

# IGEM *Connect*

Inspector-General Emergency Management

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Welcome to the latest edition of IGEM Connect.

This summer has been a mixed bag for disaster management practitioners in Queensland with many of you dealing with the consequences of recent heavy rain and others experiencing an unusually quiet season.

Wherever you sit in the spectrum, I hope this edition provides a little insight into the on-going work, direction and actions arising from my Office.

From my perspective, I intend to lead a renewed focus on re-engaging with State Government agencies during 2016.

While engagement with State agencies over the past two years has been close and productive in the development of a number of volumes of work including the Emergency Management Assurance Framework and Standard for Disaster Management in Queensland, there is a need to heighten the collaborative focus with State agencies even further.

In conjunction with our on-going partnership with local government, closer engagement with State agencies will ensure more targeted application of the Framework and maximisation of community safety outcomes for all Queenslanders.

In support of this, I have already begun a scheduled series of meetings with agency CEOs and intend to particularly heighten the level of engagement with State Government Champions for Indigenous communities.

These actions will be supported by a broader volume of work to further strengthen those relationships.

As with past years, I intend to get out in 2016 and meet as many of you as I can in person, and, along with staff in my Office, work in partnership to continue to drive excellence in disaster management in Queensland.

In addition to advising you of the focus for 2016, we have a number of other activities and initiatives I need to update you on.

## Update on Data Sharing

As many of you would be aware, my Office has been very active in looking at the issue of discovering and sharing data and information across the disaster management sphere.

Historically, the value of an open approach to sharing data has not been widely realised due to a limited ability to access and view the consolidated information in a meaningful way. This has been exacerbated by an inability to actively collaborate on the same data sets from different locations.

In October 2014 IGEM progressed a data-sharing initiative via the DSITI "Innovation Hub" to overcome this challenge. Through this process, Cloud Sherpas - a Google Global enterprise partner - was selected to develop a proof-of-concept software solution based on Google maps and tools by a cross sector panel

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including QPS, QFES, PSBA and local government. The “See what I see” (CWIC) concept was progressed to develop a range of business requirements and use cases to inform the technical and policy changes required to achieve a sustainable solution. Agencies engaged included, DPC, DTMR, DPHW, DNRM, DCCSDS, Qld Health, various local governments, office of QGCIO, and DILGP.

In late 2015, these requirements were used as the basis of assessment of three systems which could provide a potential tool for disaster management requirements.

An evaluation of three systems used by local government representatives, portfolio and state agency stakeholders concluded that EM-COP, used by Emergency Management Victoria, provided the best user experience. While it was recognised that some disaster managers could benefit from this initiative, further work is required to develop a catalogue or data portal to benefit others. The project is now under the auspices of the Public Safety Business Agency.

## Wide Bay Study

In the last edition of IGEM Connect, I flagged an exciting study my Office is facilitating in collaboration with disaster management practitioners in the Wide Bay and North Burnett region focussing on disaster management arrangements for at-risk seniors living in their own homes.

Arising from a C2C meeting in Bundaberg in September last year, the study is looking at how at-risk independent-living seniors living in the Fraser Coast, Bundaberg and North Burnett council areas are identified during a disaster; how local disaster management practitioners can gauge the extent of preparedness and resilience of those seniors at risk; and what practical mechanisms are required to ensure all Government and Non-Government organisations are working collaboratively and effectively to provide the best possible service to these residents.

The study, which is being driven by staff from within my Office including an intern from the Queensland University of Technology, involves a gap analysis process looking at current arrangements and processes and matching these against an ideal future state.

Practical suggestions for improvement will be drawn from an extensive literature review and national and international best practice models and activities.

Work on the study has progressed strongly over the summer and, importantly, the proposed model will now be road-tested in a workshop by national and international experts during the 13th Global Conference of the International Federation on Ageing in Brisbane between June 21-23 this year.

Learnings from this study and potential application to other areas within Queensland will be considered following its practical use in the first instance in the Wide Bay region.

I will keep you updated in future regarding the progress of the study but in the interim I would like to thank Bundaberg DDMG Executive Officer Snr Sgt Grantley Marcus, and Fraser Coast and Bundaberg council Disaster Management Coordinators Mal Churchill and Matt Dyer for their outstanding assistance thus far in assisting to develop and drive this volume of work.

## New IGEM Advisory Panel

One of the key strengths behind the successful implementation of the Emergency Management Assurance Framework and the Standard for Disaster Management in Queensland was the guidance and involvement of a dedicated Advisory Panel, comprising key stakeholders from across the disaster management sphere.

As the Office of the IGEM expands into broader volumes of work, I am committed to maintaining and enhancing that engagement and consultation with sector stakeholders.

As part of that commitment, I have established a broader IGEM Advisory Panel which will offer practical stakeholder comment and guidance on a range of IGEM activities.

The inaugural meeting of the new IGEM Advisory Panel will be held today, and will be made up of: Jo Beadle (DILGP0), Nancy Spencer (DPC), Michael Dickinson (LGAQ), Steve Grant (QFES), Insp John Bosnjak

(QPS), Leisa Bourne (Australian Red Cross), Tammy Miles (DCCSDS), Dr Peter Aitken (QH), Mike Wassing (QFES), Dr Tracey Arklay (Griffith University), Dr Amisha Mehta (QUT) and Anna Hebron from Brisbane City Council.

I look forward to working closely with the new Advisory Panel.

## Disaster Management Lexicon

One of the first tasks of the IGEM Advisory Panel will be to oversight the development of a common disaster management lexicon in Queensland.

In developing the Emergency Management Assurance Framework, stakeholders identified a need to work within a common language, contextualised to Queensland's disaster management sector.

While a number of national, interstate and agency-specific lexicons exist, more needs to be done to develop common terminology, phraseology and definitions specific to Queensland.

Through the IGEM Advisory Panel, a working group comprising disaster management practitioners will be formed to start of the process of developing common language.

I am under no illusion that the development of such a lexicon will involve considerable discussion and effort to progress but in my view it is a volume of work which cannot be ignored, given the potential for adverse outcomes for Queenslanders through confusion and negative impacts on interoperability between agencies.

The mechanics of how the lexicon will be developed and progressed and how it will be recognised within the disaster management sector in Queensland are matters to be considered in future by the IGEM Advisory Panel and my Office.

I will provide future updates on how the initiative is progressing

## DMO Network

The development of the Disaster Management Officer's Network has gone from strength to strength since its commencement late last year and we now have a couple of teleconferences under our belt.

The network now comprises 42 officers from 31 local authorities and my Office is actively looking to build the membership over coming months, particularly to incorporate and support officers involved with disaster management among Indigenous, rural and remote councils in Queensland.

The purpose of the network is to provide a forum for coalface practitioners within councils to:

- Build a sense of community amongst local disaster management officers in Queensland
- Support each other in applying and navigating the intricacies of Queensland's disaster management arrangements and associated doctrine
- Keep up to date with changes in the arrangements, doctrine and legislation
- Share and develop skills, knowledge, resources, ideas and innovation

As part of developing this network, my Office is currently scoping the possibility of a face-to-face forum in Cairns between May 4-6.

If you are from a local authority not already involved with the DMO Network and can see value in an officer from your council participating at the forum or bi-monthly teleconferences, contact Phil Nickerson from IGEM on 0431 500 909 or at [phil.nickerson@igem.qld.gov.au](mailto:phil.nickerson@igem.qld.gov.au).

I see real potential benefit in the network, not only for the officers involved but councils more broadly, and would encourage you to participate.

## Review of capability at a district and local level

My review team is working with stakeholders of the Warwick disaster district, including the Warwick District Disaster

Management Group and the Local Disaster Management Groups of Goondiwindi and Southern Downs, on a capability review.

Each group recently undertook an assessment against the Standard and my review team is currently analysing the responses, including feedback from the community, to develop a broad snapshot of capability.

In March, the review team will visit the district to discuss findings and agree on areas to be the focus of workshops in April to implement the improvement strategy.

I expect the review will be completed at the end of April, and provided to the Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Services. The review will include an evaluation of the process for potential replication in other disaster districts.

## Farewell to Jason Cameron

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to farewell Brisbane City Council's Disaster Operations Manager Jason Cameron.

As many of you would know Jason has announced his intention to step down from the role.

I have had the pleasure of working with Jason for a great number of years both in his role with Brisbane City Council and also formerly with Emergency Management Queensland at Kedron.

His expertise and willingness to more broadly assist the development of disaster management in Queensland has been invaluable over many years.

I would like to wish Jason the very best as he enters a new chapter of his life.

Until next time.

**Iain Mackenzie**  
**Inspector-General Emergency Management**

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