

Media release: 21 September 2018

Emergency Management focus on thriving in a changed landscape

Emergency service leaders gathered at AFAC18 powered by INTERSCHUTZ

Australasia's leading emergency management conference and exhibition, AFAC18 powered by INTERSCHUTZ held in Perth, 5-8 September 2018, attracted over 2,800 attendees from the fire, emergency, rescue, first responder, public safety, defence, industrial, hazardous, offshore and mining safety sectors.

Over four days, emergency service personnel, researchers, policy makers and volunteers from all over Australia, discussed the latest technology and research fuelling insights into how to work best with the changing natural, built and political environments. The theme, '*Changing lives in a changing world*' explored how improvements can be made to the emergency management and disaster resilience sector, and how to survive and thrive in an ever-changing, complex environment.

Stuart Ellis AM, CEO, **Australasian Fire and Emergency Services Authorities Council (AFAC)** said the sector's ability to adapt to a changing physical and political landscape needs to be a defining characteristic.

"This year, the event focused on how to address the urban, political and environmental changes. The conference's high calibre speakers such as former FEMA Administrator Craig Fugate and Dr Dana Born, Co-Director, Center for Public Leadership, Harvard Kennedy School of Government, shared their unique experiences tackling the challenges of change – it was both insightful and inspiring," said Mr Ellis.

Occupying over 9000sqm, the AFAC18 Exhibition showcased 170 manufacturers, suppliers and distributors showcasing a diverse range of products, services and solutions. [Live demonstrations](#) took place throughout the conference, revealing the latest technologies, including:

- CITIC and ENGYTECH designed, the **RXR Mobile Reconnaissance & Firefighting Vehicle**, capable of responding when situations are too dangerous for emergency responders. The demonstration showed the robot's basic movements, camera movements, applied alarms and emergency response features.
- The **Husqvarna DXR140 Demolition Robot**, a versatile demolition robot, can be combined with a variety of tools such as hammers, crushers and steel shearers.
- **FLAIM Trainer™**, a virtual reality (VR) firefighter training simulator created by Deakin University, combines industry standard equipment with innovative technology to create a realistic training scenario for future firefighters.

The Bushfire and Natural Hazards Cooperative Research Centre (CRC) hosted their Research Forum on the first day of AFAC18, at which they launched the much-anticipated Southern Australia Bushfire Outlook 2018.

When launching the research, Dr Richard Thornton, CEO, said, "the Research Forum continues to support quality and diverse research from the Bushfire and Natural Hazard CRC, needed by the

industry. The Research Forum embraces scientific research and provided the perfect platform for the sector to hear about what is changing.”

In addition, the **Australian Institute for Disaster Resilience**, held the inaugural **Australian Disaster Resilience Conference** running concurrently with AFAC18 powered by INTERSCHUTZ. Themed “*The rise of resilience: from the individual to the global,*” it explored national and global strategy and direction, as well as community resilience.

Stuart Ellis said “In the context of a changing climate, we’re facing more frequent, more severe disaster events. It’s more important than ever that we invest in disaster resilience – building the capacity of our communities to withstand and bounce back from the increasingly destructive disasters they will face.”

“Disaster resilience is vital to the emergency services sector, attendees had opportunities to hear about measuring and assessing resilience, strategies and policies. Running concurrently with AFAC18 powered by INTERSCHUTZ was a huge success and we already look forward to 2019,” said Mr Ellis.

AFAC19 powered by INTERSCHUTZ will be held at the Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre from 27-30 August 2019. It will be co-produced by the Australasian Fire and Emergency Service Authorities Council (AFAC), the Bushfire and Natural Hazards Cooperative Research Centre (CRC) and Deutsche Messe. It will explore how the emergency management sector is transitioning to a new normal.

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

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Notes to editors:

- Keynote speakers are available for interviews via the media contacts listed below
- Available for interview on request:
 - Stuart Ellis, CEO, Australasian Fire and Emergency Services Authorities Council (AFAC) and the Australian Institute for Disaster Resilience (AIDR)
 - Dr Richard Thornton, CEO, Bushfire and Natural Hazards Cooperative Research Centre
 - Harvey Stockbridge, Managing Director, Hannover Fairs Australia (Deutsche Messe)

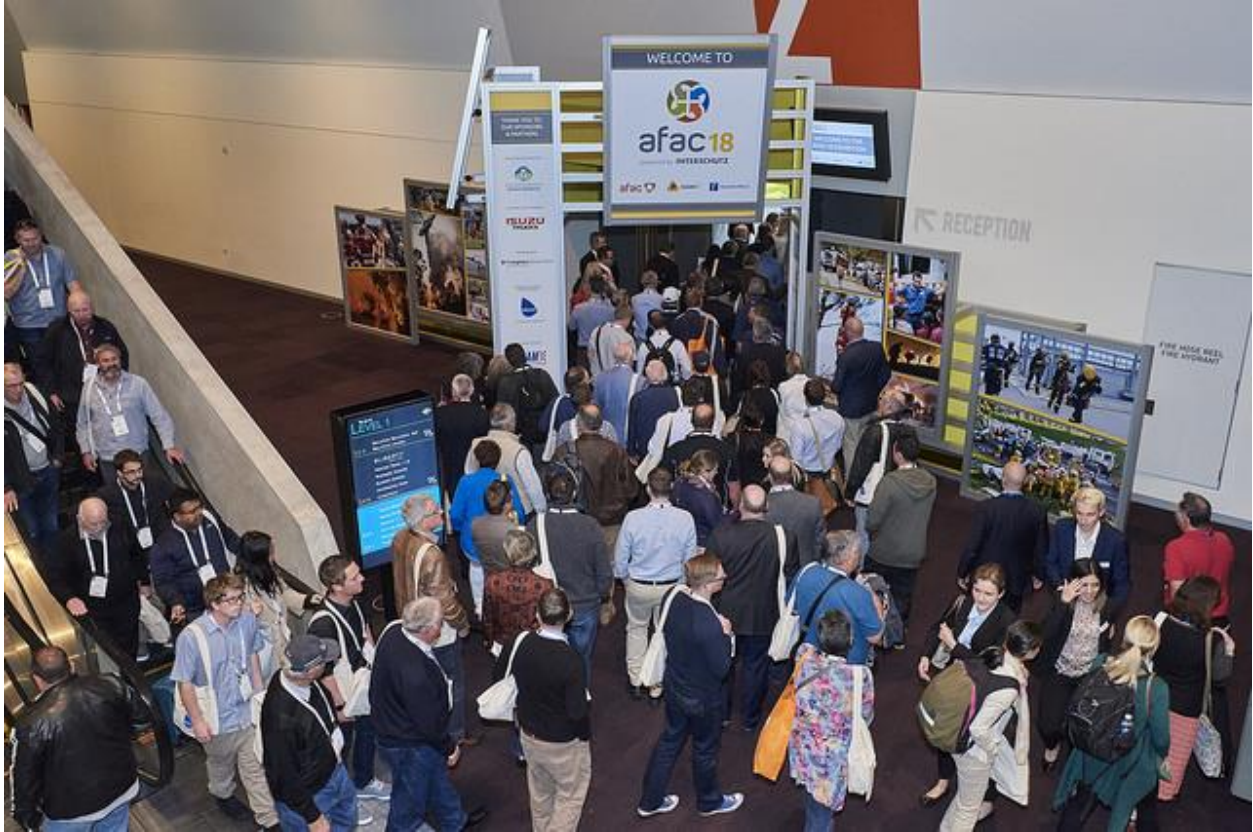
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Images:

All images of AFAC18 can be found on the [AFAC Flickr page](#) and can be used royalty free.





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 the 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 and disaster resilience 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, the private sector, research and education institutions and community groups 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.

Themed “The rise of resilience: from the individual to the global,” the Australian Disaster Resilience Conference will explore national and global strategy and direction, as well as community resilience at the grassroots level. The conference will explore resilience as a dynamic, multi-faceted national imperative; encouraging active engagement and partnerships across sectors and at all levels. The conference will culminate in a forum on the future state of resilience in Australia.

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: www.afacconference.com.au/

Facebook: [@AFACnews](https://www.facebook.com/AFACnews)

Twitter: [@AFACnews](https://twitter.com/AFACnews)

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

YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCu18IYmKgFcl27XBKFI7Klw>

Hashtag: #AFAC18

Bushfire and Natural Hazards CRC

Facebook: [@bnhcrcc](https://www.facebook.com/bnhcrc)

Twitter: [@bnhcrcc](https://twitter.com/bnhcrc)

LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/bushfire-and-natural-hazards-crc-a0919043/>

YouTube: www.youtube.com/user/bnhcrcc

Australian Institute for Disaster Resilience

Website: www.aidr.org.au/adrc

Facebook: [@AIDRnews](https://www.facebook.com/AIDRnews)

Twitter: [@AIDR_news](https://twitter.com/AIDR_news)

Linked In: <https://au.linkedin.com/company/aidr>
Hashtag: #ADRC2018