

Awareness, education and communications for compound natural hazards



RESEARCH TEAM

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Project duration: 6 months

SUPPORTING ORGANISATIONS

NSW Rural Fire Service
 Queensland Fire and Emergency Services
 Bureau of Meteorology
 Moreton Bay Regional Council
 Tasmania Fire Service
 Emergency Management Victoria
 NSW Department of Planning and Environment
 Fire Rescue NSW
 NSW State Emergency Service

Background

Compound natural hazards have become the lived experience of many Australian communities and, with such events increasing in frequency and intensity under climate change, initiatives that seek to build communities' awareness of – and preparedness for – compound natural hazards are now crucial. Despite this, little research work has been done to establish global best-practice on awareness, education and communication in relation to compound natural hazards. Providing timely and effective communication and engagement in the face of natural hazards is challenging due to the varied characteristics of natural hazards.

There is no existing framework, informed by both international research and experience of Australian communities, that lays out how communication, education and awareness initiatives can genuinely work with communities to enhance community resilience. This project is positioned to fill that knowledge gap.

Project description

This project will define and identify the nature of compound disasters, their characteristics, and how a greater frequency of natural hazard events may alter vulnerability and exposure.

The project will deliver an advanced understanding of current research and global best-practice approaches to community engagement around compound natural hazards and disasters. It will also contribute to and advance understandings of co-design as a research methodology and additionally consider the role and importance of local communications infrastructure in helping communities mitigate, prepare for, respond to and recover from compound natural hazards. The work will enable Australia to be positioned as a global leader by developing a framework, co-created with communities, to guide better communication and education on compound natural hazards.



Intended outcomes

The research will establish in an Australian context for the first time, a clear understanding of both international best-practice communication, education and awareness in relation to compound natural hazards, and local lived experience of communication needs around such hazards.

The key research output of the project, a framework to guide communication with communities, will be a tool co-designed both with communities and potential stakeholders, to ensure it is fit-for-purpose and immediately useful to emergency preparedness, management and recovery agencies, and the communities they serve.

Translation and implementation potential

The outputs from this project are intended to be immediately useable for project stakeholders including emergency management agencies, local government, local services and infrastructure, including health, and disaster recovery agencies. As such, the project outputs will have a strong potential for translation and implementation.

The online focus groups with project stakeholders are intended to solicit feedback on the project's draft framework, so that the framework is closely attentive to real-world implementation needs.

Further information

For full project details head to: www.naturalhazards.com.au/research/research-projects/awareness-education-and-communications-compound-natural-hazard-events
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