

Department of Community Safety

Emergency Management: Joined up Government; or just a disaster?



Today's Proposition

- Emergency Management provides a unique context within which to view people focussed cooperation and policy operating across all levels of government

Are disasters a good case study?

- Disaster management in Queensland is well (perhaps too well) practiced
- Disaster management demands all levels of government engage
- Despite a period of many and varied disaster events – no significant public criticism has been levelled
- Disasters require a policy response as well as an operational response.

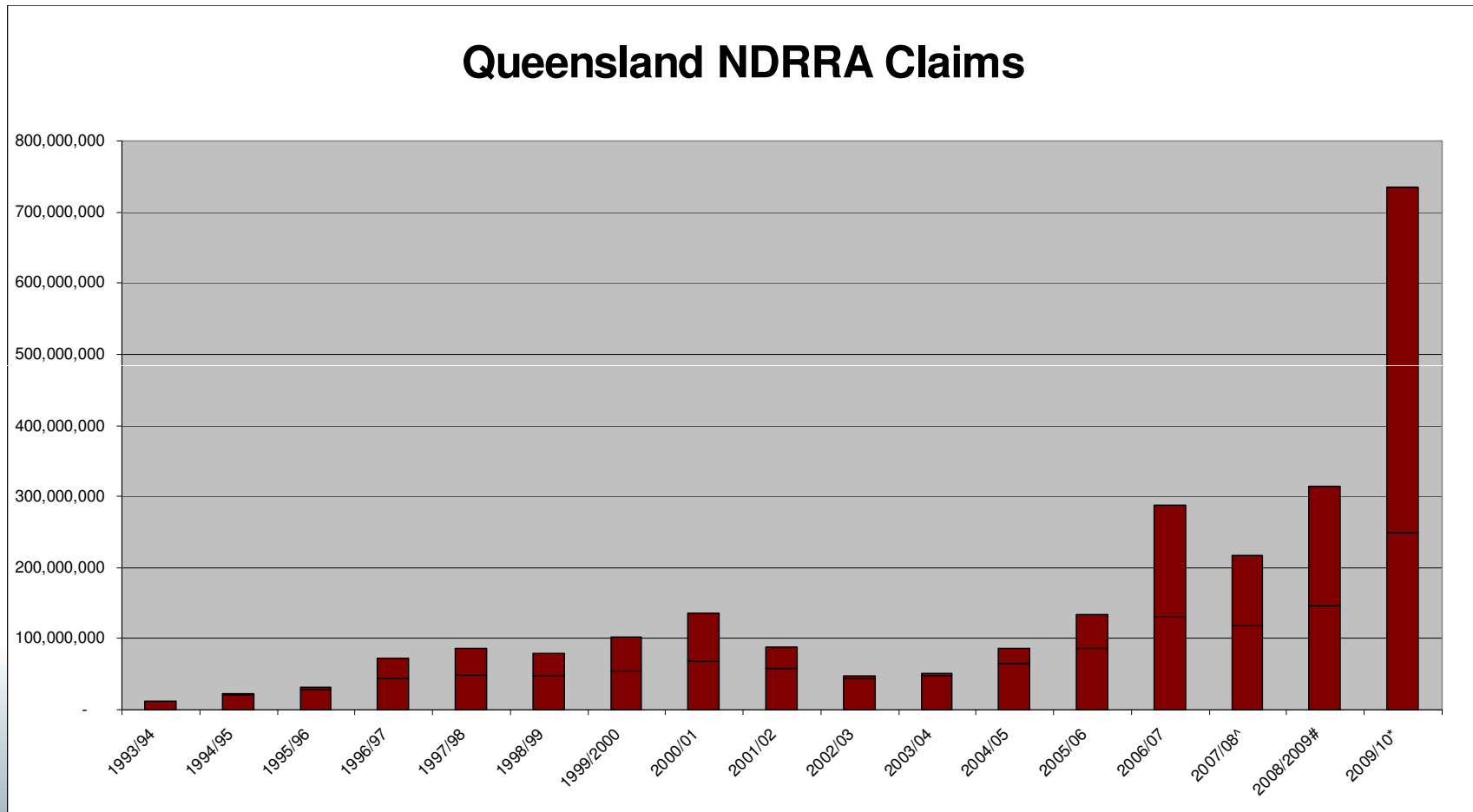
On the other hand...

- You don't want to be only reactive
 - We are at the bottom of the Maslow pyramid
 - Responses in disasters may not be good long term solutions
 - Creating a disaster just to look good might be frowned upon
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- However, there are some lessons worth considering

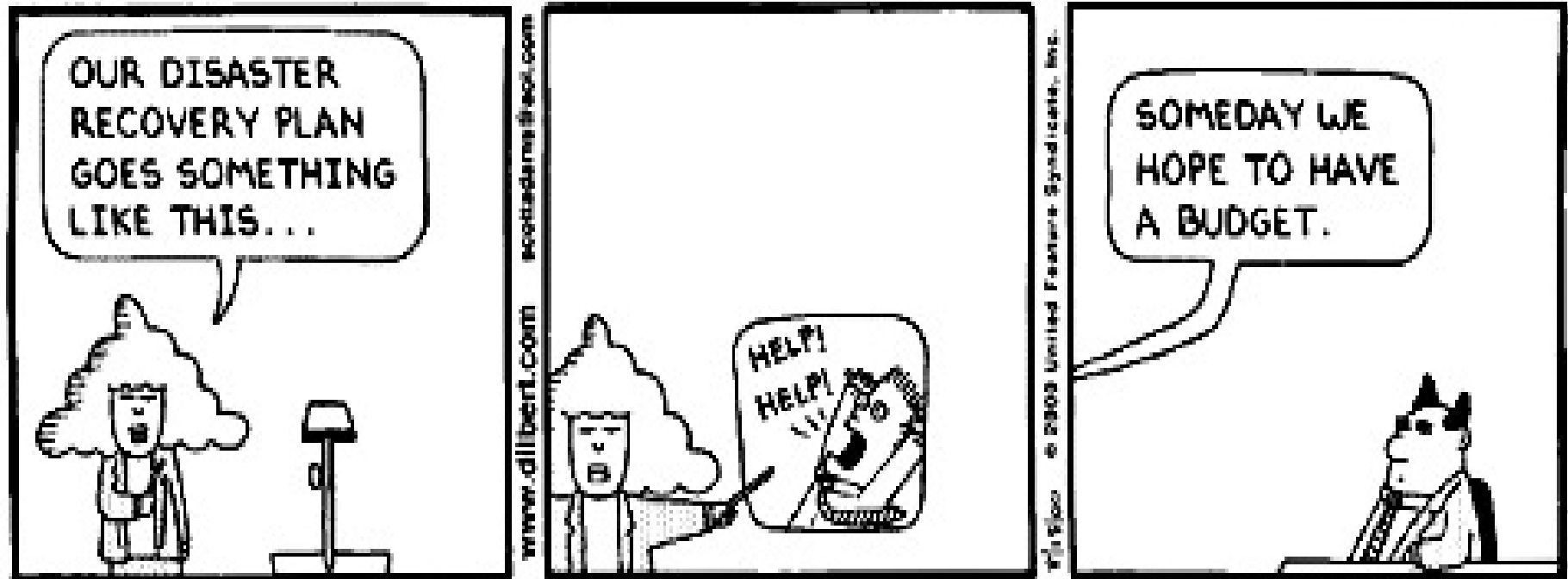
About EMQ and what we do

- Disaster Management
 - Planning
 - Prevention
 - Response/Recovery
 - Analysis and continuous improvement
- The State Emergency Service
- Rescue Helicopters
- Administer Resilience grants program
- Administer NDRRA

... and we are a growth industry



In troubled times always consult Dilbert



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Good Disaster Management

- Clear
- Compelling
- Engaged
- Transparent
- Speedy
- Skin in the game
- Outcomes paramount

Clear

- Needs of the community are unambiguous
- Advice from very practical people
- Decisions are simple
- Policies that impede action are quickly identified
- Plans, past events and exercises mean key people know one another and have worked together previously

Compelling

- The public interest is undisputed
- Systems establish priorities
- Decisions are demanded
- In my world the disaster causes the problem; not the other way around!
- Cooperation is essential because it is clear no single entity can solve the problem

Engaged

- Whole community affected
- Responders have unique access to key decision makers
- Key decision makers are at the coal-face
- Policies that are needed or impeding action are dealt with quickly
- Daily discussions with all levels of Government

Transparent

- Governance operates in the full spotlight of the public domain
- The key advisors are directly in touch with the public
- Decisions are explained in simple terms
- Images of a failing policy response are beamed into every lounge-room before you know there is a problem
- Disagreement is fatal

Speedy

- Public expectations are shared and immediate
- Effective, coordinated service delivery is the minimum
- Decisions are based on incomplete data
- Policy is managed on truncated consultation
- Cooperation is on tap

Skin in the Game

- Public have the greatest interest in the outcome
- Responders have been practicing
- Decision quality will make or break careers
- Conditions that impede assistance will not be tolerated
- Cost and resource sharing is understood

Outcomes must be ...

- People focussed
- Pragmatic
- Biased to action
- Delivering good policy, not elegant
- Shared

Therefore, the corollary ...

- Procedural
- Theoretical
- Biased to compliance
- Unattainable
- Imposed

Final thoughts ...

- Not all disaster lessons are relevant; but some are ...
- Public expectations are driving models for more responsive government
- Know the problem
- Pragmatic advisors
- Know your best alternative outcome
- Monitor
- If it's truly about people the issue is truly shared