



## Disaster Resilience in Multicultural Australia



Example of a Pictorial Action Guide—Flood

This case study is an example of action which contributes to HFA Priority for Action 3

### Abstract

**As one of the most culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) countries in the world, Australia recognises the importance of equal access to services and information for all people, regardless of their background. The Australian Emergency Management Institute (AEMI) works to build emergency management capability to engage with multicultural communities to address their needs in relation to dealing with disasters.**

A research consultation project under the Australian National Emergency Management Project Program, titled *Project Red*, was undertaken with young people from refugee and migrant backgrounds around volunteering in the emergency management sector. The Centre for Multicultural Youth was commissioned to undertake this consultation. A comprehensive picture of the young people's current awareness and interest in the roles was built and the opportunities and barriers for their active involvement were identified.

The project report showed that there was much good will among young people in CALD communities to be involved in volunteering, particularly if their involvement

contributed to the safety of their communities. They saw themselves as having an important role in communicating essential information to their parents and to recently arrived community members. Emergency management volunteer organisations are in a good position to harness this good will if they offer refugee and migrant young people volunteering opportunities that are interesting, accessible and can develop their skills.

For more information on Project Red, please follow this link: [www.em.gov.au/Documents/Project%20Red%20-%20Consultation%20Report%20-%20FINAL%20-%20June%202011%20-%20PDF.PDF](http://www.em.gov.au/Documents/Project%20Red%20-%20Consultation%20Report%20-%20FINAL%20-%20June%202011%20-%20PDF.PDF).

Six Community Safety Action Guides have also been developed for culturally and linguistically diverse communities as pictorial alternatives to the existing English text Emergency Action Guides. The guides aim to help communities understand the risks associated with natural hazards that may occur in Australia and how best to be prepared to minimise any adverse effects. The guides cover: Storm, Flood, Earthquake, Cyclone, Lightning and Heatwave.

In March 2013, the pictorial guides received the 2013 Emergency Management Resilience Award at the Association of Public-Safety Communications Officials Australasia conference and expo in Adelaide. The award acknowledges projects and systems that build community resilience for dealing with emergency situations.

To view the Pictorial Action Guides please following this link: [www.em.gov.au/Emergencymanagement/communityengagement/Pages/Communitysafetyactionguides.aspx](http://www.em.gov.au/Emergencymanagement/communityengagement/Pages/Communitysafetyactionguides.aspx).

Through recognising differences in language and cultures, and designing appropriate communication tools, significant achievements have been made, ultimately creating new relationships, partnerships and increased engagement between the emergency management sector and our new citizens.

### Other resources:

Australian Emergency Management website: [www.em.gov.au/Emergencymanagement/communityengagement/Pages/Culturallyandlinguisticallydiversecommunities.aspx](http://www.em.gov.au/Emergencymanagement/communityengagement/Pages/Culturallyandlinguisticallydiversecommunities.aspx).