

In the first issue of the sixth volume of *International Journal of Emergency Services*, we are publishing six papers that truly reflect the theme and international perspective of the journal. As a whole, the discipline seeks to prepare, prevent, avoid, process, and manage unpredictable events in crisis, disaster and emergency planning, response and management. This edition of the journal furthers this aim in emergency management by research that supports people dealing with crisis and emergency operations to improve the first responders' abilities in responding effectively to a crisis. In this issue, high-quality articles ranging from the disaster logistics in Ghana, emergency dispatchers in the USA and emergency personnel exercises in Scandinavia provide the backdrop for an enriching discussion to advance the field of emergency management.

The first article in this issue focuses on how disasters create challenges to systems that are designed to manage disasters. Drawing insight from previous work and study findings, in the first article, "Disaster logistics operation: an insight from Ghana," Kwame Owusu Kwateng, Munir Abdul Hamid, and Bernice Debrah explore how coordinating logistics in the midst of a relief operation can oftentimes be overwhelming and bring about the loss of life and assets if not done rapidly and practicably. This paper evaluates relief logistics in disaster situation in Ghana with an emphasis on coordination of emergency relief operation and effectiveness of inventory management to provide a framework for effective relief logistics operation focusing on all relevant actors in each phase of disaster. The findings from this article reveal an effective assessment time but late delivery of relief items and issues with respect to resource availability, inventory management and coordination with relief actor which resulted in slow response to affected population. The results for this study provide evidence of an ineffective disaster relief response; Kwateng *et al.*, further elaborate, ways to effectively address these issues.

In the second article, "Time to rethink Norwegian maritime collaboration exercises," Elsa Kristiansen, Jarle Sørensen, Eric Carlström and Leif Inge Magnussen, employ observations, semi-structured interviews, and reviews of associated frameworks and evaluation reports to evaluate The NORD exercise as it was in operation at five simultaneous five different sites and involved 22 public, private, and volunteer stakeholder organizations, including civil emergency response units, the military, the Norwegian Civil Defense, and major maritime volunteer organizations. The goal of this case study approach was to map the perceived collaboration between public, private, and volunteer organizations during maritime crisis work, with a substantive focus on communication, information flow, and distribution of activities. The key findings showed an intra-organizational focus, a predominance of drills, and different informal exercises instead of a cohesive exercise.

As the first link in the emergency response chain, not much research attention has been given to the call center dispatchers. In our third article entitled, "Professional quality of life of Florida emergency dispatchers," Anastasia Miller, Lynn Unruh, Ning Zhang, Xinliang Liu and Tracey Wharton, emphasize a much needed area of activity in the field of emergency services. The authors employ a web-based survey that included four well-established instruments to measure positive factors, negative factors, resilience and social support mechanisms to help understand the quality of professional life for emergency dispatchers. They conclude by suggesting two strategies for retaining the existing dispatcher workforce.

The fourth article, "Disaster preparedness of private social services: case Finland", by Merja Rapeli, Helena Mussalo-Rauhamaa, employs a single country case study approach



using a web-based questionnaire completed by businesses producing institutional care and sheltered housing services. The following factors were assessed: disaster preparedness, impacts of recent hazards, measures taken during the hazards, and connections to disaster risk management actors and relatives of their residents during the hazards. The study illustrates the relative small percentage of private service providers had a disaster preparedness plan, and only 11 percent reported that a disaster preparedness plan was a requirement agreed on with the service purchaser. The size of the unit predicted only partly the differences in the level of preparedness. The major impacts of storms were on energy supply, leading to disruptions in services.

Rasmus Dahlberg's article, "Who's in the center? A case study of a social network in an emergency management," is a case study of an informal network that emerged in the Joint Arctic Command (JACO) in Nuuk during LIVEX 2016, a large maritime emergency management exercise rehearsed the activation, deployment and insertion of the Arctic Response Force (ARF) to assist with managing a mass rescue operation following a collision between two ships off the coast of Nuuk, Greenland. At the center of this article is the question "Who was in the center of the informal network in JACO during the exercise?," to investigate the relationship between a measure of centrality in the informal network and certain actor attributes.

Research regarding firefighters and traumatic stress is limited and the final article in this issue, "Firefighters and traumatic stress: a review," by Shannon Wagner, Alex Fraess-Phillips, Luke R. Harris seeks to bring together a concise review of the literature of traumatic stress among firefighters. This article is a synthesis of previous literature that addresses many aspects of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). The authors note that the literature's primary conclusions assert that efforts enhancing coping skills and teambuilding exercises may improve firefighters' resilience to PTSD, while therapeutic and psychopharmacological treatments may be effective in reducing the progression of PTSD.

All of these articles represent advances in the literature of emergency services and management to facilitate emergency response under rapidly changing, dynamic conditions. As a whole, the articles provide an informative assessment of the current practices in five countries and grasp aspects of a fundamental challenges to emergency management under ever-changing disaster conditions. The scholarship represents a visible intellectual imprint on the scholarly landscape influencing a diverse audience of practitioners, academics, students, policy makers and the general public.

We are also happy to share that from 2017, *IJES* will be publishing three issues per year. We thank all of the scholars, peer reviewers, and readers supporting *IJES*. We value your feedback. We are also particularly interested in our readership's suggestions for future themes, topics and expressions of interests for special issues. We hope you will enjoy reading this issue and that it inspires more scholarly inquiry into the field of emergency services and management.

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