

AJEM BOOK REVIEW

How Australia deals with disasters

In Case of Emergency

How Australia deals with disasters and the people who confront the unexpected

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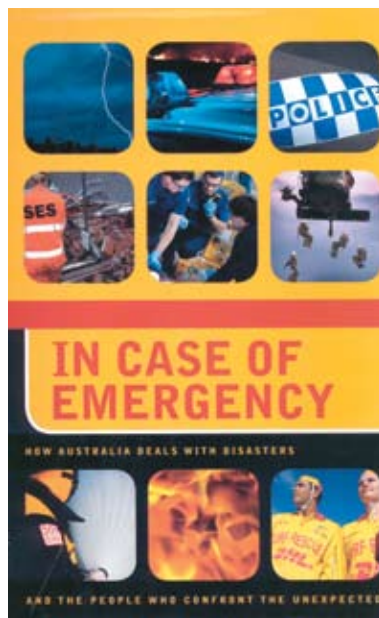
ETN-COM Publishing, Sydney.

This 220-page full-colour publication is an unprecedented visual and story presentation of Australia's emergency management and disaster recovery organisations in action. It's the first time such a comprehensive perspective of the sector has been produced.

In Case of Emergency is a high quality coffee-table style publication that presents a rich variety of history, method, organisational structure and operational incidents. It has been compiled by more than 40 contributors, many of them leading authorities in their fields, with Emergency Management Australia (EMA) being the project leader and major sponsor.

The aim of the publisher – ETN-COM Publishing of Sydney – in collaboration with EMA, is to provide articles and photographs that will create a deeper understanding and appreciation of the planning, efficiency and sheer courage that defines emergency management and emergency services in Australia.

The Director General of EMA, Tony Pearce, contributes two keynote articles: *Prepare Now for the Stormy Times Ahead*, and *Keeping Everyone in the Loop*. In his Foreword to the publication, Tony Pearce says it is a unique chronicle of Australia's skills



and achievements, its technology advances and developments and it provides a glimpse into the future for this important community sector.

Arguably, too little is known about the organisations that are responsible for our safety. This is the view of Australia's Attorney-General, the Hon Philip Ruddock MP. In his adjacent Foreword he says this is predominantly because most of their work is done behind the scenes. He adds that *In Case of Emergency* brings into focus the cooperation that exists, and the efforts of our local heroes.

Because volunteering is a mainstay of support in so many response agencies across the country, several case studies focus on the significant contribution and commitment made by our volunteers. The stalwart chairman of the Australian Emergency Management Volunteers Forum, Major General Hori Howard contributes a vivid picture of the value of the volunteer effort.

If it is the history of emergency response and management in Australia that interests you, then the substantial article contributed by former EMA Mt Macedon Training Institute Director Roger Jones, who was with EMA from shortly after it was formed as the Natural Disasters Organisation in 1974, will give you the pivotal events that changed the way Australia responds to its crises.

The other major government contributors to the book are the Australian Government Departments of Transport and Regional Services along with Health and Ageing, the Australian Federal Police, the Office of the Emergency Services Commissioner Victoria, the Queensland Department of Emergency Services, and the Metropolitan Fire Brigade and Metropolitan Ambulance Service in Melbourne. There are a number of private contributions on such topics as transport, telecommunications, technology, education, health and the special sciences. And the non-government sector is represented by the likes of Red Cross and the Salvation Army.

There are some 80 articles, vividly illustrated with action photographs sourced from across the spectrum of emergency services agencies.

In the words of Tony Pearce; those in emergency management and emergency services may be ordinary Australians, but as this publication demonstrates, their efforts and contribution are anything but ordinary.

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