

News!

2008 Report on the World Conference on Disaster Management (WCDM) Toronto-June 15th – 18th 2008

by Larry Pearce

The theme of the WCDM was “Resiliency: Individual, Community and Business.” The conference was held over three and a half days and was held at the Metro Toronto Convention Centre. It was hosted by the Canadian Centre for Emergency Preparedness, (CCEP) in partnership with Diversified Business Communications (DBC). Last year, CCEP sold the conference rights to DBC but retained the responsibility for the conference program. This year’s Platinum Sponsor was Roche, and Microsoft, Webex, Blackberry and Telus were Diamond sponsors. There were in addition, some 80 sponsor/exhibitors.

The sub theme of the conference was “Networking on a Global Scale” and from a global sense the conference met this mandate with speakers and representatives from many countries, (Canada, the United Kingdom, the United States, Australia, New Zealand, Switzerland) and nearly 2,000 delegates. The workshop speakers for the most part were good. Laurie and I attended a crisis management workshop with **Bruce Blythe** which was excellent and we are delighted that Bruce has agreed to come to next year’s EPICC Forum.

The plenary speakers were excellent, of high quality and the presentations were topical. One of the plenary speakers, **Peter Power** from the UK gave a terrific presentation and has also agreed to come to speak at next year’s EPICC Forum – his first visit to Vancouver. Some of you may remember Scott Phelps who spoke at the EPICC Forum a couple of years ago and he presented the same speech at a plenary as well. Laurie and I enjoyed the breakout sessions which were too numerous to mention, but we noted that **Jim Stanton**, of the EPICC Board, once again had a “sold out” session. In conclusion, the conference overall provided good value to the delegates, especially in its program content which was diverse enough to satisfy almost everyone’s needs. The registration and overall administration process was good and the inclusion of the Poster Sessions was an interesting addition for a non-academic venue.

On the other hand, the networking opportunities were limited. This was due in a large part to the program structure i.e., because one session started as another session finished it allowed no time to move between sessions, or to chat up the presenter. There were only two 15 minute refreshment breaks, and grab as you go lunch breaks of one hour. The things that received the most criticism were the provision and quality of the food, and the limited availability of coffee, tea or water (coupons were required to obtain beverages and it was necessary to line up to get the drinks and then one had to line up again to present the coupon to a cashier).

The large size of the convention centre, and the large number of exhibitors also contributed to the Conference but since there was only a one hour formal Tradeshow session, with a no host bar on Tuesday, July 15, 2008 it was difficult to see everything in the two days that the exhibits were available. There were two formal opportunities to network; a limited "Speakers' Only" reception on Sunday and a general reception for all delegates on the Monday the 16th from 1600 to 1730h hosted by DRI Canada.

Overall the program was very good and the delegates had the choice of 16 workshops on Sunday the 15th, and eight plenary sessions and approximately 70 breakouts during the rest of the conference.

We would like to thank Larry Pearce for submitting this review and encourage all of our members to participate by submitting news for our EPICCgram.

Coming Soon!

4th annual EPICC Seminar
"What is the secret ingredient to making a BCP a success?"

Friday September 19th, 2008
(in conjunction with Business Continuity Awareness Week- September 15-19, 2008)

Dunsmuir Lodge, Victoria BC

Please reserve your seat for the seminar as it is filling up quickly!!

To register please contact EPICC
604-813-7979 or email
info@epicc.org

21st ANNUAL EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS CONFERENCE

*Sheraton Vancouver Wall Centre Hotel,
Vancouver, BC*

Conference Dates: November 25, 26, 27

Exhibition Dates: November 25, 26, 2008

Mark your Calendars!

EPICC's 14th Annual Forum

April 27th to 29th, 2009

"Plan for Tomorrow, Today"

Program information will be posted on our web site www.epiccforum.org as it comes available.



EPICC is pleased to Welcome all New Members who've joined this past month. It is great to have such support from all of our Members. Thank you!

New Members:

Michelle Mollineaux
EMERGE0

Elizabeth Thomson
E-COMM

A Special Thank you to E-Comm for Providing EPICC with a new storage area!

Epicc News!

Our New EPICC Website is UP!

We are glad to announce that our new website is up and running. There are a few updates that still need to occur, but it is definitely a huge improvement. We will be informing all of our Members of their username and password very soon. Please browse the site for updates and coming events.

Information!

Article Review

“How Surviving Businesses Respond During and After a Major Disaster”

Authors: Roxanne Zolin and Fredric Kropp¹.

Reviewed by Larry Pearce

Zolin and Kropp begin the article by pointing out that disasters take an enormous toll on businesses ranging from short periods where no income is generated to complete closure. When business fail, the economic repercussions add more negative consequences to a community already reeling from the disaster. Businesses are created, grow, change, focus or die on a regular basis - a natural part of the business life cycle.

However, the normal stress of the economic cycle can be trivial compared with the sudden losses created by natural or person-induced disasters.



One of the first needs in disaster recovery is the distribution of goods and services to, and within, the community and thus a key goal in reconstruction is to facilitate the-growth of the economy. Zolin and Kropp point out that quick and effective response can save lives, reduce suffering, and protect property, infrastructure and the environment from further damage. Effective and timely response is also necessary for the survival of businesses impacted by the disaster. It is important, therefore, that government departments and agencies assist and interact with affected businesses to increase their chances of survival.

Unfortunately many, if not most, businesses do not have plans to cope with a major disaster, and even if they do plans are often not suited or are flawed. Although government's first and primary responsibility is to save individual's, nonetheless it is important to assist businesses in getting back on their feet as soon as possible so they can provide and meet the primary goals of the community (i.e., provision of goods and services and reconstruction).

¹ Journal of Business Continuity and Emergency Planning, January, 2007 (Vol. 1, Number 2)
183-212

What helps or hinders business survival of a cataclysmic disaster? Zolin and Kropp illustrate the key issues by using the stories of business survivors following Hurricane Katrina to discuss stages of response by businesses. "Following a cataclysmic disaster, distinct time-frames are observed in which the focus of attention and activity shifts." The paper concludes by exploring how government responses can help businesses to survive and prosper in the midst of a disaster.



The concepts in this paper reflect ongoing research on business survival under crisis.

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If you have an article that you think would be of interest to our members please let us know!
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EPICC is pleased to announce our new mailing address and we would like to thank the North Shore Emergency Management Office for providing us the space and for their continued support.

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