



Opportunity to participate in Natural Hazards Research Australia/CQU Enhancing decision-making in emergency management Project

Participants required

We are seeking Australian emergency management practitioners to be participants in two research studies (a survey study and an interview study) on current practice in operational decision-making. We are seeking input from operational staff and volunteers working at all levels of emergency management and land management organisations (including response, recovery, incident management, and more strategic regional and state-level roles). This helps us to develop a better understanding of how people currently make decisions, the tools they use, and the gaps in training and organisational doctrine on decision making.

Part 1: Online survey

The survey seeks to provide a snapshot of current decision-making practice in emergency management. Participants complete a 45-minute survey about organisational policies and procedures on decision making; operational decision-making tools; decision-making training; and how people make decisions in operational situations. This online survey is anonymous, and all responses will be deidentified and disconnected from their organisational information before any information is reported or published.

Understanding current practice in these areas and the links between them is essential in understanding the current state of decision-making practice and training in emergency management organisations and will help to improve how practitioners make decisions. This will also allow us to identify any disparities between how the organisations intend for, and train their members to make decisions, and what happens in practice.

The last section of the survey provides participants the option to opt-in to be considered for the interview phase, which is discussed next.

Part 2: Interviews

The interviews help us to deepen our understanding of key issues such as: how practitioners learn and develop their operational emergency management decision-making skills; possible gaps in training; use of decision-making tools and frameworks; challenges and opportunities to improve operational decision-making; alignment of organisational guidance to

operational decision-making practice; and the degree to which pressures (such as stress and fatigue) may undermine operational decision-making.

The interviews can be conducted online, via telephone, or in some instances face-to-face. We expect these interviews will take about 60 minutes. As with the online survey, we will carefully ensure that any participant or organisation is not identifiable from the information we present or publish.

The project

Decision making is a crucial skill across all levels of emergency management. Emergency management practitioners must make time-critical decisions in environments that are dynamic, uncertain, complex and stressful with high stakes. While much is known about decision making in some sectors of Australian emergency management, there remain key areas where decision-making training can be enhanced to meet the needs to decision makers now and into a more complex future.

This research project aims to develop a set of a prototype training and learning products that support the needs of decision-makers operating in a variety of decision-making environments. In addition, a skills acquisition framework will be produced that can assist organisations, teams, and individuals to better understand operational decision-making and how it needs to be trained. These products will be based on an analysis of the current practice and future requirements of EM operational decision-making.

The project team

The project team includes some of the world leading researchers on emergency management decision making. The team is led by A/Prof Chris Bearman and Dr Peter Hayes and includes: Prof Jim McLennan, Prof Rhona Flin, A/Prof Greg Penney and Dr Phil Butler.

Timing of the online survey and interviews

The survey is available online and will remain open until the end of March. We will continue to interview participants until the end of the March.

Next steps

If you would like to be involved, please read the next section and use the link provided to access the online survey.

Subject: Decision-making in emergency management organisations

RE: Survey invitation

We would like to invite you to participate in an online anonymous survey about how you make decisions in your role, and your views on the decision-making policies, procedures, tools, and training provided by your organisation.

You will have the opportunity to outline what affects your ability to make decisions in your role, provide anonymous feedback on your organisation's decision-making policies and procedures, and comment on any decision-making training you have received.

It is anticipated that the results of this research will benefit you, and other emergency management personnel, by improving our understanding of the current state of decision-making in emergency services and identifying areas for improvement.

This survey is compatible with your mobile device, tablet, and computer, and we expect it to take around 45 minutes to complete. Your responses are anonymous, and all feedback will be carefully considered.

If you wish to participate, please click on the link below, which will open a new window to begin the survey. Please note that you must be over 18 years of age to be eligible for this survey, and that there is no remuneration offered for completion. You may opt out at any time before the end of the survey simply by exiting out of the window. However, once completed we will be unable to remove your survey responses as we will be unable to identify these.

https://cqu.syd1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_elcbYXyzhxWs4MS

If you have any questions regarding the survey, please feel free to email:

Dr Peter Hayes: p.hayes@cqu.edu.au .

Kind regards,

Peter Hayes

Research Fellow

Appleton Institute

Central Queensland University

Of course, please feel free to contact either Chris Bearman or Peter Hayes should you wish to discuss any aspects of this research further.

We would very much like to see the EM workforce contribute to the survey and interview phase of this research project.

Peter Hayes and Chris Bearman

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