

## Excellence in Training Award – Craig Cottrill

The Upper Hutt Rural Fire Force was delighted to receive the FRSITO 2010 Excellence in Training Award for Volunteer Rural Fire Force and felt that the award was a significant milestone on the Force's journey to be the best they can be.

The award truly is a result of a whole of team effort with a number of National Certificates being awarded in 2010 and more programmed for 2011! The Upper Hutt Rural Fire Force places a high level of importance on unit standards with the motto if training doesn't/ can't contribute to a unit standard; then it's a waste of that learner's time. The Force acknowledges that the best thing about the unit standards and National Certificates is the fact that they are nationally recognisable and transferable across to other industries and full time employment in the fire industry; in fact ten members of the Upper Hutt Rural Fire Force have moved onto full time jobs in various fire related industries.

The system that the Upper Hutt Rural Fire has adopted, based on the Department of Conservation model, involves the individual learner taking responsibility for creating an evidence log of their learning and experience, supported by observing senior fire

fighters and crew bosses. By creating a small team of assessors the Upper Hutt Rural Fire Force has managed to spread the load of assessing and helped foster the required team environment.

Training plans were developed to ensure that fire fighters learnt the required practical technical requirements whilst at the same time collecting evidence towards various different unit standards. Past attempts to base training entirely around the required unit standards was not successful and a motto that unit standards needed to fall out of training rather than training having to be based around unit standards has been developed.



Bill Robertson, Craig Cottrill, Paul Nickalls,  
Upper Hutt Mayor Wayne Guppy

## Conference

### Early bird registrations close 31 August

This biennial conference targeted at emergency management strategic and operational training personnel has again attracted a number of recognised speakers.

Dr Tom Phelan, from Strategic Teaching Associates, New York, and Program Director, Emergency and Disaster Management and Fire Science, American Public University System, is our opening keynote speaker. He will discuss the cooperation and collaboration we seek in emergency services in training, planning, response and recovery.

We have also attracted a number of Australian speakers who have conducted research in coordination in incident management, and New Zealand speakers who will present very practical based sessions on lessons learnt from recent events.

Topics will include – cooperation – the key to saving lives, property and the environment; impacts from investigations; simulation in training; incident management personnel training.

The conference will begin with a welcome function on the evening of Monday 10 October, followed by two conference days, and an optional field trip on Thursday 13 October. Once again the Minister of Internal Affairs, the Hon Nathan Guy, will open the conference.

We believe it is an important commitment to emergency management to retain Christchurch as the location, and our conference venue is safe.

**REGISTER NOW** at [www.emqual.org.nz](http://www.emqual.org.nz)

# CEO update – Bill Robertson



On 1st May we became EMQUAL. The change in trading name emphasises our commitment to provide a “fit for purpose” suite of qualifications to meet the needs of the wider emergency management industry. In particular, as I mentioned in our previous newsletter, we are committed to ensuring clear, mutually recognised

(CIMS) training standards and qualifications. This would enable the skills, training and level of assistance volunteers can offer to be instantly recognised, no matter what emergency organisation they represent.

Despite the very difficult start to the year, great efforts have been put in by a large number of our trainees. 393 National Certificates had been awarded to the end of June and we have 2,953 active Training Agreements. The 2010 FRSITO Excellence in Training Award for rural fire forces was won this year by Upper Hutt Rural Fire Force. This award is always hotly contested with extraordinary efforts being put in by trainers and trainees in rural fire forces throughout

New Zealand. The award was presented at a function held in the Ascot cinema in Upper Hutt on 22nd June, which was the middle of volunteer week. Congratulations Upper Hutt!

EMQUAL activity in the third quarter will be based around a number of key objectives. We will be finalising arrangements for our conference to be held in Christchurch from 11-13 October. I would strongly encourage all trainers and managers to attend this to hear lessons from our New Zealand and international speakers that will guide us in “Enabling Emergency Management Coordination”. Other activities of importance include the rolling out of the Recognition of Current Competence process for volunteer urban firefighters, continued lobbying for more flexibility from government in the setting of qualifications, extensive moderation activity and continuing the development of new qualifications and assessment material.

On a more sombre note, we have recently been saddened by the untimely deaths of two previous team members of FRSITO. Venessa Green died in late June after being struck by a bus during a training run. Earlier this month former Regional Training Advisor Lindsay Heal lost his battle with cancer. Our thoughts are with their families and friends at this sad time.

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## FEMA EMI Higher Education Conference 2011 – Liz Hamilton

This conference, held in Emmitsburg, Maryland, was the 14th Annual Conference and was held during the year that the FEMA Emergency Management Institute is celebrating a 60-Year Legacy of Training and Education in Emergency Management.

The conference is targeted at training practitioners to assist in building their expertise in developing and delivering programmes in the emergency management area. Attendees came from a wide range of educational institutions and emergency management sectors – universities, community colleges, police departments, public safety institutions; and from around the globe. With such a broad range of topics being presented it is hard to pick a few sessions to highlight, but here are a couple.

Emergency management environments occur in many industries and health is no exception. This presentation looked at how training can be provided for nurses, and how to implement an approach that takes training design from being discussion based to operational based, through functional and full scale exercises increasing with complexity as the capability of the learners developed.

There was an informative research session on testing the assumptions made by agencies on community emergency plans with respect to special need populations – in this instance ‘latchkey children’. The research wanted to identify what assumptions were being made regarding who had responsibility for their education in this area, and who would take responsibility for their care in times of an emergency. While there were specific outcomes for planners to consider in this situation, there was also benefit from the session in looking at how to apply the research methodology to other “in-need” sections of a community.

I should also mention the excellent presentation by Chris Webb, Auckland University of Technology. Chris spoke about the Christchurch earthquakes, their impacts, the response and the recovery actions taken and continuing to be put in place.

Attending an overseas conference is also an opportunity to reflect on how we do things here; and yes we do very well.



# Auckland Council empowers Rural Fire Fighters with EMQUAL Structured Training Programme

– Nandini Chandran

Since the merger of all district councils from Rodney to Manukau to one Auckland council (super city), the Rural Fire Authority (RFA) of the council has taken steps to streamline training and development. Training their volunteers in a systematic way is a priority. Under the leadership of Bryan Cartelle – Principal Rural Fire Officer, the council has adopted a Training Pathway Programme to meet their training needs. The authority also recognises the need for volunteers to have input into driving their own training with the help of their team leaders and taking

ownership of their progression.

With Bryan Cartelle and the Deputy Principals Rural Fire Officers (DPRFO) from North, West, Central and South, there is a pool of experience to draw on in developing the training progression pathway document. Brandon Guttery- DPRFO (West) has taken the lead in the training and development of the combined Rural Fire Forces in the Auckland region. Brandon is very passionate about quality training and assessment. He believes that skilled volunteers make better fire-fighters and in turn a motivated work force.

## How does this training pathway work?

When a volunteer joins any rural fire force within the RFA, they are inducted and get a copy of the Auckland RFF Training Pathway booklet. The system is explained by their Fire Force Chief/Brigade Training Officers. The document outlines the skills sets required at each level. It also describes the training progression pathway that enables trainee to aspire to gain higher qualification as they gain seniority.

A newbie will start their training at a Limited Credit Programme (20 Credits) or at Level 2 National Certificate in Vegetation Fire fighting. On completion

of the Level 2 qualification, a volunteer will be given the opportunity to progress through the ranks and gain further national qualifications.

With this well defined Training progression pathway and support from the Rural Fire Authority and the backing of EMQUAL, this initiative will be a success and a model for other local councils to follow and adopt.

And a last word from Brendon - *A Pessimist sees the difficulty in every opportunity; an opportunist sees the opportunities in every difficulty* (Winston Churchill)

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## Rotorua District Council Rural Fire Force - Burning their way to National Certificates – Wayne Palmer

Sunday 15th May was a gloomy rainy day in Rotorua but that did not stop the Rotorua District Council from holding its End of Fire Season BBQ for its Rural Fire teams and families. As part of the 'informalities' I was invited along, my first presentation event, to present their National Certificates. The recipients were recognised by family, the Council and EMQUAL for their achievements to date ranging from National Certificates Vegetation Level 2 up to Level 4. Mike Davies General Manager Rotorua District Council (Castle Corp) and Principal Rural Fire Officer (PRFO) also acknowledged their great efforts and a desire by Council to investigate training opportunities in USAR given the recent national emergencies.

Following the presentations some of the Team members had prepared a small fire activity with handheld extinguishers which the families and especially the children really enjoyed. Both educational and fun! With the smell of sizzling sausages, chops and steaks in the air this soon drew

everyone back indoors for a well prepared meal (even your bacon and egg pie Richard). Thanks to Richard Horn, John and the rest of the Crew. It was a great day enjoyed by all with big congratulations going out to all recipients. Some were not able to be there to receive their certificates but included: Brian Kahukiwa L2, Piripi Scott L2, Paul Taiapa L2, Jules Umata L2 & L3, Soul Raroa L2 & L3, Puihi Taiapa L3, Toni Smith L3, Simon Kirner L3, Kieth Smith L3, Aroha Horn L3, Tom Raroa L3, Allan Sherman L3, Murray Davies L3, Philip Muldoon L4, John Reihana L4, and Richard Horn L4.



Well Done to Richard and all the Team!!

# Broadening Emergency Management Experience – Nathan Graham

The 5th Australasian Natural Hazards Management Conference (held over 18-21 July) at Gold Coast, Australia was an informative and valuable conference to attend. The theme of the conference was 'Major Events, Major Impacts.' This included topics covering "Reflections on Queensland Flood Disasters" and "Research and Practice: The importance on agency hazard research program"; and "Reflections on Christchurch Earthquake Disasters" and "Recovering from Crisis." Listening to how these disasters were managed, the ongoing lessons learnt, and how research can be used to support emergency management, showed the complexity of dealing with the problem when catastrophe strikes.

The conference provided good examples of research used to complement improving the resilience of communities to natural hazard events, in particular by introducing improved systems for preparedness and prevention; developing flood intelligence to enhance awareness and indicators for the required graduated response to evacuate; looking at human behaviour to respond to warning systems and how variable this is even if the threat or risk to life is high. Examples used referred to the Victorian Bush Fires and why people chose to stay and not leave, and how communities influenced the individual decision making to decide to stay; looking at vulnerable communities and mapping their ability to cope with varying levels of disaster threats; communicating uncertainty

of weather forecasts and how this can be better translated for end users i.e. how clear was the icon as a message provider to differentiate bad weather compared to a storm; and, the impact of disasters on children and how much can be learnt from them i.e. getting children back on track by talking about their experiences to cope in the disaster.

The conference demonstrated the depth of ongoing research and development taking place throughout the Australasian area of emergency management groups. It illustrated how practitioners and academics can learn from each other. It confirmed the benefits of collaboration in research with experienced practitioners and how it contributed to lifting the level of preparedness and prevention, while also supporting improved processes for recovery and response stages.

Gaining the opportunity to listen to a good selection of subject matter experts, gave me a greater appreciation and awareness of the issues the emergency services face when dealing with major disaster events and their impact. I recommend attending conferences like this, particularly if there is an opportunity to be exposed to speakers from outside the usual areas of daily work. It was very useful and informative as my professional development training forum. The other benefit was getting to see a brother in Brisbane that I hadn't seen for over three years.

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## Adult Education: NZFS trainer professional development – Mitzi Austin

The implementation of the first six months of Adult Education development for trainers has been highly successful. This contract was won by a joint bid from Competency International Ltd working with Tai Poutini Polytechnic.

One of the strengths of this partnership is the offering of Assessment by Professional Conversation as an alternative method to assess and award qualifications that recognise current competence. All region and national training managers were offered that chance and all those who took it up have completed a relevant qualification. Most managers have been awarded the National Diploma in Adult Education at level 5 with some at level 6. The process has created a dynamic 'buzz' of professional discussion and engagement in training.

At the same time three groups of trainer 'students' have completed Part 1 of face-to-face courses to upskill to the National Certificate in Adult Education (level 4). This opportunity was initially offered to our most experienced and most extensively used trainers so that they can be the first to achieve this benchmark.

The programme was not necessarily intended to teach new skills or ideas but rather to provide formal recognition through an external qualification to those people with the relevant skills. At the six month contract review we have decided that Part 2 will be more of mixed model and include a professional conversation approach combined with the face-to-face. There are places for up to another thirty students for this programme in this financial year.



# Testing out the cold

– Emergency Management Solutions LTD – Nathan Freeman

Brrrrrrr!

EMQUAL's Moderation team was invited to observe firefighters from Emergency Management Solutions at Tokoroa, conducting practical exercises in -20 degree temperatures at the Big Chills' cold storage facilities in Putaruru. Firefighters were given a range of tasks, including setting up and dismantling a decontamination shower, rescuing a patient and practicing entrapment procedures; while outside, warm firefighters set up Entry Control procedures.

While extreme cold temperatures are not normally an environment that Emergency Management

Solutions firefighters operate in, an opportunity to train in this type of environment was used to expand the firefighters experience in breathing apparatus operations.

The words "very cold" were an understatement! Firefighters' visibility was reduced due to the condensation on BA masks freezing, while the danger of slipping on frozen floors only added to concerns.

At least the firefighters had the benefit of their firefighting turnout gear to keep them a little warmer than those who were watching!



## Volunteer Fire Fighter Qualifications

– Nathan Graham

EMQUAL is working in partnership with the New Zealand Fire Service (NZFS) on a Recognition of Current Competency (RCC) programme for volunteer fire fighters.

RCC is the assessment of learning that may have already happened in an informal manner. The learner is still able to demonstrate the skills and knowledge.

EMQUAL Regional Advisors will work with local fire brigades to map the volunteer's learning and current skills to the National Certificate in Fire and Rescue Services (Urban Fire and Rescue Operations) (Level 2). NZFS has a system of recording skills currency, using

their Operational Skills Maintenance (OSM) database. The information held in this system has been mapped to unit standards; and will help inform whether the volunteer has the required skills and knowledge. Only when currency is demonstrated will the unit standard be awarded.

This process will also highlight where training is required and the programmes will be set up.

A large number of emergency management personnel are volunteers, and it is an important recognition they are able to achieve national qualifications.

Remember Conference Early Bird Registration closes 31 August.



# Jack Steed Farewell – Deanna Roa



Blair King, Jack Steed

It is with regret that Deputy Principal Rural Fire Officer, Jack Steed, was farewelled on Thursday, 31 March 2011.

Jack came to Tararua District Council with

a wealth of Rural and Urban fire experience. Jack was a Senior Fire Fighter (Station Officer Qualified) with the New Zealand Fire Service and has had over 20 years voluntary service with the Dargaville, Queenstown and Dannevirke Brigades. He was also Deputy Principal Rural Fire Officer whilst working for the Kaipara District Council. He then moved to Queenstown in early 2008 where he was a Rural Fire Officer prior to coming to work for the Tararua District Council as Roading Liaison Manager/Deputy Principal Rural Fire Officer.

With a background as a qualified small motor mechanic and many years working for livestock and farm supply organisations, trucking companies and contracting firms, Jack was very capable of operating and knowing the capabilities of rural fire equipment. His input will be missed.

During his time at Tararua he was instrumental in introducing pagers to three Rural Fire Forces within the District, assisting in setting up the Cape Turnagain marine radio site, facilitating the re-establishment of the Tiraumea Volunteer Rural Fire Force and many other projects.

I was delighted to present Jack with his National Certificates, Level 2 and I3 (Vegetation) at the function.

Jack has taken up a position as Contract Manager for Downers on the Chatham Islands and will be responsible for managing the local Council infrastructure contracts. We wish Jack and family all the best in this challenging role and lifestyle change, and you can bet Jack will be involved in Rural Fire while he is there.

# Napier Airport Hot Fire Training – Nathan Freeman

Passengers at Napier Airport would be forgiven for any concern arising from seeing Airport firefighters and appliances in action earlier this month. There was nothing to be worried about as the action was part of the continual training for Task Force Protection staff, using an aircraft training aid for the “hot fire” scenarios.

Firefighters were required to operate by themselves and as a crew of two, to do a range of tasks that would normally be done with larger crews from other organisations. Task Force Protection Trainer and Workplace Assessor, Terry Cooney was able to create scenarios that tested staff members while providing opportunities for staff members to collect evidence towards airport firefighting unit standards.

Being a cold day, staff members were keen to get into action although extinguishing the fires was the last thing cold observers wanted!



# Who won the IPOD?

## – Congratulations Bob Durham of EMS!! – Wayne Palmer



The Language, Literacy and Numeracy assessment project being conducted by EMQUAL has its first major prize winner. Bob Durham is the Operations Manager for Emergency Management

Solutions Ltd (EMS) at Kinleith Mill, Carter Holt Harvey Tokoroa. First prize of an iPod Touch 8GB was delivered to him on 29 June 11 much to his surprise. He may not be used to the technology but he assured me his grandchildren would soon train him up – I will wait for your assessment forms in the post Bob! EMS is the contracted Emergency Management and

Security provider at the Kinleith Carter Holt Harvey plant. Bob has extensive experience with 25 years in the NZ Fire Service, setting up fire services in Brunei and he is an owner of EMS. He believes that the LLN project is a valuable tool and allows trainees and trainers to make improvements within their professions. The other winners of the \$100 gift vouchers so far were:

Samantha Hughes - Wellington SPCA Animal Rescue Unit volunteer

Kenneth Rodley - DoC Marlborough

Laura Andrews - Waipu Brigade volunteer

Joseph Hardie - Waiatarua Brigade

Richard Horn - Assessor

Daniel Keatley - Howick Station

Malcolm Wylie - Papatoetoe Station

Congratulations to all the winners and remember if you want to be part of the assessment tool and go into the next major draw, log on to [www.emqual.org.nz](http://www.emqual.org.nz)

## World Wildfire Conference – South Africa

The 5th World Wildfire Conference was held at Sun City, South Africa during May. The theme "Living with Fire" was addressing global change through integrated fire management. Seventy-three Countries were represented with over 700 delegates including ten from New Zealand.



Impressive as the Conference was the "Working on Fire" (WOF) team dominated the scene. The "Working on Fire" Programme carried out by FFA Aviation (a private contractor) is funded through the South African Government. It is one of South Africa's most successful job creation and community development programmes introduced into South Africa's poverty stricken communities.



Over 3,000 young men and women are recruited from disadvantaged communities and trained in fire fighting skills. On completion they are relocated to the

100 plus fire bases throughout the country during the South African fire season, (winter in the north summer in the south).

Recruits are required to pass stringent medical and fitness tests before acceptance. They are deployed as hotshot crews of around 22-25 people and at least 30% must be women. Discipline and safety are paramount. The recruits passing out at the Conference marched 35km to the parade ground.



When not fire fighting, crews clear fire breaks, reduce fuel loadings (clearing land), and assist in community initiatives which helps to lift the community spirit. Senior crew members teach school children about fire safety and there is also an opportunity for recruits that excel to specialise in the Urban Fire Service, Rescue Service or Forestry fire crews. South Africa use the American Incident Command System (ICS) with several North American ICS specialists invited over to run workshops.



The "WOF" brand is very powerful with the Fire Fighters wearing yellow shirts, dark blue trousers and yellow helmets. Their custom designed trucks, buses and aircraft (12 Helicopters and 8 fixed wing) are all yellow with a blue strip.



Following the conference Mike Grant PRFO Southern District RFA and I visited "WOF" fire bases in Kwambonambi Natal; George, Western Cape and Newlands, Cape Town. We also visited "Working for Wetlands" at Isimangaliso Wetland Park St Lucia where 1000 workers were removing exotic plants. The "Working for Water" programme on Table Mountain employed 40 people also removing exotic plants from the Table Mountain National Park.

There is a strong emphasis on employment in South Africa with many programmes similar to "WOF" being implemented. "Working for Water" and "Working for Wetlands" involve crews clearing wilding plants from National Parks and Wetlands, "Working for Coasts" and "People for Parks" programmes are others. In the 2011/12 year through these programmes SA Government is planning to provide 5 million person days of employment plus creating positive social and economic benefits.

Imagine the STP's involved with these programmes.

Doug Ashford - PRFO  
Waimea Rural Fire Authority

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