

ESF IMPACT

newsletter

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EMC 2023 Hits The Mark

More than 450 participants from more than 50 organisations attended ESFs 23rd Emergency Management Conference (EMC) in Melbourne this week. This is an event which was begun by ESF scholarship alumni and has grown to be the preeminent gathering of the sector in Victoria. A cross sector organising committee ensures the program addresses contemporary issues through diverse voices in line with ESFs strategy to connect, harness and grow the collective wisdom and strength of the sector and arm people with evidence and knowledge to drive good practice.

This year the program had the underlying theme based on an update on CSIRO's global megatrends out to 2042 with the view to guide long-term investment, strategic and policy directions across government, industry, the not-for-profit sector and the broader Australian community. Adapting to climate change, unlocking the human dimension, the escalating health imperative and geopolitical shifts were all addressed.

Caroline Douglass from the Environment Agency in the UK spoke of their approach to coastal and flood risk management. Alarmingly two thirds of people at risk are unaware of the risk they face which is no longer seasonal. Many of the solutions being applied are nature based in combination with hard engineering to reduce the impact of floods. Most impressive was how hard barriers could be put in place in 24 hours to protect towns. Not a sand bag in sight! Mariela Diaz, CEO at Emergency Recovery Victoria painted a stark picture of how recent floods in Victoria have an unrecognised long tail.



Dr Rina Bruinsma from the newly formed [National Emergency Management Agency](#) (NEMA) spoke of how investment needs to shift to prepare to reduce future risk and impact saying we are getting better at disaster management but not fast enough and that Australians want to see all levels of government working seamlessly to empower communities.

better together

RESPONSES

My first time at EMC and I had never heard of ESF and was so pleased to learn of the work it is doing. One thing that stood out for me was the discussion in relation to how we can incorporate international humanitarian knowledge into the domestic arena.

Belinda Walsh, VicPol

There are too many things to mention why this EMC has been great. It was wonderful to be amongst people who are all trying to do their best for one common goal of community safety. A standout for me were the powerful, inspiring, and articulate women speakers. EM is in good hands with women like that!

Suzanne Rouvray, Brimbank City Council

The networking opportunity of being at EMC is invaluable. You cannot make friends in an emergency you need to make them in environments like this. Being able to hear from non-traditional ES organisations allows you to see communities through a different lens, which is fantastic.

Stewart Kreltzhim, CFA

Incredible to see the common will and drive of the sector to come together to discuss issues and collaborate towards practical solutions. The variety of presenters, topics and agencies in attendance was fabulous.

Joel Farrow, NEMA

For a recording of the presentation by **Caroline Douglass** [click here](#).