

Media Release: Friday, 13 July 2018

## **Australia's emergency responders thrive in ever-changing complex environments**

*Emergency management leaders gather in Perth to discuss how to adapt and weather change*

Australasia's leading emergency management conference, AFAC18 powered by INTERSCHUTZ, returns to Western Australia for the first time in six years, bringing a host of leading international and Australian presenters to address the latest technology and research in prescribed burning, predictive services, innovation, improving public safety, warnings, and resilience.

Co-produced by the Australasian Fire and Emergency Service Authorities Council (AFAC), the Bushfire and Natural Hazards Cooperative Research Centre (CRC) and Deutsche Messe; the conference is focused around preparing the sector to combat and adapt to changing environments.

Held over four action-packed days from 5 - 8 September 2018, the conference themed '*Changing lives in a changing world*' embraces an interoperability between emergency service agencies. AFAC18 includes the Bushfire and Natural Hazards CRC Research Forum, a two-day multi-streamed AFAC Conference, and the inaugural Australian Disaster Resilience Conference.

Stuart Ellis, CEO, AFAC, commented on this year's conference and the importance of adapting and being resilient in our ever-changing environment.

"AFAC18 is the premier and most comprehensive emergency management conference in the region, providing unique opportunities for professional development, learning and networking. This year the inaugural Australian Disaster Resilience Conference runs concurrently and adds an in-depth look into how we are contributing to a disaster resilient Australia.

"We've got an impressive line-up of speakers for AFAC18, who can share their unique experiences tackling the challenges of change. We are pleased to be back on the west coast this year, where we are able to offer development opportunities for all members across our sector," said Mr Ellis.

Bringing leading international and national speakers to Perth, keynote speakers at the conference will include:

- **Dr Neil Burrows**, Senior Principal Research Scientist, Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions
- **Anna-Maria Arabia**, Chief Executive, Australian Academy of Science
- **Craig Fugate**, former United States Federal Emergency Management Agency Administrator
- **Eric Yap**, Commissioner, Singapore Civil Defence Force

- **Astronaut Mike Mullane**, retired NASA Astronaut
- **Dr Dana Born**, Co-Director, Center for Public Leadership, Harvard Kennedy School of Government

Dr Richard Thornton, CEO, Bushfire and Natural Hazards CRC, commented on how research is helping emergency responders face challenges.

“The strength of the CRC lays with its collective nature. The Research Forum is a full day of knowledge sharing and research and will address the major changes our sector faces, from growing populations and climate change, including bushfires, floods, cyclones, storms and heatwaves. It is vital that emergency management personnel know how to adapt and cope with these increasing challenges,” said Dr Thornton.

AFAC18 looks at change as the new normal, discussing how collaboration and resilience is driving performance and the innovations in emergency management that are helping our people endure changes in the environment.

AFAC18 powered by INTERSHUTZ is being held at the Perth Convention and Exhibition Centre from 5-8 September 2018.

For more information visit: <http://www.afaconference.com.au/>

**-ENDS-**

#### **Notes to editors:**

- Keynote speakers are available for interviews via the media contacts listed below
- Available for interview on request via media contacts below:
  - Stuart Ellis, CEO, Australasian Fire and Emergency Services Authority Council (AFAC)
  - Dr Richard Thornton, CEO, Bushfire and Natural Hazards Cooperative Research Centre
  - Harvey Stockbridge, Managing Director, Deutsche Messe
- Complimentary media passes are available, apply by sending name, position and publication to [jessica@zadroagency.com.au](mailto:jessica@zadroagency.com.au)

#### **Media contacts:**

Jessica McLean | Account Manager | Zadro  
+61 2 9212 7867 | +61 400 433 182 | [jessica@zadroagency.com.au](mailto:jessica@zadroagency.com.au)

Sammy Dalglish | Group Account Director | Zadro  
+61 2 9212 7867 | +61 430 343 621 | [sammy@zadroagency.com.au](mailto:sammy@zadroagency.com.au)

#### **Images:**

All images can be found on the [AFAC Flickr page](#) and can be used royalty free.

## 1. AFAC17 showfloor



**About AFAC18:**  
**5 - 8 September | Perth Convention and Exhibition Centre**

### **Changing lives in a changing world**

Emergency management is not an easy task and is not getting easier. With a growing population moving into new areas, our changing climate, bushfires, floods, cyclones, storms and heatwaves are impacting our lives in new ways. Innovating in the face of disruptions and developing our people to successfully manage organisations of the future is a key challenge. AFAC18 looks at change as the new normal, how collaboration and resilience is driving performance and the innovations in emergency management that are helping our people to weather change.

Held over four action-packed days AFAC18 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 worldwide.

The AFAC18 program is co-produced by the Australasian Fire and Emergency Service Authorities Council (AFAC) and the Bushfire and Natural Hazards CRC and will this year feature the inaugural Australian Disaster Resilience Conference, which will run concurrently with the AFAC18 program.

AFAC18 powered by INTERSCHUTZ is a joint venture between AFAC and Deutsche Messe, trading in Australia as Hannover Fairs Pty Ltd.

**Australasian Fire and Emergency Service Authorities Council (AFAC)**

Website: <http://www.afaconference.com.au/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/AFACnews>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/afacnews>

LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/australasian-fire-and-emergency-service-authorities-council>

YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCu18lYmKgFcL27XBKFI7Klw>

Hashtag: #AFAC18

**Bushfire and Natural Hazards CRC**

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