



WADEM Oceania Newsletter - July 2019

Hello and welcome to the WADEM Oceania Chapter Newsletter for July 2019!

This year has seen a number of disaster events throughout the Oceania region. Papua New Guinea experienced an earthquake, Micronesia and the Marshall Islands have experienced storm events, and Australia has once again been impacted by bushfires. Volcano impact, the subject of the Oceania Chapter session at the Brisbane Congress, has once again affected the people of Papua New Guinea.

Recent eruptions of Mount Ulawun and Mount Manam have destroyed homes, plantations, and wells, with reports of up to 15,000 people affected. Relief to those affected is challenging as the ash cloud has caused flight disruption in the region. The report can be accessed at:

[New Alert - Papua New Guinea: Mt. Manam Volcano - Jun 2019](#)

The Oceania Chapter has continued to provide input into the broader WADEM organisational goal, and the development and publishing of the latest Position Statement regarding accurate reporting of public health data was led by several Oceania Chapter members.

The aims of the Chapter are to implement the objectives of WADEM within the Oceania Region as applicable to the resources and needs of the Region. Members of the Chapter possess a region-specific knowledge base of disasters and their prevention, preparedness, response, and recovery requirements. The Chapter provides a means to advocate for ensuring that region-specific disaster requirements are being properly understood and addressed.

Objectives

The objectives of the Chapter are to promote:

- Education and training opportunities to advance the professionalism of the humanitarian workforce;
- Interpretation and exchange of information through a network of members and publications;
- Development and maintenance of evidence-based standards of emergency and disaster health care and provision of leadership for integration into practice;
- Coordination of data collection and provision of direction in the development of standardized disaster assessment and research/evaluation methodologies;
- Encouragement of publications and presentation of evidence-based research findings in scientific publications, national, regional, and international conferences and congresses;
- Increased credibility for the members of the organization on a global, national, and local level;
- Increased membership and promotion of WADEM; and
- Ongoing development and improvement of emergency and disaster health management in the community.

Our committee members are:

Joe Cuthbertson (Chair)	Erin Smith (Deputy Chair)
Penny Burns	Caroline Spencer
Rowena Christiansen	Vivienne Tippett
Peter Aitken	Graeme McColl
Sandra Richardson	Sonia Morshead

Co-opted members:

Thompson Telepo	Alison Hutton
Skip Burkle	Hendro Wartatmo

Oceania Disaster Updates

Five disasters have been recorded on the CRED international disaster database for the year of 2019 in Oceania thus far, predominantly affecting Australia and Micronesia.

Disasters in Oceania: 2019 (*last updated 19 April 2019*)

Disaster Type	Country Name	Occurrence	Total deaths	Injured	Affected
Flood	Australia	1	3		100
Landslide	Papua New Guinea	3	10		
Storm	Marshall Islands	1			
Storm	Micronesia	1			10,000
Wildfire	Australia	1			672

Created on: 30 June 2019

D. Guha-Sapir, R. Below, Ph. Hoyois - EM-DAT: The CRED/OFDA International Disaster Database – www.emdat.be – Université Catholique de Louvain – Brussels – Belgium.

The recently released “Disasters 2018: Year in Review April 2019/CRED Crunch” is a useful resource for practitioners. Of note, Oceania and neighbours continued to bear great impacts from disasters in 2018 compared to the rest of the world. Earthquakes in Papua New Guinea affected over half a million people, and tsunami and mudflow triggered by earthquake in Sulawesi resulted in the deaths of 4,340 people, making it the deadliest disaster worldwide since 2015.

Conference Report

WADEM Congress 2019 - Brisbane, Australia

WADEM Oceania developed and hosted a dedicated event at the WADEM Brisbane Congress titled:

“Volcano Impact in Oceania”

The risk to human health caused by volcano eruption is of great relevance to populations in Oceania, many of which live in close proximity to the Pacific “Ring of Fire.” In 2018, seven volcanic disaster events were reported internationally, in December 2018 Mt. Anak Krakatau in Indonesia erupted which triggered a tsunami that killed over 400 people on the islands of Sumatra and Java.

The aim of the session was to explore how Volcano disaster risk and impact affect populations in Oceania. The objective of the session was for the Oceania Chapter to promote an improved attitude in engaging communities in disaster risk reduction and response. This attitude is based on principles of:

- Listen, don’t tell.
- Hear, don’t presume.
- Respond, ONLY if locally relevant.
- Link response to the local to make it sustainable.

Five presentations were provided by Oceania members, the first being led by Carol Stewart from Massey who provided an insightful session on health hazards of volcanic eruptions of Oceania volcano activity and risk factors specific to it. This was followed by Dr Ali Haedar from Indonesia who described the health impacts of volcano-related events in Indonesia. From further afield, based on her experiences in Vanuatu, Dr. Alison Lyon presented insights on primary care roles in building local capacity following volcanic activity. Bella Donna and Madelina from Indonesia both provided input on health team structure and practice in Indonesia, and the session was completed with a presentation from Kahlinda Mahoney on the application of the Tupaia regional health data platform for disaster response in Asia-Pacific.

The Oceania session was well attended. For more information, stay tuned to PDM, the presenters are developing a special report based on the session for publication.

Primary Health Care

The Canterbury Primary Health Group (CPRG) coordinates emergency planning and responses for the Canterbury region. Activations in recent times have been coordinating responses to earthquakes, measles outbreak and supporting primary health in the aftermath of a terror attack. The following website covers updates on events and free planning templates. This is available for others to use but acknowledgement to CPRG would be appreciated.

<http://www.primaryhealthresponse.org.nz/>

For further information, please contact Graeme McColl - ilsogno@snap.net.nz.

Education in the Spotlight - Edith Cowan University (ECU)

Study post-graduate Disaster and Emergency Response at Edith Cowan University

Are you interested in expanding your career within the multidisciplinary field of disaster and emergency response? Do you work for the emergency services, healthcare sector, military, NGO, emergency telecommunications, volunteer, mining, or other emergency management or disaster response organisations? Then we have a course that has been designed for ALL of you! ECU's postgraduate courses cover all aspects of the management of disasters, from preparedness and mitigation to response and recovery, as well as focusing on some of the key challenges associated with the overall management of disasters including mass fatality management, disaster victim identification, leadership, the psychological impact, disaster health and humanitarian assistance, to legal and ethical issues.

Our courses include a Graduate Certificate, Graduate Diploma, and a Masters Degree. All courses are offered entirely online with no on-campus requirement. They are open to both domestic and international students.

If you are an international student, contact the Course Coordinator, Dr. Erin Smith, to discuss an exciting new sponsorship opportunity which could reduce your course fees.

If you are a domestic student and working in the disaster and emergency response space, remember that you can claim some of your fees on your taxes each year!

Value for money

Our Master of Disaster and Emergency Response is great value for money. Our total course fee is currently the cheapest for Master degrees in Disaster and Emergency Management in Australia - AND our course is only nine units compared to the traditional twelve units in most other programs. So, we are cheaper - and you will complete your course quicker!

Quality education

Want another reason to choose Edith Cowan University to study disaster and emergency response? In 2019, and for the 4th year in a row, ECU received the top undergraduate teaching quality ranking of all public universities in Australia. QILT results are based on thousands of surveys completed by students across Australia. Over 85% of ECU students surveyed, rated the quality of the teaching they received

positively. ECU was also the top-ranked Australian public university for skills development and overall educational experience (based on two-year aggregated results).

ECU has been ranked in the world's top 150 universities under 50 years old in the 2019 Times Higher Education (THE) Young Universities Rankings. Young universities were measured on their teaching, research, citations, international outlook and industry income. Every year, university graduates around Australia are surveyed about their time at university, including factors impacting the quality of their experience and some post-university outcomes. The resulting scores are translated into university star ratings and these are published in the Good Universities Guide. ECU graduates have again given us a 5-star rating for teaching quality. This rating has now been achieved for 12 years in a row.

Expert guest speakers

Our course utilises innovative interview-style podcasts with some of the best national and international experts in this field as key learning materials. Why read about it when you can hear about it from someone who has been there, seen it and done it! Student feedback consistently highlights these podcasts as one of the best aspects of the courses. Our guest speakers include WADEM's own Professor Frederick "Skip" Burkle Jr, as well as key speakers from organisations like the UN, WHO, IFRC and ICRC, and other key national and international disaster and emergency response organisations. We also have an amazing group of survivors from disasters like the 9/11 terrorist attacks, and the London and Bali bombings, who join us to share their stories and reflect on their experiences. No other university degree offers all of these speakers within one course!

Want a taste?

An example of the type of podcast provided to our students has been provided for you to listen to for free! The podcast is an interview between the Course Coordinator, Dr Erin Smith and Ambulance Victoria's Peer Support Coordinator, Mr. David Cooper. David joins us to discuss Psychological First Aid: what it is; what it isn't; and how Ambulance Victoria do it. David also reflects on being invited to New Zealand following the Christchurch earthquakes to assist them with peer-support and his experiences during that deployment.

When can I start?

ECU offer both start-of-year and mid-year intake. You can still enrol now to commence studying with one of the fastest growing postgraduate courses in Disaster and Emergency Response worldwide for Semester 2, 2019! Our student numbers have increased by around 200% over the past two years resulting in an engaging and rewarding online education experience.

Is it only offered part-time?

No! You can complete all of our courses either part-time or full-time - which means you could complete a Graduate Certificate in Disaster and Emergency Response online in only one semester if you study full-time!

Where can I get more information?

You can get more information on our program here:

<https://www.ecu.edu.au/degrees/courses/master-of-disaster-and-emergency-response>

Have a question?

Please feel free to contact the Course Coordinator for ECU's postgraduate programs in Disaster and Emergency Response, Dr. Erin Smith - Erin.Smith@ecu.edu.au or by phone - +61 0408 148 749.



Want to listen to a podcast?

Dr. Erin Smith interviews Ambulance Victoria's Peer Support Coordinator David Cooper. A long-time paramedic with Ambulance Victoria, David Cooper has spent more than a decade caring for the careers.

<https://soundcloud.com/erin-cotter-smith/dr-erin-smith-interviews-ambulance-victorias-peer-support-coordinator-david-cooper>

How to Get Involved???

We would like to gain your support and input in achievement of these, and furthermore, would like to know how we can assist you in your endeavours.

WADEM Podcasts: We have a "Call Out" for anyone interested in talking to me about their work for a WADEM Podcast, with a particular focus on practical aspects of work in disaster emergency nursing - such as lessons learnt. For more information, please contact - alison.hutton@newcastle.edu.au.

Feedback

Thank you for your interest in our Chapter, if you have any suggestions or questions please contact us as below. Material is welcome for any of the sections listed in the Newsletter, or under a new category, if that is appropriate. Personal experiences, case and research reports are especially welcome; material is welcome from WADEM members and even nonmembers internationally.

Feedback to - jcuthbertson@wadem.org.

Disclaimer

The comments, opinions, and material in this Newsletter are those of the respective authors and not necessarily those of WADEM or the WADEM Oceania Chapter.