Tomorrow's disasters –foresight principles, risk assessment and treatment



Graeme A. Riddell^{1,2}, Hedwig van Delden^{1,2}, Holger R. Maier¹, Aaron C. Zecchin¹

¹ School of Civil, Environmental & Mining Engineering, The University of Adelaide, SA Australia ² Research Institute for Knowledge Systems (RIKS), Maastricht, the Netherlands

WHEN PLANS HAVE AN OVER-RELIANCE ON WHAT HAPPENED IN THE PAST, THE RISK IS THAT ONE MISSES THE POTENTIAL FOR A FUTURE THAT IS DIFFERENT, UNSEEN, AND UNIMAGINABLE.

HINDSIGHT, LEARNING THE LESSONS OF THE PAST, IS NECESSARY, BUT PLANNING SHOULD BE DRIVEN ALSO BY IMAGINATION AND FORESIGHT.

ARE WE PLANNING FOR THE NEXT FIRE? OR ARE WE PLANNING FOR THE NEXT "FIRESTORM"? WHAT DO WE THINK THAT WILL LOOK LIKE? IN THIS SETTING, THE GREATEST FAILURE MAY WELL BE THE FAILURE TO IMAGINE.

Foresight allows us to strategically, and transparently, consider the driving forces impacting on the emergency management sector. It is a process to consider the drivers of change – globalisation, urbanisation, technological development, changing societies and work patterns and how they impact on the sector moving into the future.

Foresight can be integrated into risk management procedures by allowing a broader consideration of the 'context' pertinent to the risk assessment. It can also allow for the consideration of treatment effectiveness under future, uncertain times.

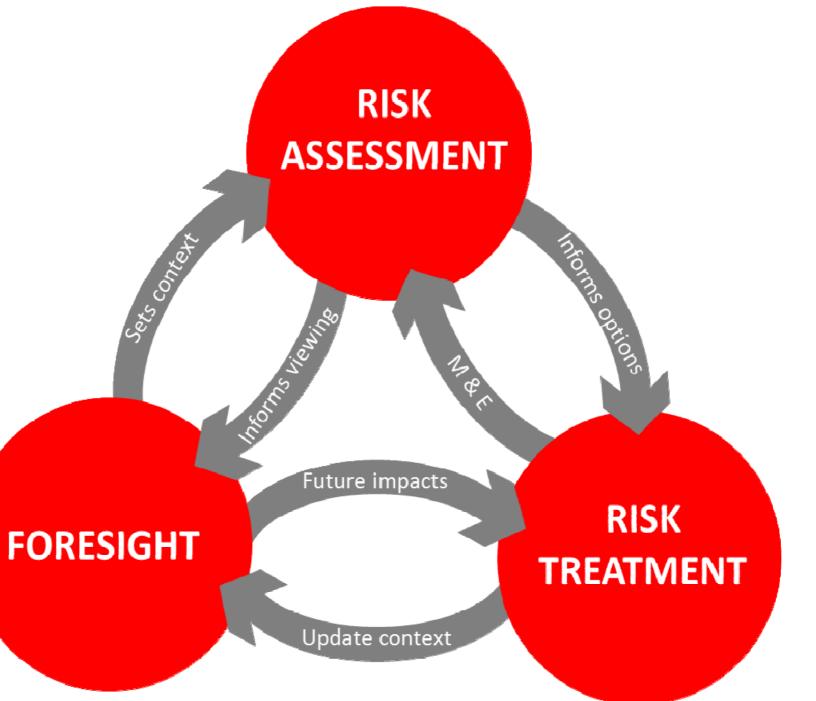
Foresight, importantly, doesn't focus on one future – but instead considers what could happen, and what would the impact of that be?

Multiple methods can be used to consider future uncertainties and the complexities associated with an increasingly more connected world. However, at the core it involves exploring relevant drivers to the emergency sector's future, and challenging assumptions about what will happen next – developing strategic capacity in an uncertain, turbulent world.

Making decisions that consider the aging population, changing demographics, climate change, economic growth and changing industry base along with impact of technology and internet certainly looked very complex to start with, however it made a lot of sense. Putting these elements into the scenarios was where it all came together for me and then mapping it into the time schedule was particularly illuminating.

Liz Connell, SA SES

EUAN FERGUSON Report of the Special Inquiry into the January 2016 Waroona Fire



SCENARIOS FOR GREATER ADELAIDE

Using foresight concepts scenarios for Greater Adelaide's development were created with a diverse range of stakeholders involved in risk reduction and planning in the region.

Five scenarios were developed (three shown below) considering how the Greater Adelaide region progresses to be either more or less socially resilient, or more or less open to government implementation of mitigation options.

The scenarios were also translated to quantitative model parameters and modelled to provide five different risk profiles for different hazards – see below for bushfire.

THREE SCENARIOS FOR DEVELOPMENT IN GREATER ADELAIDE

