

We are delighted to write this editorial for the first issue of Volume 8. In this issue, the *International Journal of Emergency Services (IJES)* is again publishing six original articles that explore the themes of psychological screening of the emergency services responders, training and evaluation in the fire services, the issue of CPR training for the paramedics and firefighters, the issue of austerity and use of Lean and Six Sigma techniques in policing. These papers seek to close the information gap by making significant contributions to the emergency management literature and the way we view the role of emergency management practitioners.

The first article, "The role of psychological screening for emergency service responders" by Noreen Tehrani and Ian Hesketh examines the role that psychological screening and surveillance can play in improving the delivery of psychological support to emergency service responders (ESRs) at the time of increasing demands and complexity across the world. The article discusses the use of psychological screening and surveillance of trauma-exposed emergency service workers by surveying the tools currently in use. The article argues that psychological screening and surveillance of ESRs provides a simple and economic mechanism to identify ESRs in need of psychological support. The authors argue that such an approach offers an opportunity to examine and quantify the impact of personal and organisational factors, influencing the level of trauma resilience, having implications for ESRs across variety of organisational settings.

Our second article, "Stating the obvious: evaluating the state of public assurance in fire and rescue authorities in England" examines the form, content and reporting arrangements of "statements of assurance" required from fire and rescue authorities (FRAs) in England since 2012 and identify potential improvements for future implementation. The Authors, Thomas Spencer, Jo Hayden, Peter Murphy and Russ Glennon, provide potential lessons which could be adopted to inform future guidance in respect of the preparation and publication of the statement of assurance and its role within the wider public assurance regime for fire and rescue authorities. This exploratory research focussed on documentary analysis and qualitative interviews. The study found that the usefulness of the statements was undermined by the considerable inconsistencies in respect of the length, structure, name and content of the statement, and how they fitted into the overall reporting framework for FRAs. The article concludes that there is confusion amongst authorities as to the statement's role and the risk of it being perceived as a "box ticking" exercise rather than a real contribution to public assurance.

We continue with the theme of fire services in our third article. Titled "Evaluation of firefighter leadership trainings" Niklas Schulte and Meinald T. Thielsch argue the lack of a validated instrument assessing the quality of leadership trainings in firefighter education. The study was conducted at the largest of the 16 German state-run academies for fire service forces and focussed on trainings for group and platoon leaders, the two most prevalent training types for incident commanders and applied a mixed methodology in two separate studies. The study resulted in a six-dimensional questionnaire reflecting relevant training processes and outcomes and newly created Feedback Instrument for Rescue forces Education which meets the relevant psychometric quality criteria. By examining critical factors of training quality, the article enhances the understanding of critical processes in programmes for rescue forces education. The article has clear implications for the evaluation of fire service training in different international contexts.

Amy Seymour-Walsh in her article, "The development and critique of validated assessment tools for pre-hospital resuscitation skills" describes the development of clinically credible skill practice and assessment guides for intraosseous (IO) needle insertion and laryngeal mask airway



(LMA) insertion as two essential components of advanced life support training. A modified Delphi process was used to identify how expert, pre-hospital clinicians use IO and LMA devices in an Australian ambulance setting. This article challenges the notion that validation can be satisfied by compliance to a procedure such as a Delphi study while arguing that the validity of any assessment tool must consider the proposed use of the tool, and whether the context of its development aligns to this objective for use in the pre-hospital resuscitation setting.

Our fifth article, “Low-dose, high-frequency CPR training with feedback for firefighters” by Anna Abellsson, Jari Appelgren and Christer Axelsson, investigates the effects of the intervention of low-dose, high-frequency cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) training for Swedish firefighters. The firefighters are trained to provide immediate resuscitation, which is essential for survival, and to perform CPR and all fire trucks are equipped with defibrillators and basic medical equipment. This study used a quantitative approach involving about 40 firefighters. Findings from this study showed that low-dose, high-frequency CPR training with an average of six training sessions per month improves ventilation volume, compression depth, rate and recoil and objective feedback during the training enhances the firefighters’ CPR skills. The study has clear implications for police and ambulance CPR training.

Our final article in this issue entitled “Lean and Six Sigma in policing: austerity, driver or distraction?” by Bryan Rodgers, Jiju Antony and Ivor Marshall examines the issue of austerity being the driver for introducing continuous improvement (CI) methodologies, such as Lean and Six Sigma into policing. The article demonstrates the ongoing discussion of the applicability of lean and Six Sigma in the public sector in general and highlights challenges and lessons learned, particularly in embedding service improvement methodologies into organisational culture. The article emphasises the risks to service delivery if factors such as budget constraints are considered in isolation while providing examples of opportunities which may exist in policing as well as introducing ongoing work in policing.

In 2019, *IJES* will continue to be represented at major international conferences by sponsoring/hosting specialist panels on emergency services management led by the editors. This includes the 23rd Annual International Research Society for Public Management (IRSPM) conference hosted by Victoria University, New Zealand in April and the Annual European Academy of Management (EURAM) Conference organised by ISCTE–IUL in Lisbon, Portugal in June 2019. *IJES* will participate in the “Families Amidst Global and Local Processes: Economic, Political and Cultural Change”, an international symposium co-hosted by the University of the Aegean, the Committee on Family Research (RC06) of the International Sociological Association, the University of Delaware and Rowan University July 2019 Rhodes, Greece. The editors will chair sessions on emergency response during times of austerity and Emergency response during a humanitarian crisis. In North America, *IJES* editors will host sessions on disaster preparedness and emergency response at the 45th Annual Mid-South Sociological Association (MSSA), October 2019, in Jackson, Mississippi, USA.

As we reflect on the eight years of publication of *IJES*, the editors wish to thank our reviewers who have worked so hard and given their valuable time to make the *IJES* a leading voice in the discipline. We remain true to our mission by providing a scholarly platform for cutting-edge scholarship in the management of all emergency services, including universal services such as fire and rescue, police and ambulance services as well as more specialized services such as the coastguard, air-sea or mountain rescue at all stages of the disaster cycle. Additional, we thank the authors, reviewers and readers in supporting *IJES*. The scholarly and scientific peer reviews form the foundation of *IJES* and helps us publish high-quality research. We value the comments and feedback from our readers and invite suggestions for future themes, topics and expressions of interest for special issues. We again renew our call for publishing with us or joining *IJES* as potential reviewers and/or on the editorial board.

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