
Preface

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Biographical notes: Nils Rosmuller has a PhD in Transport Safety from Delft University of Technology (2001). Since July 2007, he has been working at TNO as head of the Department for Industrial Safety. His main fields of interests are transport safety, tunnel safety and disaster management. He has published his work in numerous international conferences and in several international journals, e.g. *Safety Science*, *International Journal of Emergency Management*, *Environmental Planning*, *Journal of Hazardous Materials* and *International Journal of Hydrogen Energy*.

The International Emergency Management Society (TIEMS) was founded in 1993 in Washington, USA, by an international group of emergency managers, scientists and practitioners and is today registered as an international, independent, not-for-profit NGO (TIEMS i.n.p.a.). TIEMS is dedicated to developing and bringing the benefits of modern emergency management (EM) methods, tools and practices to society for a safer world.

TIEMS is an international network of planners, researchers from engineering and social sciences, industry managers, practitioners, and other interested parties within emergency and disaster management.

Within this network TIEMS stimulates the exchange of information on the use of innovative methods and technologies within emergency and disaster management to improve our ability to avoid, mitigate, respond to, and recover from natural and technological disasters.

To do so, TIEMS organises once a year an international conference. In 2009, this conference was held in Istanbul, Turkey. In 2010, the venue was in Beijing, China. Scientists, emergency managers and practitioners from all over the world presented their work and exchanged good practices. The best papers were selected for this special issue of the *International Journal of Emergency Management*.

The papers selected present a variety of emerging subjects related to emergency management. There are two contributions that deal with emergency response preparedness in developing countries, both in India. In particular in such a country, disasters could be enormous (floodings, landslides) affecting millions of people. The necessity for well-developed disaster plans in hospitals, and what such plans should comprise, is presented by Smith et al. Such plans should deal with the local circumstances and technologies in hospitals, which make the challenge to be well prepared for disasters really demanding. Gupta presents the items that should be apparent in emergency operation centres in order to be able to coordinate all kind of disaster response organisations such as the hospitals.

We have also three cutting-edge technology contributions. Yang et al. present the applicability of sensor networks and data analysis regarding fire safety in buildings. Not only can sensors facilitate the monitoring of fires, but they can also, in combination with very sophisticated data analysis techniques and fire safety engineering knowledge, facilitate predictions of the fire development. Dimitrijevic addresses in her contribution the dangers of nanoparticles. We know the danger of dust explosion, but what kind of explosive danger may be introduced by nanotechnology and particles. Her literature overview gives the first insights in those dangers. Finally, Lavie presents an unmanned technology (GuideKeeper) that can be used for surveillance of wide areas of land and sea borders.

In addition, we have two contributions from Australia, both dealing with new phenomena in emergency management. King acknowledges the impacts of climate change and addresses items to deal with these changes in community hazard mitigation plans. Tindall's work elaborates on the role of consulars in coordinating large-scale crisis involving citizens abroad: how did consulars of three countries coordinate their emergency response actions? As a result of these case studies she identifies activities for development of consular emergency plans and elements to be incorporated in such very specific emergency plans.