. With the introduction of a single lessons management process, trust is being re-established across the career and volunteer workforce and partner agencies.

The Queensland Fire and Emergency Services (QFES) gateway provides all members and staff with multiple methods to provide feedback, including a spreadsheet for the data, a single templated form, or a kit for face-to-face debriefs. Based around SHARE (Safety, How, Achievements, Risks, Empower) the process captures the whole of the event by everyone one that was involved regardless of their role. The process is very visual with images used to explain topics and processes, which provides a greater understanding and is engaging. This visual aspect combined with the SHARE template gives the process a flow that has the added advantage of reducing the potential of people getting stuck on the negative issues.

With participants understanding that all the data provided will continue to be reviewed as it's entered into a functional database and seeing some results following the process, either by changes to practices or the production of a visual report, there has been increased confidence in the process.

Following a recent multi agency operation, a session was held involving several external agencies who found the process open, easy to use, and engaging, to the point where there has been requests for QFES staff to run the process for other agencies.

With greater knowledge of the process there has been a greater uptake in debriefs, and a proposal to introduce a QR code for use in vehicles, documentation, and buildings will only increase the responses following all events, regardless of size.



Ian Phipps currently works for QFES as the SES Area Controller for the Toowoomba area of the South West Region and is responsible for 403 volunteers across five local government areas. In performing this role, Ian brings with him over 25 years of operational experience. Ian joined the Queensland SES in 1986, before undertaking operational policing roles with the RAAF Police, NSW Police Force, and time with the US State Department. In addition to the challenges of the day-to-day operations, these roles saw him undertake the lead in several large multiagency operations, before moving into managerial roles where he has been involved in the development of operational policy. Through his experience and witnessing the lack of change following traditional debriefs, Ian has focussed his attention on an effective lessons management system that empowers all users and drives continuous improvement for QFES.

Selling the need for lessons management: bringing the workforce along

2.30pm | Tuesday 22 March

Dan Meijer and Josh Atkins - NSW Rural Fire Service

The 2019-20 bushfire season was the most intense, longest, most destructive fire season in living memory: 26 deaths, thousands of buildings destroyed, and widespread damage to the environment and fauna of NSW.

The extraordinary conditions meant that in some cases, well-established containment methods failed and new initiatives were adapted on the go. Necessity proved to be the mother of invention.

The lessons of our successful firefights, and those needed to share our adaption to never-before-seen fire ferocity and scale, has made a robust Lessons Management System essential to the organisation's future.

The NSW Rural Fire Service Lessons Management Framework is structured to both address the needs of the organisation, using established methodologies, and also the needs of the workforce, by being based on participation and inclusion at all levels.

As in many similar organisations, resistance to change is common and needs to be managed carefully. However, volunteers embrace initiatives which they see value in. Volunteers' morale can be affected by their perception of being listened to and valued by the organisation.



Superintendent Dan Meijer has been an operational firefighter with the NSW RFS for 23 years, with the last 17 as a salaried staff member.

His current role is Supervisor of Operational Improvement, focussing on the NSW RFS lessons management system, as well as a range of consulting and SME roles across the organisation.

He has worked in a variety of staff roles, including learning and development, firefighting research, interagency liaison and coordination, managing the NSW RFS communications centre, and coordinating operational doctrine. His operational experience includes being Brigade Captain, commanding divisions in the field, holding a range of Incident Management Team roles across major fire campaigns, and roles in the NSW RFS state operations centre.



Chief Superintendent Josh Atkins has been an operational firefighter with the NSW RFS for eight years, with the last two as a salaried staff member. Josh was previously with NSW Ambulance as an Intensive Care Paramedic and Operational Manager for 18 years.

His current role is Manager of Operational Performance, focussing on operational improvement, the NSW RFS lessons management system, operational reporting and NSW RFS doctrine.

He has worked in a variety of roles with NSW Ambulance and NSW RFS, including Manager Patient Flow, Zone Manager, Control Centre Manager, NRSC Deployments Manager, a number of NSW and Australian deployments and worked with AFAC on the Interstate COVID Protocol. His operational experience includes Ambulance Commander at various high profile events across NSW, and deployments with NSW RFS into Victoria and around NSW.

Community centred learnings from the K'gari (Fraser Island) Bushfire Review

3.30pm | Tuesday 22 March

Kylie Mercer - Office of the Inspector-General Emergency Management

The Office of the Inspector-General of Emergency Management (IGEM) undertook a review into a bushfire event on K'gari (Fraser Island), Queensland in 2020 that attracted worldwide media attention. The review examined the preparedness and response to the bushfire to identify examples of good practice and opportunities for improvement. The fire started on 14 October 2020 as a result of an illegal campfire on the island. The bushfire burned for 8 weeks, burning over 50% of the island's vegetation. K'gari is the world's largest sand island and is a UNESCO World Heritage Listed site. It features pristine and ancient rainforest areas, sand dunes and lakes. It also presents challenges for traditional firefighting efforts due to the heavy canopies of forests and narrow and sandy 4WD tracks. The island is home to the Traditional Owners, the Butchulla people, who were part of the Incident Management Team and Incident Control Centre during the event. They provided advice and guidance on the use of fresh and salt water for waterbombing operations and the location of culturally significant sites. Their land and sea rangers were also involved in the firefighting response.

In commencing the review, IGEM undertook the largest community engagement program in its 6-year history engaging with the Traditional Owners, local community, business community and researcher groups. The review took into regard the cultural and environmental significance of K'gari, and its UNESCO World Heritage listing, and highlighted good practice and opportunities for improvement. The report features several case studies including the integration of Traditional Owners into the firefighting response, and the township of Happy Valley developing and enacting its community bushfire plan, with 50 residents staying behind to defend their township.

During and after the review, IGEM identified lessons to improve our community engagement program and implemented changes through our review process to address these learnings. This presentation will share the learnings from the five community forums IGEM held with residents, businesses and tourism operators, an online summit with academics and researchers, and a co-designed forum with the island's Traditional Owners.



Kylie Mercer was admitted as a solicitor in 2001, she has over 20 years experience in a range of legal and managerial roles within the public sector with extensive experience particularly within independent statutory authorities, working with a variety of statutory boards.

Kylie first commenced her career as a criminal defence lawyer at Legal Aid Queensland. From there she has held a range of positions from Manager, High Risk Work Licences at Workplace Health and Safety, to Executive Manager, Discipline and Appeals at Queensland College of Teachers through to Registrar of Board of Professional Engineers of Queensland, managing all aspects of the office. Kylie has also held a number of positions at Parole Board Queensland, as a Community Board member, Professional Board member and as Director of their Legal Unit.

Kylie commenced her role as Director, Legal Monitoring and Evaluation at IGEM in October 2021 and is embracing the challenge of working in a new environment.

Success: a great reality check

4.00pm | Tuesday 22 March

Janelle Wheatley and Scott Hanckel ESM - ACT Emergency Services Agency

“A trusted future-focused agency that protects and supports a prepared and resilient community.” This is the vision of the ACT Emergency Services Agency (ESA).

This presentation will explore the successful approaches (and challenges) faced by the ACT ESA in the day-to-day delivery of emergency management services to the ACT community.

The presentation will:

- Consider the benefits of taking a strategic, holistic and collaborative approach to the delivery of emergency services through an integrated model. This approach allows for operations to be based within a single entity, enabling direct access to individual specialist services whilst integrating the end service delivered to the community to simplify government processes and achieve better outcomes for the wellbeing of Canberrans.
- Reflect on the value of continued partnerships and shared responsibility within the ACT Government and with the community as imperative to preserving life, property, and the environment.
- Discuss the advantages and effectiveness of a robust monitoring and evaluation process that drives innovation and supports learning for service improvement.
- Examine the direct relationship between strategic alignment and operational performance.
- Explore how ACT ESA is evolving and building the organisation for the future, embracing an adaptive management process to address increasing climate change, and supporting continuous improvement based on sound research, modelling, monitoring, evaluation and lessons learned.



Janelle Wheatley is an experienced senior manager with more than 30 years in the public sector. Janelle’s experience at the senior management level is extensive, having worked across several portfolio areas including emergency services, community recovery and emergency planning, youth services, family support and out of home care. Janelle joined the ACT ESA in September 2018 and was subsequently appointed to the Chief of Staff position in May 2020. Prior to this time, Janelle was a volunteer member of the ACT State Emergency Service. As Chief of Staff to the Commissioner, Janelle has been instrumental in shaping ACT ESA’s strategic direction and working collaboratively to mature the governance structure, including both strategic and operational risk management, strategic policy development and business process improvement. Janelle has been actively involved in emergency management for more than 20 years, including as the Deputy Community Recovery Coordinator for the ACT. Janelle played a significant community recovery role in the 2003 Canberra bushfires. Further, Janelle has led two interstate deployments (2011 Brisbane floods and 2018 Townsville floods) as part of the ACT Community Recovery Team, supporting and empowering the community to manage their own recovery from disasters.



Scott Hanckel has spent 23 years as a Senior Emergency Manager with the NSW State Emergency Service and ACT ESA, following a 15 year military career. Scott is an emergency management professional with an ongoing commitment to increase the resilience of communities during emergencies or disasters through collaboration, communication, integrity and leadership.

Scott has played a leading role in organisational-wide work on redeveloping and defining incident management and leading the operational response of the NSW State Emergency Service. In his current role as Senior Director Planning and Preparedness for the ACT ESA, he oversees risk reduction planning and preparedness activities for the agency.

Scott is married to Tracy and is proud father to Daniel and Jessica.

Success is learning from and with our communities

4.30pm | Tuesday 22 March

Mike Wassing AFSM - Queensland Fire and Emergency Services

Success is community engagement that includes meaningful two-way communication, where insight is gained through listening to and hearing the ideas, intelligence, opinions and needs of our communities. This achieves a strong sense of community connectedness and increased collective capability in the face of emergency and disasters. It helps us make better and more sustainable decisions and enables capable communities to take positive actions.

Operation Knock Knock was a state-wide, multi-agency community engagement initiative involving staff and volunteers from Queensland Fire and Emergency Services (QFES), Surf Life Saving Queensland, Volunteer Marine Rescue, Queensland Police Service and Australian Red Cross. They mobilised together to door knock in their local communities to raise awareness of the importance of resilience, preparation for hazards, and community connectedness. A targeted and local place-based approach ensured the community was engaged on matters that were important to them. This also presented a unique opportunity to collect valuable data that could be shared and used as a reference point for future engagements.

The Inspector-General Emergency Management (IGEM) Queensland Bushfires Review identified a number of community observations, insights and opportunities for improvement in bushfire management in Queensland following the worst fires on record in 2018 and 2019. QFES values the opportunity to review the findings to further understand the community and support the priorities that are important to them. The independent IGEM recommendations inform a collective view of lessons identified internally by QFES, Rural Fire Service, State Emergency Service, Fire and Rescue Service and disaster management staff and volunteers. Good governance combined with training, development and cultural change programs ensures the lessons identified are systematically embedded as lessons learned and applied. A process that is iterative as it is collaborative.

Success is learning from and with our communities – to enable us to make better decisions on business priorities underpinned by local community intelligence.



Mike Wassing is the Deputy Commissioner for Emergency Management, Volunteerism and Community Resilience within QFES and is committed to enhancing volunteerism, strengthening QFES capabilities and promoting an inclusive and supportive culture that enriches our ability to support our local communities. He is responsible for the accountabilities of the State Emergency Service, Rural Fire Service, community resilience and risk mitigation, and volunteer capability and coordination within the department, including support to approximately 37,000 volunteers. With a shared vision for the cornerstone role volunteers from all organisations play in creating healthy, safe and resilient communities, Mike led the development of the QFES Volunteerism Strategy, which is premised on the crucial partnership with volunteer services, not-for-profit organisations, businesses and the whole of government. With several years serving as a volunteer in the Country Fire Authority in Victoria and over 25 years in fire and emergency management, Mike has extensive experience leading the management and coordination of prevention, preparedness, response and recovery for all hazards, as well as strategic control and coordination for major emergencies. Mike holds a Bachelor of Applied Science in Environment Management and Land Use Policy, a Diploma in Firefighting Operations and Fire Management, and a Graduate Diploma of Business in Strategic Management, and has been awarded both the National Emergency Medal and Australian Fire Service Medal.



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Closing the loop – moving from lessons we don't learn to lessons we do

10.15am | Wednesday 23 March

Alistair Dawson - Inspector-General, Emergency Management, Queensland

This presentation will outline the role that effective lessons management can play in leading transformational change. It will focus on three key areas: learning lessons, being accountable, and embedding culture.

The Royal Commission into National Natural Disaster Arrangements identified the importance of doing more than merely identifying lessons. The real benefits are achieved through learning those lessons and following through with actions. The same lessons have been identified repeatedly over the past 20 years. This indicates that few have actually been learned. Why is this? Are the lessons identified 'wicked problems' or so complex that they cannot be solved? Is there reluctance or barriers to implementing recommended solutions? How do we encourage a culture of learning within and across organisations and jurisdictions? These are just some of the questions to answer if disaster and emergency management is to become a true learning sector. Acknowledging and taking steps to ensure we learn the lessons of history will help us to improve the future.

The Royal Commission also identified the importance of accountability. It is incumbent upon all of us who have been entrusted by our communities to prevent, prepare, respond, and recover to be accountable. We know it is not easy to

implement change. Nor is it easy to work collaboratively to monitor, evaluate and report on the implementation of recommendations for that change. However, it is an important construct of accountability that we are transparent about why recommendations are not accepted and that we work together to ensure timely implementation, monitoring, and reporting on those that are.

At the grass roots level, promoting and embedding a culture of learning within individuals and across all levels of organisations is the key to creating a learning culture. Focusing on individuals and organisations will expand this mindset across sectors and jurisdictions to create a true learning nation. Instilling a positive no-blame approach to the sharing of lessons, both identified and learned, will enhance and encourage the learning culture that we should all be embracing. This presentation will seek to explore how questions around learning lessons can be answered, the steps we can take to shift thinking and focus attention on learning and how through this we can all be accountable, 'close the loop' and learn the lessons.



Alistair Dawson was appointed Queensland's Inspector-General Emergency Management on 6 February 2020. Alistair has extensive emergency management experience and has played a key role in coordinating the whole-of-government response to several complex disaster events across the state as a District Disaster Coordinator, Chair of the State Disaster Coordination Group and Executive Officer to the Premier of Queensland. Alistair brings over 40 years' policing experience in both London and Queensland to the role as Inspector-General Emergency Management. Alistair started as a general duties police officer in Brisbane in 1982 and went on to become one of Queensland's most senior police officers, serving as the Chief Superintendent at the G20 Group, Police Commander for the 2018 Commonwealth Games and held a number of Assistant Commissioner roles. In 2010, he was awarded the Australian Police Medal, and the National Emergency Medal for Queensland 2010-2011.

Learnings from a unique response

11.30am | Wednesday 23 March

Joe Buffone - Director General, Emergency Management Australia

The establishment of the Victorian Aged Care Response Centre (VACRC) following the outbreak of COVID-19 across residential aged care facilities in Victoria demonstrated the importance of being able to harness a multi-agency, multi-disciplined workforce with emergency management, health and military experts to tackle a unique problem in a complex operating environment.

The VACRC exhibited its effectiveness in coordinating acute response, particularly in reducing the impact of the pandemic and improving the on the ground operational response. There was no other agency or entity set up to do this and it filled that gap.

The achievements of the VACRC all need to be seen in the context that it started with nothing. Everything had to be constructed from scratch, including the operating model, the physical space, the structures, and the team. All this at the same time as responding to the crisis.

The ability to engage with risk by doing things differently, and a willingness to learn from others and share learnings increased morale and encouraged personnel to perform at their best in a highly complex and challenging situation.

A real time lessons process was initiated to identify lessons that had or could be learned to both enhance the effectiveness of VACRC and inform potential future requirements for a similar centre that may be required in other jurisdictions.

This presentation will present the insights from the real time lessons process as well as learnings from conducting the process.



Joe Buffone is the Director General of Emergency Management Australia (EMA). He has been with EMA since December 2016 and has held multiple roles within the organisation. As Director General, Joe is responsible for overseeing Australian Government National Situation Room, Coordination of Australian Government Disaster Assistance (non-financial) and the National Coordination Mechanism.

Joe has more than 30 years' experience in security and disaster management and has held a number of key senior positions. Joe was deployed to Victoria to establish and lead the Victorian Aged Care Response Centre to coordinate the response to COVID outbreaks in the Aged Care sector. Joe led the centre for three months until the situation was stabilised and transitioned to recovery. Joe has held several senior executive positions over the past 15 years, such as Chief Officer of the Country Fire Authority Victoria, Deputy Emergency Management Commissioner Victoria, and Deputy Emergency Services Commissioner Victoria.

Joe has had direct involvement in coordinating and responding to major emergencies in Australia and internationally, at the strategic, operational and tactical levels. Some examples are; leading the Victorian Aged Care Response Centre 2020, Black Summer bushfires 2019-20, Far North Queensland floods 2018-19, Cyclone Debbie 2017, Tasmanian bushfires 2016, Wye River bushfires 2016, Nepal earthquake 2015, Somerton building waste fire 2015, Hazelwood Mine fire 2014, NSW bushfires 2014, Victorian floods 2011, and the Victorian Black Saturday bushfires 2009. Joe has also served in the Australian Defence Force.

Joe holds a Masters of Business, Graduate Diploma in Disaster Management, and a Diploma in Security Management.

Defence lessons identified from COVID-19

12.00pm | Wednesday 23 March

Geoff Cooper - Army Knowledge Centre

On 9 March 2020, Defence established the COVID-19 task force to ensure coordination of Defence support to whole-of-government efforts. In response to the developing situation, Defence commenced Operation COVID-19 ASSIST, to task support to government agencies and international partners.

One month later a lessons strategy was issued. This enabled the task force to establish the Enterprise Level, Defence COVID-19 Lessons Framework (DCLF). The DCLF facilitated centralised coordination, but relied on de-centralised lesson capture and analysis.

Success of the DCLF was due to three factors: legitimacy, framework, and relationships. A formal task order and associated directives ensured the COVID-19 task force had authority to obtain observations from all services and groups. The DCLF provided governance, process, and a roadmap. The existing lessons network in Defence (predominately Navy, Army and Air Force) extended to include all groups into a 'coalition of the willing'.

The DCLF was a phased approach for lessons management, with phases aligned to deliverables in three-monthly cycles. The DCLF was based on four lines of effort from the overarching Defence COVID-19 strategy: support to public health, support to the economy, safeguard national security, support the near region; and another theme covering policy, business continuity and strategic communications.

By the end of phase two (30 September) there were well over 1,000 observations in the Defence Lessons Repository. Although most were tactical, some were strategic and progressed to become insights, and subsequently presented to senior Defence leadership as strategic level lessons identified.

The greatest successes of the DCLF was the quality of strategic insights that could be shared amongst allies and partners, and how insights could inform ongoing pandemic planning. Just as successful was the unity of effort in achieving the ambitious DCLF timelines. This has done much to bring lessons management to the forefront to initiate reform and promote organisational learning in Defence.



Geoff Cooper has been developing experience in the practical work associated with organisational learning, knowledge exploitation [management], and learning capability strategy since 2001. At this stage, his experience has all been with the Australian Army, Australian Government, and its allies.

Geoff's goal is to use his knowledge and skills to help organisations that are serious about developing organisational learning potential.

A terror attack, a volcanic eruption and COVID-19

12.30pm | Wednesday 23 March

Claire Bibby, Claire Pettigrew and Des Hosie - LessoNZ Community of Practice

In New Zealand in March 2019, 51 people died as a result of a terror attack. In December 2019, a volcano erupted causing 21 deaths.

A team of three emergency managers volunteered to co-author a lessons management report about these incidents for the New Zealand Government, when in March 2020, a state of national emergency was declared and the entire nation went into isolation to manage COVID-19.

This presentation, by the team of three, discusses how the lessons management O.I.L.L. methodology was successfully introduced to New Zealand in the middle of a pandemic.

With a touch of humour and humility, the team will discuss the highs and lows in their approach to lessons analysis and writing the report, and the successful socialisation of their work with leaders who could make change.



Claire Bibby retired this year after 36 years of service with New Zealand Police. In her former role she was Continuous Improvement Advisor at police headquarters for the 111 emergency centres, which manage emergency response. She was also a member of the inter-agency LessoNZ community of practice.

In 2018 Claire received the Australasian Council of Women and Policing Award for excellence in research to improve law enforcement for women. In 2019 she was a finalist in the policy section for the New Zealand Women of Influence Awards.



Claire Pettigrew has worked in Emergency Management for several New Zealand government agencies, including the National Emergency Management Agency. She currently works in emergency management and business continuity at the Ministry of Education, where her portfolio focuses on capability development and continuous improvement.

She has assisted several agencies with evaluation of emergency exercises and responses and has piloted a continuous improvement framework within her volunteer role with New Zealand Land Search and Rescue.

Claire has a Master of Management, attained with research into community disaster resilience initiatives, and has also published research on youth engagement with the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction.



Des Hosie is a career firefighter and 39-year veteran of the New Zealand Fire Service and Fire and Emergency New Zealand.

Currently the National Response Capability Advisor for Safety, Continuous Improvement and Lessons Management based in Fire and Emergency New Zealand's national headquarters, Des has extensive operational firefighting and rescue experience.

Des leads LessoNZ, a lessons management community of practice in New Zealand. Its function is to share lessons from incidents and exercises across the all of government, emergency services, defence and key infrastructure sectors.

Using research to learn future lessons about disaster exercises

2.00pm | Wednesday 23 March

Mark Ryan - C3 Resilience

The Bushfire and Natural Hazards CRC has done a terrific job collating the recommendations of over 315 reports and enquiries into a database which can be easily accessed and analysed.

If 315 recommendations can be sorted into 41 sub codes or themes, what can these tell us about lessons we already know? Whilst one could present for days on the thematic data they have put together, let's focus on the concept of emergency management exercises.

The recommendations, of which many are positive, speak to community involvement in exercising, strongly recommend joint training and exercising, and should work vertically and horizontally across incident and emergency response phases, yet not one of the 41 recommendations talk about using lessons themselves as the exercise need.

Lessons from the past become ideal needs for future exercises. Multi-agency exercises are rich in outcomes and relationship maturity, yet seemed to be shied away from, in a world where it is becoming more and more evident that no single agency, or indeed jurisdiction can cope.

This presentation is designed to be interactive. Online polling will be used to ask the audience about what the blockages are in sharing lessons at a multi-agency level to form efficient and effective disaster and emergency management lessons that are informed by exercise findings, or lessons identified. I will walk delegates through those blockages and start a dialogue that can continue throughout the conference, before a presentation at the end of the conference on the thoughts, findings and key takeaways for delegates to bring back to their organisations to start a dialogue.

Considering the recent release of the NSW Audit Office findings about the difficulties in implementing report recommendations, this presentation is designed to be current, practical and stimulate discussion amongst conference participants.



Mark Ryan has a career spanning 27 years in fire and emergency management across four states and territories. Mark held senior volunteer positions with the NSW Rural Fire Service (RFS) before taking on the role of Inspector, Operations for the ACT Rural Fire Service in 2003, then returning to the NSW RFS taking on a range of operational, management and leadership positions at the rank of Superintendent until 2010. During his time, he performed a range of Level 3 Incident Management Team positions including Incident Controller, Major Incident Management Coordinator Region North, including for the Black Saturday Bushfires in Victoria in 2009.

Mark then moved to Queensland where he worked with Queensland Fire and Emergency Services setting up operational assurance programs, then shifting to lead the Brisbane City State Emergency Service; where he led the State Emergency Service response to the 2014 Brisbane hailstorm, G20 Summit in Brisbane in 2014 and the Brisbane contribution to the Gold Coast Commonwealth Games and Queens Baton Relay in 2018. Mark has been awarded the Canberra Bushfire Medal, the National Medal, National Emergency Medal and citations from the G20 2014 Summit and 2018 Gold Coast Commonwealth Games.

Mark is a passionate lessons management practitioner. As one of the original co-writers of the original *Lessons Management Handbook* by AIDR, he also participated in the review in 2018. He was awarded the AFAC Lessons Management Award in 2019 for his work establishing a lessons management framework for the Queensland Government Department of Natural Resources, Mines and Energy.

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Health and Safety Assessments and security analysis to protect your people, your investment and your reputation

CRISIS MANAGEMENT

Building first response capability coupled with expert support during crisis' to control the narrative, and bring together critical functions of your organisation to solve complex issues

General information

Networking event

A networking event will be held on the evening of Day One of the forum in the foyer and terrace outside the forum plenary room from 5pm – 7pm. It will be available to all those attending in person, with drinks and canapes being served.

AFAC Lessons Management Award

AFAC, along with member agencies, recognise the continued need to develop lessons management capability across the fire and emergency services in Australia. The AFAC Knowledge, Innovation and Research Utilisation Network develops and advocates approaches that support the development and sharing of good practice in knowledge management, lessons management, innovation and cultural practices that support our business at all levels.

The Lessons Management Award winner will be recognised for their efforts to develop lessons management capability within their organisation and across the sector.

The Award is proudly sponsored by C3 Resilience.



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Join the conversation

The Lessons Management Forum is being presented to both a virtual and in-person audience, as such we want to make sure we address everyone's most burning questions.

Therefore, we'll be using an audience interaction platform called Slido. Slido allows you to submit your questions as well as upvote the questions of other participants. Questions with the highest number of votes will stand a better chance to get answered by speakers.

1. Go to [slido.com](https://www.slido.com)
2. Enter **#LMF2022** or **scan the QR code**, which will be displayed on the slideshow of each presentation.
3. Once you are in the Lessons Management Forum Q&A page you can pick which sessions you wish to ask your questions in.



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