

and response to remote mass casualty incidents. The Australian constitution makes the Commonwealth responsible for the defence of Australia, and for the protection of states against invasion. Each State or Territory is responsible for the protection of its citizens and property.

The Commonwealth provides National emergency management programmes including the cyclone warning system, the Commonwealth Search and Rescue Organisation for response to air and maritime incidents, and Space Debris Nuclear fallout to cope with threats affecting National interests, and ideally, is suited to coordinate assistance between States, if requested.

Aid to near Pacific neighbors in times of disaster also is managed at the Commonwealth level. Each State and Territory is responsible for emergency response and recovery plans within their respective jurisdictions. This presentation outlines the measures necessary to provide effective mass casualty management for remote area incidents, and for communities that may be remote from major treatment facilities. It addresses the medical coordination and organizational issues involved with the prehospital management and distribution of casualties to appropriate treatment facilities.

Objectives: (1) To outline Australia's geographical and demographical features and the consequential effects on emergency planning nationally and between States and Territories; (2) To provide an oversight of the levels of responsibility for emergency management planning in Australia; and (3) To discuss some of the measures necessary to provide effective prehospital management and distribution of casualties to treatment facilities.

Keywords: Australia; emergency management; planning; prehospital management of casualties; remote area casualties

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Municipal Plans of Emergency in Disaster Prevention

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Objective: To promote the prevention and mitigation of the effects of natural and man-made disasters through knowledge about the phenomenon and by specific preparedness of the local authorities with action organizations, services, people, and resources available to respond to disasters. The aim of the Municipal Plans is to establish coordinational ties between civilians, volunteers, and local government.

During the last century, disaster prevention has become a focus of attention in emergency administration. One must understand clearly and accurately, the possible effects of a disaster, and, in case of emergency, who commands the responses. This can aid the civil defense authorities and the general population in developing specific mechanisms that reduce the impact of calamities. Municipal Plans of Emergency, also known as Municipal Plans of Contingency (MPC), develop community protection actions, and include the action organizations, services, people, and resources available to respond to disasters. It also includes the identification of specific risks, community preparedness, local response capacity, risk planning, and

establishment of the structural organization (authorities, agencies, offices, volunteers) that respond to emergencies. Each element understands its respective roles, what to do, what not to do, and how to participate in a team effort. The use of MPCs obliges decision-makers to make plans and execute preventative actions and emergency projects that provide effective formulas capable of improving stability factors and response mechanisms.

Social Context: In the rural communities of Oaxaca, long-standing governmental paternalism has created an attitude of dependence. Thus, it is important that mechanisms are created that increase the ability of local actors to respond to emergency situations on the basis of their own resources and organization. The risks faced in countries of the first world differ considerably from those faced in those of the third world. The socio-economic characteristics of the population in Mexico and Oaxaca, as in other underdeveloped countries, necessitate the development of an alternative model for disaster prevention. The infrastructural conditions in the south of Mexico call for social rather than technical responses to emergency situations. While in Europe and North America, where there exist technical emergency response teams, in Mexico, the response force must derive from strengthening of social links and the capacity of ordinary citizens. This program forms a contribution to the Mexican sense of solidarity and mutual help in the face of disaster.

Keywords: disaster prevention; Municipal Plans of Contingency (MPC)

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Training in Emergency Ultrasound for Civilian and Military Use

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Until the introduction of truly portable high resolution ultrasound with colour Doppler, ultrasound examinations for emergency use were limited. The SonoSite 180, released in Australia in December 1999, permitted portable ultrasound examinations to be performed rapidly and easily in many emergency situations in hospital and military settings. Prior to this, a training course with accreditation and continuing assessment was formulated in 1998 by the late Dr. Marie Kuhn, Director of Emergency Medicine at the Royal Adelaide Hospital. This course was taught in the hospital, and was followed by an abbreviated course using the same teaching materials utilised in the military, both within Australia, and also during a six-month military deployment between February and August 2001.

More than 20 such courses were held in East Timor, and doctors, radiographers, and soldiers from many countries of the UN were trained to perform the FAST ultrasound scan. Since then, courses have been held for the military and civilian medical and paramedical staff in many parts of Australia. The effectiveness of the courses has been demonstrated by military medical staff deployed overseas, and in civilian hospitals by Radiology, Emergency Medicine, and Intensive Care (ICU) staff. Increased availability of portable ultrasound equipment in the Australian military setting, and its use in civilian life, including retrievals, will increase the skills of medical staff, and the use of the FAST scan as part of the initial assessment of