ORGANIZATIONAL FEATURES AND THEIR EFFECT IN THE RESPONSE PROCESS OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT ORGANIZATIONS

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Research Problem
Existing emergency management coordination processes in Australia are often strained when emergency situations get complex.

The Context
This study is carried out under Bushfire CRC’s Organizing for Effective Incident Management (OEIM) project which seeks to better understand how multi-agency emergency management coordination above the IMT level can be improved in order to reduce the consequences to the communities.

It focuses on the study of organizational response processes and organizational features that manage competing demands in complex emergency situations.

It is a component of OEIM project that aims to build a coordination typology to assist fire service agencies to examine the relationship between organizational systems, capabilities, processes and organizational features.

Fig. 1 explains the response process in terms of domains (jurisdictions responsible for particular roles in the event), tasks (division of labor for the enactment of activities), resources (human capacities and technologies) and activities (conjoined actions of individuals and social units).

To further analyze these organizational response processes, the framework of organizational features below is also utilized.

Fig. 1: Organizational response processes in disasters (adapted from Dynes, 1979; Boin & Paul't Hart, 2010).

The key challenge is to develop organizational processes that are at the same time adaptive, yet highly consistent, as well as having a high regard for involvement of stakeholders and a shared mission.

Method
Conceptual theoretical frameworks in Fig 1, 2 & 3 are being used to analyze organizational response processes in related case studies of emergency events.

Outcomes and Expected Benefits
Overall, this study facilitates in building a framework for organizational typology.

Through the process of case study analysis and stakeholder assessment, the organizational typology will be developed as a tool for use in organizational response analysis and training / exercises, and to identify any changes needed.

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