

FIRE UPDATE

BUSHFIRE CRC NEWSLETTER AUGUST 2012

RESEARCH WITH FRANCE

Research using a 3D fire suppression simulator was undertaken when representatives from the Bushfire CRC recently travelled to France as part of a study tour to exchange best practices in fire response.

CEO Gary Morgan and research leader Dr Christine Owen (University of Tasmania) were joined in France by an Australian and New Zealand Incident Management Team, made up of Bushfire CRC and AFAC partners Andrew Lawson (Country Fire Service South Australia), John Hayes, Bryan McCarthy and Dr Claire Johnson (Country Fire Authority Victoria), Reegan Key (Victorian Fire Services Commissioner), Steve Yorke (New South Wales Rural Fire Service), Paul Turner (New Zealand Fire Service) and Bob Evans (New South Wales SES), with the contingent hosted by the Bouches-du-Rhône Fire Brigade in Marseille.

Using the 3D fire suppression simulator located at France's national research dissemination and training centre, the international research collaboration participated in forest fire exercises, allowing for differences in organisation, tactics and decision-making processes to be observed and discussed.



Dr Owen and Dr Johnson, with the assistance of French researcher Dr Renaud Vidal, observed the exercises to research the comparative strategies employed and the way the different teams functioned.

The data collected during the exercises will be further analysed and a report prepared for the AFAC AIIMS committee. The research will also assist in identifying additional areas of mutual interest for ongoing collaboration between the Bushfire CRC and the Bouches-du-Rhône Fire Brigade.

RESEARCH ON SHOW IN PERTH

A record number of research posters will be on show at the annual Bushfire CRC and AFAC conference this year, with over 80 posters from Bushfire CRC researchers, explaining their research and how it will benefit you.

The conference takes place in Perth on 28-31 August, and the research posters are always a highlight. They will be on display at the Bushfire CRC/AFAC booth, located in the middle of the trade expo – a great place to meet and greet new friends and old. Poster sessions will take place during the morning tea and lunch breaks at the Research Forum, as well as at morning tea on the first day of the conference. Posters are also able to be viewed throughout the conference. All conference resources will be on the Bushfire CRC website at the conclusion of the week.

The last day of the conference features the Student Showcase, an opportunity for



Bushfire CRC students to showcase their projects in brief presentations. Additional professional development sessions include a session on how to run professional events – a must attend for those who run events. To register, and for information on all the professional development sessions, visit www.afac2012.org

Partnerships are an important part of the Bushfire CRC, and the conference will provide many more opportunities. Make the most of the conference; by the end of the week you will be well informed about the vast areas of research covered by the Bushfire CRC and why it is important to you and your organisation.

CEO'S BLOG

GARY MORGAN



Recently I have attended a number of important meetings in Europe, highlighting the important role the Bushfire CRC plays not just in Australia, but internationally.

The Bushfire CRC and AFAC research partnership with the Bouches-du-Rhône Fire Brigade in Marseille is a fantastic opportunity for ongoing collaboration. I would like to thank all personal who attended: Dr Christine Owen, Andrew Lawson, John Hayes, Bryan McCarthy, Dr Claire Johnson, Reegan Key, Steve Yorke, Paul Turner and Bob Evans. The research collaboration would not have been possible without the hard work of Christine and Claire, as well as the Bushfire CRC's Dr Noreen Krusel, who pulled together the trip whilst undertaking the very successful Human Factors workshops around Australia. Thanks too must go to Board member Murray Dudfield for his participation and support.

Joining us in Marseille was Dale Dague from the US Forest Service; partnerships such as this between some of the areas most at risk of bushfire in the world are incredibly important for shared learning.

I also attended meetings of the United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction Wildland Fire Advisory Committee and the International Liaison Committee meeting for the 6th International Wildland Fire Conference (Korea 2015) in Germany, as well as the Fire Management Actions Alliance Advisory Group meeting in Italy.

These opportunities reinforced the global recognition that the Bushfire CRC is the leading fire and emergency management research organisation in Australasia, as well as emphasising the Bushfire CRC's significant global leadership role in promoting sound fire management based on scientific research.

MINISTERS DISCUSS INSTITUTE

The future of fire research was discussed at the June meeting of the Standing Council for Police and Emergency Management (SCPEM).

This council is a part of the Council of Australian Governments and is made up of all the state emergency services ministers and the federal Attorney-General.

The council decided to form a committee to develop a proposal on a research institute for fire and natural hazards for the next SCPEM, in November 2012.

The meeting produced a Communique with a section that was of particular relevance to the Bushfire CRC.

Under the heading *Research and Knowledge Management* it stated:

- Ministers acknowledged the importance of adopting a strategic national approach to natural hazards research and training as key to strengthening Australia's resilience to disasters.
- Ministers endorsed the concept of a national platform to oversee natural hazards research, knowledge management and training. Such a platform will adopt a collaborative, integrated approach that capitalises on existing facilities and networks, and builds on the work of the Bushfire CRC and other research bodies to advance natural hazards research.

The full Communique is on the Attorney-General's [website](#).

NORTHERN FIRE OUTLOOK

Large areas of Northern Australia face above-normal fire potential for the current 2012-13 fire season, despite the extensive fires in some parts of the region last season.

More details on the fire season across northern Australia are in the Bushfire CRC's *Northern Australia Seasonal Bushfire Outlook* for the Northern Territory and northern Western Australia and Queensland, published as a Bushfire CRC *Fire Note*.

The annual Bushfire CRC *Seasonal Bushfire Outlook* process has been going since 2006.



The Outlook provides information to assist fire authorities in making strategic decisions such as resource planning and prescribed fire management, and to reduce the negative impacts of bushfire.

A *Seasonal Bushfire Outlook* for southern Australia will be published later this month.

STUDENT BLOG LYNDSSEY WRIGHT

We are very fortunate to have the best and brightest researchers in this country doing the fantastic work on behalf of the industry in the interests of creating a safer community.

Many of our researchers are now beginning to look at how to communicate the outcomes

of their work. We should not shy away from appreciating that the questions the researchers are seeking to answer are complex, and so too are the answers they are uncovering. As we move to the second half of the Bushfire CRC's term, I encourage everyone to remember the best communications material will challenge us and make us think.

GUEST BLOG DR CHRISTINE OWEN, UNIVERSITY OF TASMANIA



In early July I had the privilege of travelling with a Bushfire CRC and AFAC contingent to France as part

of a collaborative research study tour. It was a great trip, meeting with a committed group of fire services personnel from the Bouches-du-Rhône Fire Brigade. We visited a number of fire stations, as well as their training facility.

Dr Claire Johnson and I undertook some research observations of the application of worst case scenario thinking to enhance communication during two Incident Management Team simulation exercises. Our visiting group used the simulations to demonstrate how AIIMS works and the importance placed on information to the community.

We also had the opportunity to observe a full-scale exercise that involved more than 200 firefighters, 80 vehicles and an impressive level of air attack on a simulated fire.

RESEARCH BLOG

RICHARD THORNTON



The annual conference is getting close now and final touches are being put in place. Like the

Olympics, this is shaping up to be the best ever! We have excellent keynote and invited speakers who, I am sure, will challenge those present. We also have a great selection of presentations and panel sessions to address the broad theme of 'Diverse Country. Common Ground' – highlighting that although Australia is a large country, we face many common challenges and opportunities.

Of particular interest to me and the Bushfire CRC members is the Research Forum, where some of the latest research findings are presented to the audience of researchers and end users. This is a great opportunity to see where the research is taking the industry, with 32 separate speakers and three leading keynotes, as well as the Western Australian Minister for Environment and Water.

Interested? Please make sure that you are registered for the Research Forum, in addition to the standard two-day registration, to ensure you don't miss out. The conference [website](#) has all the details.

This year will feature a record number of research posters from the Bushfire CRC. They will be available for viewing at the Research Forum, and throughout the conference at the Bushfire CRC and AFAC booth in the centre of the trade expo area. Remember to cast your vote for the people's choice award.

IN BRIEF

LIKE US?

Have you liked the Bushfire CRC on Facebook? Make sure you don't miss anything and like the [Bushfire CRC page](#), or click on the Facebook button on the Bushfire CRC website.

NEW ONLINE

The proceedings of the Fire Weather and Risk Workshop that took place after the 2011 conference are now available [online](#).

New resources include videos introducing the [Fire Decision Support Toolbox](#) project, an advanced software program that will help fire managers fight bushfires faster and more effectively and a summary of the research into the [effect of fire on water quality and supply](#).