

Media release: 31 July 2017

International expert urges Firefighters to embrace Smart Data

Leading international smart data expert, and a Senior Firefighter in the Netherlands, Mr Bart van Leeuwen, urges Australian fire and emergency services to harness the power of smart data to make predictions of the unexpected; ahead of his keynote presentation at Australasia's premier emergency management conference, AFAC17 powered by INTERSCHUTZ, 4-7 September 2017.

Educating emergency management personnel about new technologies and the impact of data usage on their emergency strategy could empower Australia's trusted fire and emergency service departments to better serve the communities they aid and continuously develop response plans.

Owner of smart data company, Netage B.V. Mr van Leeuwen said that connecting and understanding the data of our environment could have an invaluable impact on the long-term safety of Australian communities.

"Netage B.V. strives to assist fire services worldwide. Data should be connected, currently fire services operate extensively on data silos and the recollection of existing datasets. What we need is to link and harvest the data at the source to make it possible to maintain quality.

"It's about creating a smarter firefighter, who is armed with knowledge of the data to expect the unexpected and trained in the crucial technologies that aid their ability to act safely and smartly in their domain.

"Smart data technologies, like machine learning, could provide great benefits to emergency management, however world-over, there are not enough individuals in the service who understand these technological advancements," said Mr van Leeuwen.

AFAC17 will bring together local and international emergency management experts to discuss six key themes including collaboration and performance, data to drive performance, public value, research utilisation and innovation, strengthening organisations and the value of mitigation and disaster resilience.

"Our profession is constantly moving, not learning new advances is not an option. AFAC17 will inspire people to be curious, willing to learn and to educate themselves on our industry," concluded Mr van Leeuwen.



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The keynote presentation, *'Smart Data for Smarter Firefighters'* will take an outside the box approach to explaining the tactical role of connecting data and technology with real people; helping to pin point errors and generate possible solutions that in most cases can assist with the unexpected.

Mr van Leeuwen's session will be held on Tuesday 5 September at AFAC17 powered by INTERSHUTZ, 4 – 7 September 2017 taking place at the International Convention Centre, Sydney, Darling Harbour.

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Notes to Editors:

- Keynote speakers are available for interviews via the media contacts listed below
- Available for interview on request via media contacts below:
 - Bart van Leeuwen, Senior Firefighter and owner of Netage B.V.
 - Stuart Ellis, CEO, Australasian Fire and Emergency Services Authority Council (AFAC)
 - Dr Richard Thornton, CEO, Bushfire and Natural Hazards Cooperative Research Centre (Bushfire and Natural Hazards CRC)
 - Harvey Stockbridge, Managing Director, Deutsche Messe
- **Complimentary media passes are available, apply by sending name, position and publication title to jessica@zadroagency.com.au**

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About AFAC17:

4 - 7 September | International Convention Centre Sydney

Collaborating for Success – Improving performance in emergency management

Collaborating and improving performance is essential for success in emergency management. Innovating in the face of disruptions and developing our people to successfully manage organisations of the future is a key challenge. Understanding what our

people need to deliver and what communities expect is no simple task. Working together is how we will deliver the best results. AFAC17 will focus on how we can work together to improve our performance, what leading the way looks like and who will benefit from our collective effort.

Held over four action-packed days AFAC17 powered by INTERSCHUTZ will attract delegates and visitors from emergency and security services agencies, all levels of government, non-government organisations, research and education institutions from Australia and world-wide.

AFAC17 powered by INTERSCHUTZ is a joint venture between the Australasian Fire and Emergency Service Authorities Council (AFAC) and Deutsche Messe, trading in Australia as Hannover Fairs Pty Ltd, and is co-produced with the Bushfire and Natural Hazards CRC.

Australasian Fire and Emergency Service Authorities Council (AFAC)

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Hashtag: #AFAC17

Images: (High resolution images are available on request)

1. Mr Bart van Leeuwen



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2. AFAC16 powered by INTERSCHUTZ showfloor

