Are we prepared for catastrophic disasters?

How a change in thinking might change the outcome

Mark Crosweller AFSM
Director General
Emergency Management Australia
National Security and Emergency Management Group
We can’t solve catastrophe but we can get better at it!
How a Change in Thinking Might Change the Inevitability of Disasters

Improving our capability to better plan for, respond to and recover from severe to catastrophic level disasters | MAY 2015
Understanding our point of limitation

Figure 1: Correlation between risk, consequence and intensity.

[Diagram showing correlations between risk, consequence, and intensity with examples like 2013 Tasmanian Bushfires, 2003 Canberra Bushfire, etc.]

---

“THINK DIFFERENTLY”
BEFORE, DURING & AFTER
[Beyond Knowledge, Skills, Experience, Imagination]
Consequence Management
Leadership
Professional Development
Governance
Resource Management
Intelligence
Communication

“GETTING BETTER”
BEFORE, DURING & AFTER
[within Knowledge, Skills, Experience, Imagination]
Risk Management
Risk Mitigation
Leadership
Education
Governance
Resource Management
Planning
Communication

Close the gap of residual risk (actual consequence) by “Getting Better” and “Thinking Differently”
Thinking differently

- Accepting inevitability
- Changing the way we think about residual risk
  - Least likely/most consequential – little thought/a lot of thought!
  - Rarity might reduce risk but it does not reduce consequence
- Implementing practical measures
  - Paint the picture; Tell the story; Find the problems; Propose the solutions
  - The US Experience (Seattle / Anchorage)
- Establishing an ethical premise for leadership
  - Trust (symbol of uniform / ultimate measure of success)
  - Unity
  - Humility
  - Compassion (the ultimate mission)
  - Forgiveness
- National Vulnerability Profile
- National Mitigation Strategy
The national program of work: National capabilities to protect Australian communities (in collaboration with AFAC)

- National Fire Danger Rating System (Phase II)
- Emergency Alert
- National Aerial Firefighting Centre (NAFC)
- Tsunami Warning Centre
- National Resource Sharing Centre
- National Situational Awareness Tool (NSAT)
- National Statement of Capability for Fire and Emergency Services
- Capability Roadmap for Enhancing Emergency Management in Australia 2016
- Commissioners and Chief Officers Strategic Committee (CCOSC)
- Australian Institute for Disaster Resilience (AIDR)
- Arrangements for Interstate Assistance (AIA)
- International Agreement with Canadian Government
Questions/comments?