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Advances in
**MEDICAL
JEWELLERY**
& Emergency ID

Marine
Safety
- A Personal Account

Floodwater
Rising

Plus

Psychological First Aid

Surf Lifesaving Australia

International Year Of The Nurse

Travelling To Australia - A Personal Account

Angel On A Blue Bike - A Personal Account



20 Marine Safety

- A Personal Account

Boating to me has always been fun and exhilarating. You soon learn that common sense is just as essential as a life jacket when you are on the water. In this article I share some of my personal experiences, both fun and serious, while boating.

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Floods can be damaging and destructive to property and worse still to lives. Here we examine some of the ways to prepare for and cope with a severe flood.



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Medical alert tags are now available in a wide variety of styles. The more traditional take the form of a bracelet or necklace, or even a key ring. These can carry basic health information and warnings. Others can carry a reference to a 24 hour emergency contact centre from where more detailed information can be obtained.

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Today there are over 350 Surf Lifesaving Clubs in Australia, patrolling over 400 beaches. Here we have a brief history of our surf lifesavers and some tips on what you can do to support your local club.

26 Travelling to Australia

There are many differences to be taken into consideration, large and small, when you come into a new country. In this personal account we hear about some of the experiences of a New Zealand girl moving to Australia.

Letter from The Editor

2010 has been a wet year for a lot of Australia which has been good for farmers and given a lot of "on the job experience" to the Emergency Services.

This edition has a large portion devoted to water and safety along with our usual exploration in to services that cross before our eyes and we hardly know they are there e.g. it is the international year of the nurse and their "in the field" colleagues, the St Johns ambulance. In this issue we have taken a different approach to providing knowledge by including personal experiences from the community that relate to the use or need of an emergency service. We have taken this approach because we want our readers to be able to place themselves in the situation or scenario that the articles convey. The "Angel on the Blue Bike" is heart felt true story of one instant that changed a whole families lives forever and directed a young girl to become a nurse and an advocate for teaching others about asthma.

The power of our magazine really hits home the fact that emergencies are real and the people that assist are real. Lives change in the blink of an eye. Being able to assist yourself and others starts with an awareness of the world around us. Knowledge lessens the effects before, during and after the moment that lives and property are threatened.

I hope that you will enjoy our blend of personal experiences and facts about different emergency services as well as take in the serious message of being prepared because one day an emergency may present itself to you.

The Editor
Emergency Services Report



A few years ago a melting European glacier yielded up the frozen body of a stone-age hunter who appeared to have frozen to death thousands of years ago. Not surprisingly, he carried no personal identification – no driver's licence, no credit cards, nothing. They are still trying to work out who he is.

In the thousands of years since, we and our society have changed in many ways, but many of us still carry little or no personal identification or health information with us. Such key information can be critically important – can even make the difference between life or death in an emergency situation.

The idea of wearing identification or medical information is not new. I'm not sure that gladiators entering the Colosseum carried health benefit cards, or next of kin details. And there is no evidence for Genghis Khan knowing his blood group. But, as early as 1861 during the American Civil War, soldiers were known to pin paper notes with their name and address inside their coats. Some scratched the information into their leather belts. Others wore a primitive form of name badge. From these beginnings, the concept of soldiers' "dog tags" developed – as a way to quickly identify dead or seriously injured men.

During World War II, as well as wearing the ubiquitous dog tags, many soldiers would have their blood group, or known allergies, tattooed onto their bodies. Such a tattoo could save an injured soldier from the hit-and-miss blood matching techniques on the battlefield, greatly reducing the chance of adverse reactions that were frequently lethal.

Advances in MEDICAL JEWELRY & Emergency ID – are you keeping up?

In 1953 the daughter of an American doctor received treatment that caused her body to experience anaphylactic shock – a severe and life-threatening allergic reaction. The incident nearly killed the girl. After that experience, her parents would attach a note to the girl's coat, or have her wear a paper bracelet describing her allergies. As an adult, the girl came up with the idea of wearing a silver bracelet engraved with the life-saving information.

Wikipedia describes a medical information tag as: "... a small emblem or tag worn on a bracelet, neck chain, or on the clothing, bearing a message that the wearer

has important medical requirements that might need urgent attention." The intention of the tag is to alert emergency personnel or a physician to the person's condition when the wearer is unable to provide the information themselves.

Medical alert tags are now available in a wide variety of styles. The more traditional take the form of a bracelet or necklace, or even a key ring. These can carry basic health information and warnings. Others can carry a reference to a 24 hour emergency contact centre from where more detailed information can be obtained. Even more sophisticated forms, such as specifically designed

JEWELLERY

USBs, are available that use electronic devices to store huge amounts of information about the wearer, ready for reading on any basic computer.

Some years ago, when Nicole Graham was a Police Officer, she experienced many serious incidents where personal ID information would have been beneficial to both the wearer and to emergency services personnel. People often incorrectly think that their driver's license holds enough information about them. However, your driver's license contains little more than your name and address. If no one is at home at the listed address, there is no other useful information immediately



Medical & Emergency Service Training Of Medical Jewellery And Emergency ID.

How Our 24 Hour Emergency Line Works

1

Check the patient for Medical Jewellery or Emergency ID



2

Turn the item over and read the back



3

Call the 24Hr 1300 number on the rear and quote the unique number. Most will also have a medical condition engraved for your immediate reference



4

Emergency line staff will ask your name and location. They will then immediately call you back to verify you are medical/emergency personnel



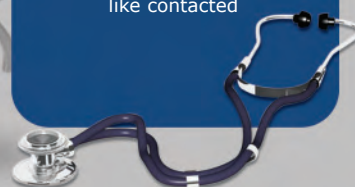
5

You will then be given all the wearers vital information that they WANT or NEED passed on to you



6

You can now treat/assist the patient knowing more details about them, their medical conditions/history, medications, allergies and who they would like contacted



Emergency Medical Identification		Notify In Emergency	
Name _____	Name _____	Phone _____	
Address _____	Name _____	Phone _____	
City _____ ST _____ Zip _____			



available. Obviously there is a case for driver's licenses to carry additional information, but that is an issue for another forum.

While she was a serving Police officer – apparently fit and healthy – Nicole was a regular competitor in biathlon (swimming and running) competitions. One day during gym training Nicole found herself breathless, dizzy and nauseous. Concerned that her fitness level had dropped, Nicole pressed on with her training, running harder and more often. Tests subsequently revealed that Nicole had a serious heart condition necessitating open-heart surgery, without which she would likely have suffered a fatal heart attack.

Nicole realised that during her training runs she had carried no identification or health information. Had she collapsed, critical time would have been lost in trying to establish her identity and critical health details. Her awareness of the importance of such information was heightened when a family member was hit by a car and sadly, after hours of emergency hospital treatment, passed away. Because he was carrying no identification, his body was taken to the morgue, and there was considerable delay before his family became aware of the situation.

After leaving the Police Force, Nicole decided to establish a business based on her experience of the importance of personal and health identification. Emergency ID Australia was born. From her Police experience, Nicole knows the value of identifying information in an emergency situation, she also knows which information is more and less

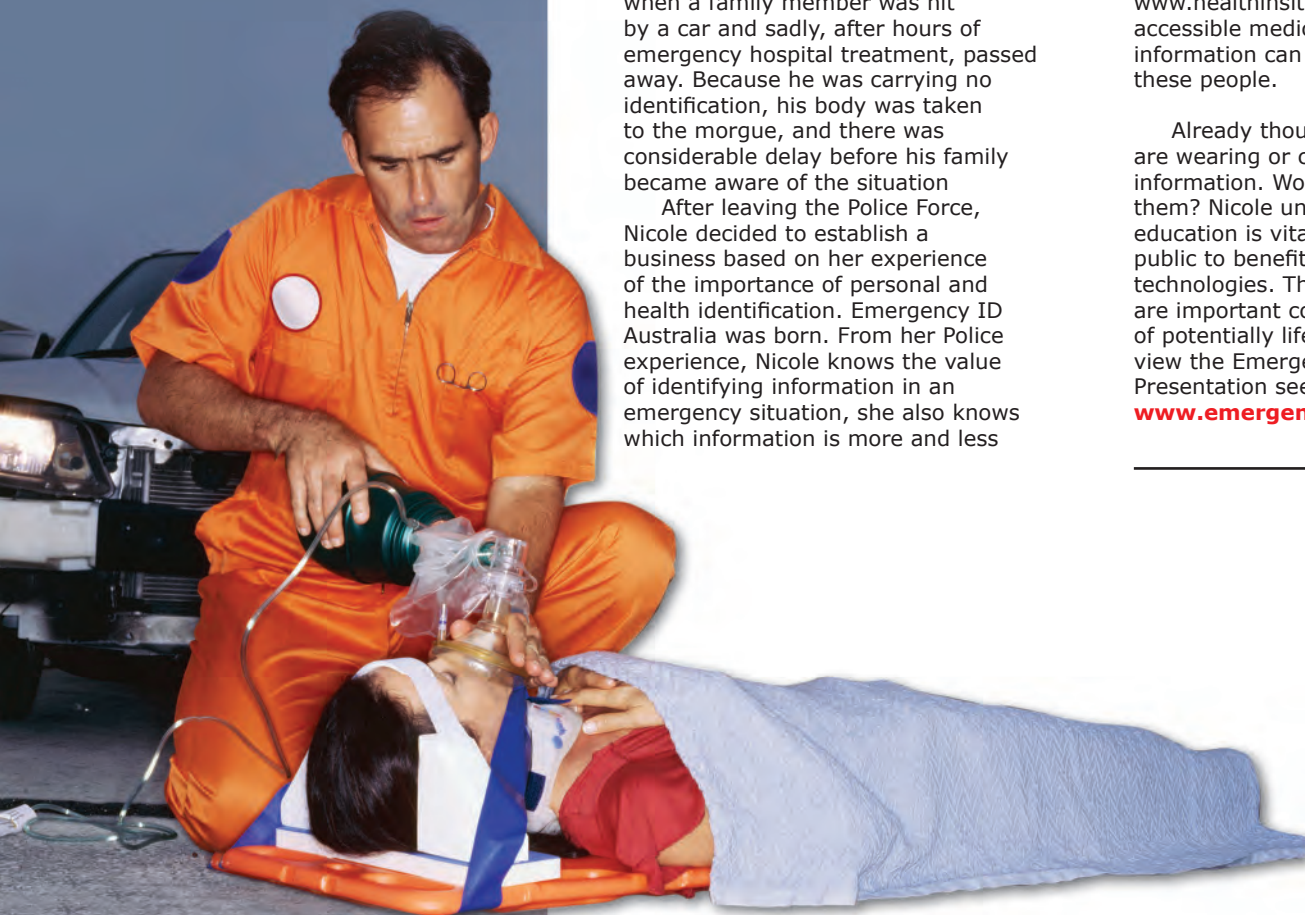
useful. Consultation with her contacts in other Emergency Services refined the information set. As a result, Emergency ID Australia now carries a huge range of the most useful and up-to-date emergency identification products available.

Of course you don't have to be involved in an accident for emergency identification and health information to be valuable, even vital. Any of us has the potential to be incapacitated by sudden illness or accident, and an identification device can greatly speed the process of receiving the most effective assistance, and of notifying appropriate people.

With an aging population, the number of people in Australia diagnosed with dementia is projected to increase dramatically, from 245,400 in 2009 to 1.13 million cases by 2050. (Source Alzheimer's Australia). Diabetes is on the rise worldwide. It has been estimated that over 900,000 Australians currently have diabetes, and about half of those are not aware that they have the condition. (Source: www.healthinsite.gov.au) Carrying accessible medical and emergency information can be invaluable for these people.

Already thousands of Australians are wearing or carrying emergency information. Would you recognise them? Nicole understands that education is vital in order for the public to benefit most from ID technologies. The technical devices are important components in a matrix of potentially life saving solutions. To view the Emergency Services Training Presentation see

www.emergencyID.com.au.



The Fence or The Ambulance

A Poem by Joseph Malines

*'Twas a dangerous cliff, as they freely confessed,
Though to walk near its crest was so pleasant:
But over its terrible edge there had slipped
A duke and many a peasant;
So the people said something would have to be done.
But their projects did not at all tally:
Some said, "Put a fence around the edge of the cliff"
Some, "An ambulance down in the valley."
But the cry for the ambulance carried the day.
For it spread to the neighbouring city:
A fence may be useful or not, it is true,
But each heart became brimful of pity
For those who had slipped o'er that dangerous cliff,
And the dwellers in highway and alley
Gave pounds or gave pence, not to put up a fence,
But an ambulance down in the valley.
"For the cliff is alright if your careful," they said,
"and if folks even slip or are dropping,
it isn't the slipping that hurts them so much
as the shock down below-when they're stopping,"
So day after day when these mishaps occurred,
Quick forth would the rescuers sally
To pick up the victims who fell off the cliff,
With their ambulance down in the valley.
Then an old man remarked, "it's a marvel to me
that people give far more attention
to repairing results than to stopping the cause,
when they'd much better aim at prevention.
Let us stop at its source all this mischief, cried he.
"Come neighbours and friends, let us rally :
If the cliff we will fence, we might almost dispense
with the ambulance down in the valley."
"Oh, he's a fanatic," the others rejoined:
"dispense with the ambulance Never!
He'd dispense with all charities, too, if he could:
no, no! We'll support them forever.
Aren't we picking up folks just as fast as they fall?
And shall this man dictate to us? Shall he?
Why would people of sense stop to put up a fence?
While their ambulance works in the valley?"
But a sensible few who are practical too,
Will not bear with such nonsense much longer
They believe that prevention is better than cure
And their party will soon be the stronger
Encourage them, then with your purse, voice and pen
And (while other philanthropists dally)
They will scorn all pretence, and put up a stout fence
On the cliff that hangs over the valley.*

The Nurse

A Poem by A.Smith

*As she walks through the night, I can barely hear her.
Her steps are light as she tends to their care.
Monitors beeping and patients crying
Alarms buzzing someone is dying.
She reaches my bedside an hour or so later
She gently leans over, a hand upon a shoulder
I can not tell by the warmth in her smile
The result of the emergency down the aisle.
At three AM she is still there, writing her notes attending to cares
I drift in and out of sleep all night and when I wake it is light
My nurse is still warm although weary,
It must be knock off time nearly
Another alarm, another rush of adrenaline
My nurse she runs — she is the heroine.
And as I close my eyes for but a second,
She has saved a life, touched a heart, listened to an old man,
soothed a crying child and cared for a dying woman. She has
medicated, counselled, cared and been compassionate,
she is a nurse, she is a hero, she is my friend.*

International Year of the NURSE

2010 is International Year of the Nurse. This year we celebrate the 'backbone' of health care, those who work endless and often unfriendly hours, those who tirelessly return each and everyday to serve the community.

We celebrate nurses from all arenas, from all specialties, nurses who deal with the trauma, the illness and disease, those who assist bringing a bouncing bundle of joy into the world and those nurses who hold our hands and care for us as they tenderly care for those who are dying. Nurses, who over the past 150 years, have served our community indefatigably; often with little or no gratitude.

We celebrate the history of the struggle to fight the misconception that nurses are to be viewed and respected not as tradespersons or a doctor's lackey, but as the highly skilled, highly academic and diligently trained "Caring Professionals". This year in recognition of the United Nations Millennium Development Goals, seeks to recognize the contributions of nurses globally.

This is a very momentous year of nursing recognition as 2010 not only celebrates the commitment nurses around the world have embarked upon by bringing the promotion of health to their communities; 2010 is also the Centennial Year of the death of modern nursing's founder Florence Nightingale (1820 - 1910).

Nursing in history can be dated back as far as the 17th century when in 1633 the founding of the Sisters of Charity, Servants of the Sick Poor by Saints Vincent de Paul and Louise

de Merillac commenced caring for the ill in their own homes and as history progressed the recognition of a need for a hospital comes to light and in 1645. Jeanne Mance establishes North America's first hospital, by 1660 over 40 'houses' of the Sisters of Charity exist in France and other countries and the sick poor are helped in their own dwellings in over 26 parishes in Paris.

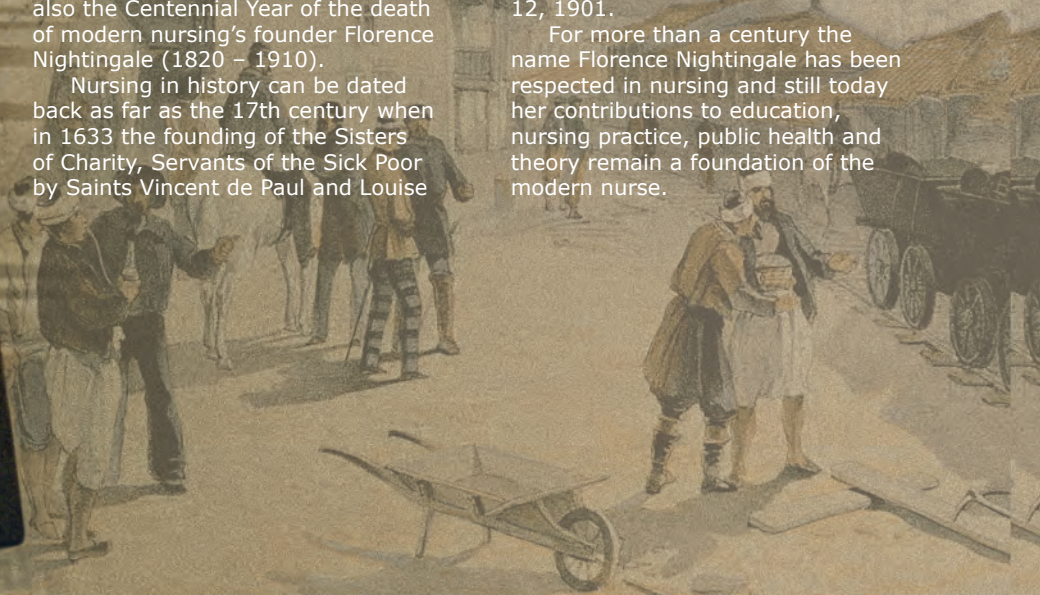
In 1850, Florence Nightingale began her training as a nurse at the institute of St. Vincent de Paul at Alexandria, Egypt. By the Crimean War she is sent to Turkey along with 38 other volunteer nurses to assist with caring for the injured soldiers.

In 1860 Florence Nightingale is a household revered name in nursing and her Notes On Nursing: what it is and what it is not is published. By 1886 America would publish its first Nursing Journal, 'The Nightingale' and by the 20th century, nursing is made a regulated profession first in New Zealand with the adoption of the Nurses Registration Act, September 12, 1901.

For more than a century the name Florence Nightingale has been respected in nursing and still today her contributions to education, nursing practice, public health and theory remain a foundation of the modern nurse.



Florence Nightingale



The International Year of The Nurse recognizes Florence Nightingale and the other awe inspiring nurses of the past such as James Derham, a slave from New Orleans, who in 1783 bought his freedom with money he earned whilst working as a nurse, and Ellen Dougherty who in 1902 became the world's first Registered Nurse and Edith Cavell who is executed in 1915 by a German firing squad for helping hundreds of Allied soldiers escape to the Netherlands. Nurses throughout history have changed the way in which the profession is practiced and respected. Some have lost their lives for their job and country such as the twenty one Australian nurses in the 1942 Banka Island massacre, the survivors of a bombed and sunken ship who were then executed by bayonet or machine gun by the Japanese Imperial Army Soldiers.

We celebrate those nurses who helped change societal imagery such as Mary Elizabeth Carnegie who in 1949 was the first black person elected to the board of Florida Nurses Association with both the right to speak and vote. Those nurses whose perseverance and dedication in the field of research changed the way in which clinical skills were taught and practiced the development of the child-centred nursing model in 1988 by Anne Casey.

The celebrations and acknowledgement of nurses past and present should be on the forefront of every political agenda and budget reform, in the hearts and minds of each and every person who in some way at some point in their lives been touched by a nurse, either by being a patient themselves or a friend or family member who has been.

Nurses are the unsung heroes of healthcare. Their job is arduous and confronting, their salaries do not compensate for their workloads and the emotional toll of nursing is still today, severely under recognized.

As 2010 passes all too quickly, take a moment to process the United Nations Millennium Development Goals that our nurses diligently strive towards helping achieve globally.

1. Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger
2. Achieve universal primary education
3. Promote gender equality and empower women
4. Reduce child mortality
5. Improve mental health
6. Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and all communicable and non-communicable diseases
7. Ensure environmental sustainability
8. Develop a global partnership for development





Psychological First Aid

– The silent life saver!

Physical trauma, injury or accident has long been associated with the provision of first aid. First aid is emergency treatment given to an injured, wounded or sick person before the services of a Medical Officer can be secured; first aid aims are to preserve life, protect an unconscious victim, and prevent a condition from worsening and to promote recovery.

The ideology that first aid is purely for the emergent physical needs of a victim is readily being challenged. Contemporary findings have revealed that psychological first aid is important and although the concept is recent, research has found that psychological first aid given to those suffering from emotional trauma, illness or injury can have a potentially life saving reaction if individuals are encouraged to provide help at the earliest moment possible, as with physical first aid.

Emergencies can happen at any time and it is important to be prepared with the knowledge and equipment to react in those emergencies. Most accidents happen in and around the home or workplace and a first aider is more likely to act on an emergency involving a loved one or someone that they know more so than they would for a complete stranger.

The basis of first aid globally remains unchanged in any language. The aims remain to preserve life, prevent a possible deterioration and to promote healing. When considering psychological first aid the aims remain aligned with physical first aid and universal in approach. When considering every emergency that occurs entails a significant degree of emotional distress, it is surprising that psychological first aid training is not a mandatory requirement for employees

and employers alike as many careers now insist on physical first aid as a prerequisite for employment.

In times of emotional distress people often say and do things that they may not normally do. These intense responses can often lead to a life threatening situation. It is important to realise that people do not have to suffer with a mental illness to become so emotionally distressed that they require emergency psychological assistance. It is true that psychological first aid can of course benefit anyone suffering with mental illness, however the provision of this first aid can indeed benefit any person in emotional turmoil.

What is it and how do we do it?

Psychological first aid is just that, it is emergency assistance for the emotionally distressed. A mental health first aider needs to be taught how to recognise distress and how to respond appropriately, prevent mental health deterioration, seek appropriate professional assistance and whilst waiting with the 'victim' assist them in the recovery and restoration of the person's ability to function.

Distress presents in a plethora of ways and from a multitude of causative factors. Everyday life events such as conflict, financial strain, trauma, injury, illness and bereavement cause stress and can be difficult to cope with. Often stress

can be a cumulative reaction to one or many significant events in which a person begins to 'burn out' such as experiencing difficulty coping with the stressors. This can lead to acute emotional distress. It may be difficult to establish as the first aid provider what the distress is caused by unless the person is able to tell you. What is important however is that you are able to recognise that the person is psychologically traumatised and if they require someone to support their immediate mental health in an appropriate way.

As with any other first aid provision your personal safety is of the utmost importance, and if a 'victim' of acute emotional distress is behaving in a way that may endanger you, the best thing you can do as a first aider is to seek the immediate assistance of trained emergency personnel such as the ambulance and the police.

Appropriate support with the presentation of acute distress can be displayed in a variety of ways. It may be as simple as just listening to a person talk and helping them find a suitable professional to follow up with. It may also be far more complex. The important thing is that your response is appropriate, non judgemental and safe. If the only thing you do as a psychological first aid provider is to call for trained assistance, you have potentially saved a life.

“A mental health first aider needs to be taught how to recognise distress and how to respond appropriately”



There are fundamental core actions of psychological first aid that should be adhered to when responding to distress such as comfort, support, and initial practical and emotional assistance and information provision. The mental health branch in Queensland 2008, states there are eight core components of psychological first aid provision, being;

1. Contact and engagement.

This is with the goal of the first aid provider to either respond to contact made by those in distress or through the initiation of making contact in an empathetic, non-intrusive approach.

2. Safety and Comfort.

This is with the goal of the first aid provider to protect the immediate safety of the 'victim' and implement measures for ongoing safety and to provide physical and emotional comfort. It is important to remember here that the provision of physical safety and emotional safety can often compliment the benefits of each other. Offering the distressed person a hot cup of tea and a comfortable chair can immediately establish a therapeutic rapport in which disclosure of stress phenomena can flow more comfortably.

3. Stabilization.

This is with the objective of the first aid provider to calm and orient the emotionally overwhelmed person.

4. Information gathering.

This is with the goal of the first aid provider identifying current needs and areas of immediate concern for the distressed and be able to tailor any interventions to meet the specific needs of the person in crisis.

5. Practical assistance.

This goal is again important and relatively easy, it could be as simple as offering to drive the distressed person home, or to a friend or family member or providing a warm blanket. This practical thinking and action assists in addressing immediate needs that are often overlooked in times of distress.

6. Connection with social supports.

The objective of this core component is to help the person establish either brief or ongoing contacts with sources of primary support such as community assistance, family members and friends.

7. Information on coping.

The goal here is to inform the person about normal and severe stress reactions and ways in which to cope with these reactions. Information is power and it is effective in promoting adaptability and the return of normalised physiological and psychological functioning.

8. Linkage with collaborative services.

The goal to the final core component according to the Queensland mental health branch is to link the person in need with additional available services and support structures that they may require either now or in the future. These services could include phone numbers to the local centre link offices for financial assistance, legal aid for legal advice, local psychology services and local charities or counselling services.

Mental health first aid courses can be easily found by searching the internet for your nearest training providers. So the next time you update your CPR skills consider a course in helping save lives psychologically.

It wasn't really a big thing back then; I mean it was something we grew up with, something that most people didn't really understand and something that we as a family just, learnt to deal with. We dealt with it well really, through the ignorance and the expenses, days off school and hospital visits; it's just the way it was, we were a family and we dealt with all our troubles as a united front. We were a family, a strong, loving family and never in my wildest dreams did I ever even imagine that that could be changed in some way, and when it was, we were changed forever.

I was twelve years old the day it happened, still a child really, a child who thought she was all grown up, still entrenched with the good in the world, innocent, naïve, sheltered; the way all twelve year old girls should be. And then, in what seemed like seconds I had grown up, I was no longer young and I was certainly no longer naïve, in all but one solitary afternoon, a part of me changed and a part of me died and I no longer saw only good; through the eyes of experience now, I saw the bad as well. At just twelve years of age, I had had to face what young children should never have to and it hurt an indescribable pain that remains forever etched into my being. I was just twelve years old the day I watched my brother struggle for his last breath of life, screaming at him to live, watching my father pound down upon his chest willing his heart to continue beating almost in perfect harmony with the tear drops sliding down his face more forcefully with each passing moment of lifelessness. The reality of that day has never altered once in my recall, it never gets



Blue Bike

- A Personal Account

any easier to retell and time, as the cliché stands, has not once ever made the memory more bearable. Seeing a loved one die a sudden and horrific death, is not something I would ever wish upon another.

Scott had always been sick, being 18 months older than me; I had lived my whole life knowing that my big brother suffered from illnesses on a regular basis. I was accustomed to midnight dashes to the emergency department and hospital visiting hours. I knew our paediatrician by his first name and lovingly called him the chocolate Dr. and he would smile when I held his hand with amazement and inspected the perfect chocolate

smoothness of his skin. He was a lovely Doctor. He was good to me although I was not his patient and he was a great support both in life and death. I had always wanted to be a doctor when I was younger, but that changed the day Scott died.

It's astounding the things you do remember from your childhood when you grow up, like the smell of our washing blowing in the crisp breeze of a Canberra spring day, and the soft touch of my beloved teddy bear 'Leo'. I can remember my dad being the strongest most amazing man I had ever known and my mother the proudest of all mothers in the world. I can remember the happiness of a



childhood most would be envious of, and the experience of feeling utter devastation and incompleteness scorched into my heart the day I watched him die.

Scott and I were two very different people, he was quiet and softly spoken, he had a laugh that was contagious and the most perfect white teeth I had ever seen, even now many years later I still wonder how someone who had spent a short lifetime of illness could have such perfected teeth. It seems almost silly to spend hours thinking about his teeth, but I do even now, glance at the few photographs I have of him and I think about how perfect his teeth were. I don't have a lot of memories of Scott, I know we made many together as siblings, fighting and arguing over small injustices like whose turn it was to do the dishes, and laughing and camping and crying and bike riding; but they don't really seem like real memories to me because when I close my eyes and try to remember them, a sadness washes over me and tears blur the pictures in my mind. I can still smell my mum's

homemade pancakes but I cannot recall what my brother's hands looked like, or how his voice sounded when he was angry or how his eyes danced when he was happy. I think if it were possible to buy memories from days gone past, I would spend a lifetime of savings on those ones.

Over the years I have managed to cling like a shred of desperation to a life jacket to one small fleeting memory of my big brother, I often have to try with all my might to see it clearly in my mind, to replay it in dark days when I am struggling to find the light and inspiration to carry on as though I had never been through something so torturous. When I try really hard, for just a few brief moments I can see him, his sandy hair flying about in his face, his smile that could light up a room beaming and his eyes a soft baby blue laughing at the wonders of life. He is riding on his motorbike, a Yamaha 175. It is blue almost the same brilliant blue as his eyes and he is free, free from hospitals and illness; he is just a young care free kid having innocent

fun. I can smell the country freshness in the air around him and almost feel the wind caressing my face as I stand on our property on the outskirts of Canberra and watch him ride that bike. The moment of reminiscence lasts for but a few minutes, but that is all I have left and that memory is more precious to me than life itself.

Canberra was bitterly cold, June 21st 1989, the day had been uneventful, I do not even remember going to school that day, but I must have. I was sitting in our lounge room, a modest room filled with classic eighties style furniture and memorabilia, I actually do not even remember what I was doing in there but I remember the chill that ran straight through me when I heard him call my name. Our parents were at work, and like most afternoons when he was well, Scott would ride his bike about 500 meters down the road to a friend's house and I would stay at home talking to friends on the phone or doing homework. At around four o'clock one of us would start getting vegetables ready for our parents who would come home from work and

cook dinner. So it must have been around four o'clock that I heard him screaming.

I sauntered to the front door to find my brother hunched over his bike, his body weakened from getting him home, his chest rising and falling struggling to allow that precious oxygen either in or out. His brilliant blue eyes were red, tear stained and a bluish tinge touched his lips. He begged me to get his ventolin and I was angry at him. He had spent a lifetime of being ill, of struggling for breath. He knew he should not have even left the house without it. I yelled at him for being so stupid and left him there in the bitterness of the afternoon to find it for him. I wonder even now, if it were me that killed him by leaving him out there in the cold, I should have made him come inside but instead I found the ventolin and threw it at him telling him how stupid he was not to have come home sooner. He clutched that inhaler and sucked on it with every ounce of strength he had left. I was scared and I know he was scared too.

There must have been an angel standing with me on the front porch that day, because as I remember my knees going weak with overwhelming panic, my dad, my hero and my idol came home from work unexpectedly early and I was no longer alone in the crisis that was unfolding before me.

I still think somehow he knew, he knew I would never have been able to manage on my own that day and he waited for our dad, that he sent a secret message to the angels to tell dad to come home and he waited. He was looking out for his little sister, trying against fate to protect me from the horror of that afternoon. My dad leapt from the car, I had never seen my dad run so fast, he ran and picked up my 14 year old brother off his bike like he was a small toddler, carried him inside and laid him on the brown and beige couch. Those brilliant blue eyes glanced up at me, tears escaping, rolling down his cheek to touch the corner of his grey lips and I screamed at him, I screamed at him to stop fooling around, that it was not a joke anymore. I screamed at him as loud as I could, and he lay there, unable to breathe another breath.

My dad began CPR, his big masculine hands covering my

brothers' chest in desperation and fear; I had never been so scared in all my life. I went to the phone to dial an ambulance but as I went to pick it up it was already ringing and my mother was on the other end asking if we had done the vegetables for dinner. I told her Scott was sick and I had to call an ambulance but she didn't hear me, she was crying, she knew just by my voice that something was really very wrong. I called the ambulance and begged them to hurry, as I watched my father frantically attempting to breathe life back into my big brother. No matter how hard he tried it didn't work. My brother was dying.

The sirens rang through the small suburban streets all the way to our home. It was surreal really, this should not have been happening to us. We could deal with anything, we were a family. Before I knew it, our home was filed with ambulance officers. For 45 minutes they tried in vain to get him to breathe, but he just lay there, motionless, blue. They covered his face in a white sheet and I held his hand. I do not remember what it felt like but I remember it was warm and I thought everyone must be lying to me. He could not be dead because his body was still warm, and I cried tears that burnt my face and ached my heart.

I remember looking up at my dad, the man I had thought could conquer the world and he was beaten. A parent should never outlive a child; I cannot begin to imagine the excruciating pain he would have felt, the anger and the guilt at being unable to save his only son.

Years later my father is a changed man. He is still strong and he is still my hero, but he is colder now. He has never forgiven himself and I have never understood the anguish he must live with. We don't really talk anymore, we share a silent understanding and confusion of that horrible day he lost his only son and I lost my only brother. So very different and yet so unbearably painful. My mother is a changed woman too. She holds me at a distance; she loves me more than any mother possibly could but she too remains tormented by loss. Somewhere deep inside I believe she feels if she allows herself to be too close, too reliant and too involved, she may have to bear losing me too

and then life would not be worth living at all.

His funeral was huge, school children and friends and family overfilled the quaint country style church. My father with the last of his heroic strength he could muster led the coffin bearers down the aisle as Phil Collins sung his emotive Against All Odds, and my mother sobbed, a sound that tore my heart strings and shredded my twelve year old soul, and there was nothing I could say or do to help them. My brother was dead. He would never return. I was lost without him and our world had been changed forever.

I listen to that song fairly often still. I cry at how much it means to me and how relevant those lyrics are to a sister who has had to stand there helplessly as she watched her life being torn apart by the death of her brother, her friend. I am in melancholic awe at the changes and the distance that fear and loss can create in a once tightly knit, happy loving family. I gaze into the brilliant blue eyes of my twelve year old son and know that losing him or his siblings would all but destroy me and I close my eyes and imagine my brother riding that motorbike through the clouds in the sky looking down upon my family and know he is protecting his little sister still. I may not remember what clothes he wore or how his laugh sounded to my ears, but I will always remember in my own way, and he will be forever alive in my heart.

I remain ambivalent to second class approaches at educating the community of the seriousness of asthma although I resigned myself to believe that anything is better than nothing. Still I feel a deep embedded anger that envelops me to the core that he is gone and my family is incomplete. I feel the panic rising when I hear my children coughing or wheezing and I close my eyes and remember my one happy memory of my big brother on his blue bike.

“I close my eyes and imagine my brother riding that motorbike through the clouds in the sky looking down upon my family”



*I keep seeing visions of you,
Lying on the floor,
I tried to tell you,
That I will love you forever more.*

*Your face was blue and cold,
Your body motionless,
Everyone was told,
But just cause your gone,
I'll never love you any less.*

*I go to your grave
I tell you I love you
I try to be brave
But it's just so hard to do.*

*Your my brother and i love you so
There will be no other
Your memory will never go.*

*They say that time can mend and heal
All sad and lonely broken hearts
But time cannot fix mine up for me
It cannot replace the missing part.*

*Living without you is not easy
I feel an ache that will not subside
A part of me went with you that day
And I never got to say goodbye.*

*Time will not be kind now
Some memories are lost in space
I have to close my eyes real tight
Just to see your face.*

*Rest easy in heaven big brother
I miss you more than words
Know that my heart is with you there
Losing you has been my biggest hurt.*

Australian Government Emergency Alert

....Be Warned Be Informed



Why.

As of 1st December 2009 the Emergency Alert System came into operation in Australia. This is a system that allows, during a time of high risk, the government to send a mass alert to certain areas of the community to warn them of impending danger. Since its introduction the alert has been used 33 times in Victoria, New South Wales, Queensland and South Australia. The threats included tsunami, bushfire, flood and chemical incident emergencies. Over 166,000 alerts were issued this way.

Who.

Each state has its own team of emergency services authorities such as fire and police, who are able to issue these alerts. People specially trained in the use of the system will make the final decision as to whether or not an alert needs to be issued.

What.

The Emergency Alert system is a telephone based system. Alerts will be sent to both mobile phones and landlines. The message on a mobile will arrive via text message and on a landline you will hear a recorded message including the words Emergency, Emergency. Landlines will be selected depending on the address of the actual handset and mobiles will be notified depending on their billing address. This means that if you are holidaying in an area that receives an alert; you will not receive this alert.

When.

All text messages will originate from the mobile number 0444 444 444. No calls can be made back to this number. It cannot receive incoming calls. The system can send 300 text messages per second and deliver 1000 voice messages to landlines per minute. Most people in a specific area will all receive the alert at pretty much the same time.

- If you are on your landline or no one answers after 3 attempts you will not receive the alert. Remember also that cordless phones depend on power. If the power is off your phone will not ring.
- If your mobile inbox is full, your phone is off or you are in a black spot, you will not receive the warning either.
- All customers of all providers will receive the alerts.
- If your child has a mobile phone they will receive the text. Explaining to them and preparing them will prevent panic.

How.

The Integrated Public Number Database (IPND) is a list of all Australian phone numbers, both listed and private. There are very strict laws in place governing the use of this database. In order for the Commonwealth to have use of this database for the alerts a legislative amendment was made to the Telecommunications Act. While access to our phone numbers was made available our names and other details have still been kept private. There is a Location Based Number Store (LBNS) that enables us to be notified based on our geographical location.

For more information contact your local office on the numbers provided below, or visit www.emergencyalert.gov.au.

Australian Capital Territory: Canberra Connect: 13 22 81

New South Wales: Law Enforcement and Security Coordination, NSW Department of Premier and Cabinet: (02) 9228 3528

Northern Territory: Superintendent Joint Emergency Services Communications Centre (JESCC): (08) 8922 1518

Queensland: Emergency Management Queensland: (07) 3247 8511

South Australia: South Australian Fire and Emergency Commission: (08) 8204 9373

Tasmania: Tasmania Fire Service: (03) 6230 8600

Victoria: Office of the Emergency Services Commissioner: (03) 8684 7900

*When I am called to duty, God
whenever flames may rage,
Give me the strength to save some life
Whatever be its age.
Help me to embrace a little child
Before it's too late,
Or some older person
from the horror of that fate.
Enable me to be alert
And hear the weakest shout,
And quickly and efficiently
to put the fire out.
I want to fill my calling
and give the best in me,
To guard my neighbour
And protect his property.
And if according to Your will
I have to lose my life,
Please bless with Your protecting hand
My children and my wife*



The Fireman's PRAYER

History of The Fireman's Prayer

While most accounts of the Firemen's Prayer conclude with Author Unknown, the world renowned poem was written by Firefighter A.W. "Smokey" Linn. As a young firefighter in 1958 Linn and his crew responded to a fire in which three children were trapped behind security bars and died in the fire.

The only way he could find to ease the pain of such a tragedy was to sit down and put his thoughts on paper. The phrase, "enable me to be alert and hear the weakest shout", sends

a chill up a firefighter's spine as you imagine what he experienced on that fateful night. It was a particularly tough time for him as he had young children around the same age.

His granddaughter, Penny McGlachlin said that back then there were no grief counsellors to help the firefighters. Penny believes this was an actual prayer from him, to God for the sake of his own family, the other fireman, and the families of the children.

Smokey joined the Wichita,

Kansas Fire Department in 1947 after returning from World War 2. He retired in 1975 and became president of the local chapter of the Good Sam Camping Club. He passed away March 31, 2004 of complications following surgery.

The Fireman's Prayer was originally published in a book called, "A Celebration of Poets" in 1958. The last copyright of the book was 1998. It is the family's desire that the credit for the Firemen's Prayer go to the author, A.W. Smokey Linn.

The Great floods of 1990 and the 1974 Brisbane flood were far from great. They are two of Australia's worst ever floods. They claimed lives, injured many and left many more people temporarily homeless.

Continuous heavy rains caused partly by cyclones, invaded towns and communities in Queensland, New South Wales and a smaller part of Victoria, leaving behind in its ravenous path; destruction. Floodwaters continue to cause destruction throughout the state of Queensland (mainly in the monsoonal wet season) resulting from prolonged or very heavy rainfall brought about by severe thunderstorms, rains in the tropics and tropical cyclones.

Floods are a mixed blessing. Not only are floods damaging and destructive, they cause inevitable loss of life, loss of livestock, destruction of properties as well as soil runoff and threatening of wildlife. The waters that arise replenish the land also. It is nature's balance. Many areas need the water for growth of pastures, to fill up the dams and lakes and most importantly to fill up the grounds' local water reserves.

Weather Forecasters

Emergency services are stretched to the limit when a flood warning is released, providing essential rescues, evacuations and food drops, if needed. The Bureau of Meteorology is a warning service responsible for providing Australians with information on the dangers of weather. Weather as severe as thunderstorms, are monitored and then reported to the public in order to minimise damage and injury, or greater still, loss of life. The Bureau's Regional Forecasting Centres in State and Territory capitals prepare the warnings which are founded from forecasters and "storm spotters"; a network of approximately 3000 volunteers who provide valuable reports of severe weather to forecasters.

Various methods such as satellite pictures, radar displays and lightning detection networks indicate where and how heavily the rain is falling. Once the data is collected it is immediately transmitted to radio and television stations as well as police and emergency services.

The State Emergency Service

The SES is a volunteer organization designed to help and support communities in the event of an emergency or disaster. The SES works to create better public awareness about such disasters and is there on the scene to assist and save lives in a flood. Each year the SES receives thousands of calls for assistance, helping where aid is needed. The SES's major goal and mission is to help communities to prepare for, respond to and recover from an event or disaster.

To contact the SES in an emergency call: 132 500

Preparation

There are a number of simple things that you and your family can do and should know, that will keep you safe and protect your property. Because some floods can rise quickly, there is often little time to acquire particular knowledge or belongings to help you and your family in the event of a flood. Here are some very helpful tips to prepare you and ease



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FLOODWATERS RISING

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0.4
0.2

the panic in an emergency. Firstly, for your own knowledge of flood patterns in your area, go to a local council and ask about flood plans, i.e. problem areas and potential flood heights. People who live near rivers or in low-lying coastal areas live with the greatest threat of floods. It is also imperative to check if your house and contents are covered against flooding. In the Great Floods of 1990, the total estimated cost of damage was \$415 million (in 1990 values), most of which was uninsured, leaving people devastated and homeless.

Emergency Kit

It may seem silly to some to prepare an emergency kit, for those "just in case" moments, but in high rainfall seasons, you just never know what card nature will play next. Pack a kit, which need only be small, but contains vital survival needs in a flood. Help may not be at your side instantly so you need to take preventative measures.

This kit should include:

- a portable radio, torch and spare batteries
- stocks of fresh water and canned food
- matches, fuel lamp, portable stove, cooking gear, utensils, and can opener
- waterproof bags for clothing and valuables.
- a first aid kit
- masking tape for windows.

You just never know when this kit may be needed, so to have it prepared and close at hand could be a lifesaver.

It is also important to have in this kit a list of emergency numbers handy, including the numbers of local Fire, Police, Ambulance, State Emergency Service, Local Council, gas and electricity companies and of course relatives and loved ones. Also know where your local evacuation location is.

When the flood hits, know your dangers. Listen to the local radio station for advice and warnings. If need be and you need to evacuate, keep your portable radio on you at all times to listen to the updates.

Remember the key: move items to higher ground. Any possessions you wish to be safe and untouched by the water, consider; both indoors and outdoors, such as cars, outdoor equipment, furniture or clothing. You will need to move these to higher ground if water threatens to enter your home.

Evacuation

If it is imperative to evacuate or you decide to leave your home of your own accord then be sure to tell neighbours and local police. Take your emergency kit with you along with any valuables or important possessions packed in water proof bags. Turn off power, gas and water and remember to take your mobile phone with you, but only use if necessary. Lock your house and take the recommended evacuation routes to safety.

After the flood

Once the flooding eases, the waters will be of great danger. Hidden and protruding obstacles will be everywhere and the impact of the floodwaters would have deposited debris, so it is important to not allow your children to play near or in flood waters.

If you need to enter floodwaters always check the depth and current

with a stick and stay away from culverts, drains and water above knee-depth.

Before moving back into your home, make sure it is safe to do so. Until water supplies have been given the OK to drink, boil your tap water before drinking, and never eat food that has been in direct contact with floodwaters.

Times after a flood will be tough and trauma of the events will set in, if in need of help and assistance contact support services to help you deal with the situation.

Further information and assistance for flooding:

Bureau of Meteorology: Flood
http://www.disaster.qld.gov.au/disasters/flooding_what.asp

To contact the SES for assistance in flood and storm emergencies
phone: 132 500




Slow-onset, rapid-onset and flash flooding

There are several types of flooding in Australia including slow-onset floods, rapid on-set floods and flash floods.

Vast flat areas of Queensland are affected by slow-onset floods. Where flooding damages towns, major losses of livestock and crops occur. The flooding can last weeks or even months, with the damage continuing.

Rapid on-set floods are, well rapid. They happen very quickly, and mainly affect areas surrounding mountains. Heavy flows of water make their way down rivers draining to the coast. These floods are much more damaging as there is less time to take preventative action due to their fast and dangerous state.

Flash floods pose a much greater risk of loss of life and property. Flash floods result from relatively short, intense bursts of rainfall, often from thunderstorms. It can occur in almost all parts of Australia.



Boating to me has always been fun and exhilarating, even before I got my job working on board ferries. You soon learn that common sense is just as essential as a life jacket when you are on the water.

Before I came to the Gold Coast I was working as an On Board Services Crew Member for Fullers Group in New Zealand. Fullers is the leading Ferry service in New Zealand and to be a part of it was an amazing experience, although I already had grown a pair of sea legs well before embarking on this job.

Growing up in New Zealand we had access to many beaches that basically became our backyard and when my father brought home a Haines Hunter that bright blue backyard soon expanded out to the islands off the coast line.

Marine Safety

- A Personal Account

A boat can really take you places you can only dream of. I recall going to different islands and having picnics on unspoiled beaches, snorkelling through crystal clear water, fishing with nothing around but an expanse of glistening water or simply just breathing in that crisp salt air.

It sounds like the life, doesn't it? Well it is, yet in all those times of being out on the boat there was always one thing on my mind: marine safety. A lot of responsibility is accompanied with being out on the water, if you want to have fun and come back home safe.

“When you hit that numbing water,
you’re tossed about by under currents
of the ship and your own impact.”

I feel it is of great importance to all boat owners, boat goers and fisherman to know the dangers of the sea and knowledge of the marine environment and above all know how to keep you and your crew safe.

The sea is a spectacular thing and it is ever changing. I remember a time my family and I went out in the boat, the sun was beaming down; it was a glorious day. Looking up towards the blue sky we saw an ominous grey cloud float over, blocking the sun from view and the gentle breeze became a fierce chill on our backs; it was definitely time to head home.

The weather became steadily worse. The waves grew choppy, punching the hull as we pounded over them. The last outing of summer had become a scary adventure and we were all holding on for dear life, as the saying goes. My Dad had his Maritime Day Skipper Certificate which he received after going to several courses, learning all the ins and outs of boat safety, from tidal patterns to rope tying to GPS units and so on. Knowing that my dad knew what he was doing in controlling the boat helped us relax a little. He kept the momentum up so we continued to cut through these huge swells so we didn’t become engulfed by the sea (only minor exaggeration there).

We reached the boat ramp in one piece, no damage to ourselves or the boat. Out of all the years I’ve been out on the boat, experiencing all kinds of sea conditions, this was by far the worst. You just never know when the weather will turn. The sea can become a dangerous place if you are not aware of its habits and tricks.

My time working on the Harbour for Fullers ferries made me realise how imperative marine safety is. Not only was I working in the café onboard, but my job also included roles such as assisting passengers embarking and disembarking the vessel, having knowledge of ship

handling, safety equipment and emergency procedures. Before I was assigned to my particular roles on the boats, myself and others were put through a series of drills and lessons to learn the fundamentals of marine safety.

One particular event that stuck with me was the day my fellow sea farers and I were practicing man over board drills. We each donned life jackets and were told by senior crew and Captain to jump ship. Looking at each other with questioning eyes we leaped from the boat as one and hit that cold water hard. We had just become men over board.

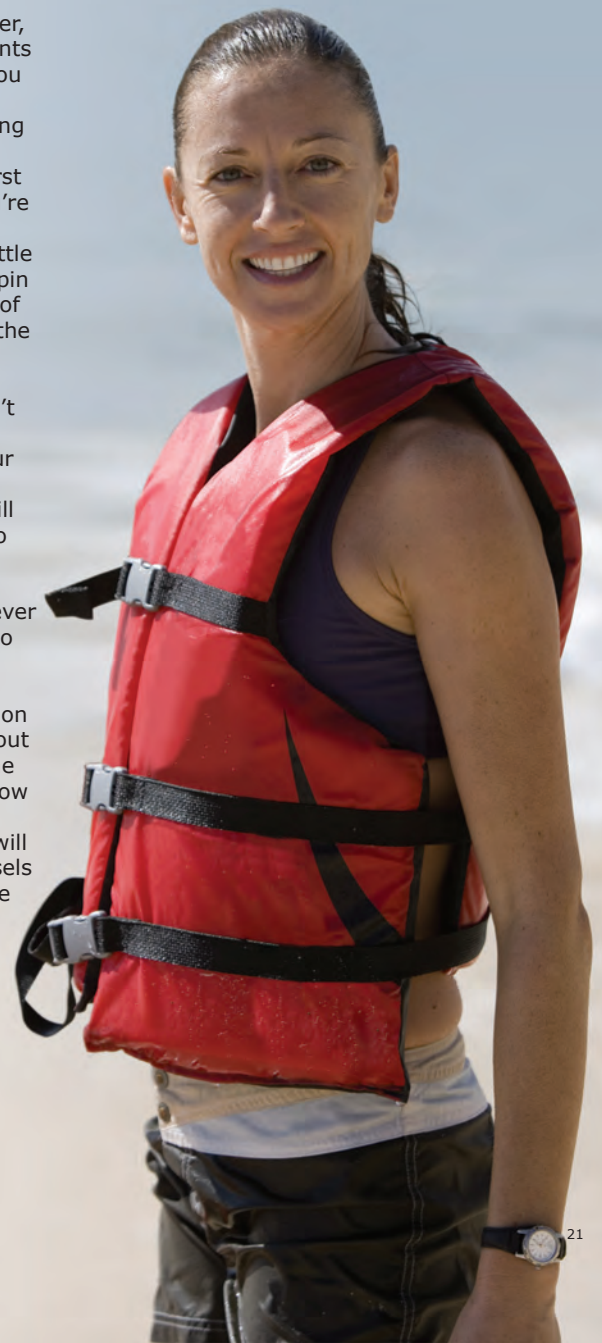
When you hit that numbing water, you’re tossed about by under currents of the ship and your own impact. You let out bubbles of air and find your bearings with eyes shut tight. Kicking furiously, an age passes before you come gasping up for breath. The first thing you instinctively do, once you’re breathing again, is to check your fellow partners. You’re all okay, a little wet, but fine. Treading water you spin about looking for a rope to get out of the drink, what you find instead is the boat sailing off into the distance.

Suddenly that cold sea just became a whole lot colder. I couldn’t believe it. Just in that short time and travelling around 25 knots, your chances of being heard or seen are slim. Being in that situation, the drill had achieved its goal, to put us into the reality of a situation that could prove to be fatal.

It is the skipper’s duty (or whoever is in charge of the boat and crew) to prevent accidents, such as people falling over board.

Most of it comes down to common sense and being responsible while out on the water, but perhaps one of the most important things to know is how to operate the radio.

The radio is the one thing that will keep you in contact with other vessels around you and the people on shore that can help you in times of need.



The Volunteer Marine Rescue (VMR) organization is run entirely by volunteers. They work hard to raise funds to deliver marine rescue and education services through five states, from Port Vincent SA to Cape York QLD.

Queensland has a large number of volunteer marine stations that provide an invaluable service to the boating public. These stations listen out for distress calls so that immediate action can be taken.

While not compulsory it is strongly recommended that all recreational boaters report their intended journey to the local VMR. They will need to know your destination, your expected return time and the number of passengers on your vessel. Once at sea boats are strongly encouraged to use their communication systems, logging into the local station, keeping aware of updates and changes such as weather patterns or recent boating

activities going on around them. There are several call procedures that are vital for safety out on the water. They include distress calls, urgency calls and safety calls.

Distress calls use 'mayday' and only if the vessel is in grave and imminent danger and in need of immediate assistance. This call can be sent out when the vessel is sinking or on fire.

The urgency call is a message that is sent out if your ship or boat is in danger of drifting onto rocks or someone on board has fallen ill.

The Safety call is to report a navigational warning to another station. For example severe weather warnings.

All of these calls are made on frequency VHF channel 16 along the majority of the Queensland coast.

The stations operate on a 24/7 basis if they need to be contacted for whatever emergency. Don't forget marine radios are essential for life saving and having that communication link between other vessels and rescue groups.

For more information regarding the different call procedures and

what to report in an emergency visit www.msq.qld.gov.au. For marine emergencies and search & rescue. you can call triple zero (000)

The Gold Coast is based on extensive waterways with great access to the ocean and the strong appeal for boating that has made it the key Australian centre for marine excursions and day trips out on the water. We all love the experience on the water and we should all wish to keep it enjoyable for ourselves and others. Whilst out at sea we should be mindful and courteous to other vessels around us, and just like vehicles on the road we need to stick to strict boating traffic laws in order to avoid incidents.

Boats should stick to safe and comfortable speed limits to ensure safe boating for yourself and others nearby. Boaters must travel at a speed where the driver can slow down efficiently to avoid a collision or other dangers. Due to there being many waterways around the Gold Coast, speed must be reduced because the waterways are very narrow and fast speeds will cause waves that can be an inconvenience or hazard to other boaters. Large waves caused from unnecessary speeds can also cause damage to infrastructure and contribute to erosion.

Visibility can also be a hazard while out on the water. Whether it is at night or during the day, potential hazards (logs, buoys, and vessels ect.) can be avoided by taking care, keeping an extra look out, equipping



Important equipment that you will need in your kit before setting off for a boat trip.

your boat with the necessary lights and driving slowly through rain, fog, mist, smoke and glare.

There were many different occasions while working with Fullers, mainly on the early morning shift, that thick blankets of fog covered the entire harbour making visibility very hard for the ship master.

I would be needed as a lookout up in the wheel house, poking my head out of either the starboard or port side of the vessel, keeping my eyes peeled for signs of movement, lights or sounds of vessels approaching. The procedure in this instance was for me to relay messages in small intervals to the Master upon whether there were any vessels passing or not. Of course the Master has all his GPS and radio gear, but it pays to take extra precaution in extreme conditions, such as this, to prevent an incident from happening.

Before you take off for that much needed getaway with the family; equipped with a fully stocked picnic hamper and of course the inflatable rubber dingy, it is crucial to check that your boat is in seaworthy condition so you avoid breaking down at sea.

Regular servicing and maintenance of your vessel is essential to prevent any mishaps and to ensure a safe and comfortable trip. Remember to also check the trailer for any signs of damage and to check that the tail gate lights are in good working order, registration is up to date and the overall road worthy state of the

trailer is in good condition. Accidents can happen not just on the water but also while transporting the boat to and from the water. Having your boat come loose and bouncing down the road behind you is one story that you wouldn't want to share with others (let alone the police).

Remember to display a safety sock around the motors propeller to warn others to keep a safe distance while behind you.

While out on the water, even in calm conditions you should always wear a life jacket. In the event of an emergency, even if there is a life jacket nearby, you will never find the time to put one on. There were a number of marine incidents in 2005 resulting in people drowning while boating in Queensland, as a result of not wearing life jackets. Maritime Safety acted upon this and it is now compulsory to wear life jackets in high risk situations. Remember, it is not a life saver if you're not wearing it!

As well as having safety guaranteed life jackets aboard, there is other very important equipment that you will need in your kit before setting off for that trip.

Orange and red hand flares should be stowed on board in case of an emergency. They are only to be used if all other safety measures fail. They are used to attract the attention of nearby boats or aircraft if the vessel is in extreme distress.

Other signalling devices that should be used first to attract the attention of other vessels include

a torch, fluorescent light, lantern or cyalume stick. You should have several of these instruments on board in case of an emergency.

An Emergency Positioning Indicating Radio Beacon (also known as an EPIRB) is a small tracking device that emits a signal so you and your crew can be located when in distress.

Similar to flares, EPIRB's are only to be used in grave danger and only after other communications have been tried first.

Before you head out onto the water check the weather conditions for that day and tell someone staying behind where you are going, when you will be back and how many passengers are on board. Check you have suitable equipment in case of an emergency so you can get help. Take a mobile phone with you stored with appropriate numbers you can contact. These numbers may need to be kept on speed dial.

For the safety of yourself and others when out on the water, consider taking a short course through the Australian Volunteer Coast Guard. A recommended short course; Basic Seamanship & Small Boat Handling is designed to turn the novice boat-owner into a competent small boat skipper.

In some States, all boat and jet ski operators must hold a license. It is advisable to contact the VMR in your area to find out the local legislation.

For further information visit www.coastguard.com.au.



Hand Flare



EPIRB



The Surf Life Saving Australia movement was founded in Australia back in 1906. There is still some contention between Bondi and Bronte Surf Clubs as to who were the first, with most people conceding Bronte did start first but that Bondi were the first 'official' members of the new movement.

Prior to this there was no need for such an organisation as public bathing was banned until 1902 and at no time were men and women permitted in the water together. After a gentleman by the name of William Gocher entered the water at Manly Beach one lunch time, the sport of surf bathing quickly grew in popularity.

Only after several drownings on Sydney's beaches was the need for an organisation such as Surf Life Saving Australia recognized.



Today

Today there are over 350 clubs in Australia patrolling over 400 beaches. Saturdays, Sundays and all public holidays during the summer months, the fantastic volunteer surf lifesavers give up their own time to keep us safe on our beaches.

In the 80 years since record keeping began, 500,000 plus rescues have taken place on our beaches. In 1929 with a population of 6.6 million, 493 people drowned. In the summer of 2005-06 with a population of over 20 million the number of drownings on our beaches had been reduced to 265.

Surf Lifesavers

Let's not confuse our fantastic volunteer surf lifesavers with the full time lifeguards employed by local governments. While they also do amazing work in the community, they are paid for their time and work at public pools and other waterways as well as on our beaches.

Surf Lifesaving Australia is one of the biggest volunteer organizations in the country. More than 50% of all volunteers on our beaches are aged under 25 years. In the period 2005-06 40% of all surf lifesavers were women.

To volunteer on the beach a surf lifesaver must hold a Bronze Medallion, senior first aid certificate

as well as an Advanced Resuscitation award. To hold a Bronze Medallion you must be over 15 years of age and demonstrate proficiency in certain areas including, surf awareness, emergency care, rescue procedures, among others.

Juniors

A true reflection of the popularity and respect for our surf lifesavers is the ever increasing number of Nippers on beaches. Nippers are the juniors in surf clubs, who, together with their families, invade the beaches in droves Sunday mornings, all summer long.

In the 1930's, with declining memberships, Cottesloe was the first club in Australia to introduce sub-juniors (juveniles) to surf lifesaving. By the 1960's the Nippers were a part of club life and encouraged by senior members. The current growth in the number of Nipper members has forced some clubs to cap their memberships purely as a safety precaution.

Nippers are open to children aged 5 through 13 years of age. On the beach a child can make new friends, have fun, all while learning the serious aspects of surf safety. The Junior Development Program is in place Australia wide to make sure all Nippers possess the same knowledge and education. Regular competitions are held between neighboring clubs and are a wonderful way to encourage

SURF LIFE SAVING

healthy competitiveness. Children are rewarded with certificates, ribbons, medals and the ability to compete in regional competitions.

In 2005-06 there were almost 50,000 Nippers Australia wide, which represented nearly 40% of all memberships. These Nippers will be the lifesavers of tomorrow, the future of Surf Lifesaving Australia.

Supporting Your Local Club

There are many ways members of the community can support their local surf club without donning a red and yellow cap and hitting the beach. The junior contingent of surf life saving clubs are not funded and survive on the funds each club generates for itself. A large part of these funds come from the fees members and their families pay to participate. During the season the committees will organise various fund raisers as a way of supplementing their clubs income.

- By going along to your local surf club for a meal you are helping to put back into your club. The supporters' side of a club will support the life saving side as much as they can.

- Volunteer. Head down to the beach on a Sunday morning and lend a hand. To go onto the beach and help the children you will need to hold a current Blue Card but there is always the canteen or BBQ duties. Every little bit helps.

- Most clubs have a weekly news letter for their members and there is always an advertising space available.

- Clubs provide uniforms for the larger carnivals during a season and these are one of the biggest costs facing smaller clubs. Towels, hats, bags, shirts and shorts are all provide free of charge to qualifying competitors. Why not donate the hats next year? Approach your local club, find out what they need and have your company emblem included.

- Most clubs have a sponsor that is with them each season. These sponsors receive recognition in newsletters, on beach tents and even on uniforms. Give your local club a call if you can help.

- For those of us unable to be so grandiose there is the Surf Safe Appeal each year. You will see life savers in their uniforms in your local shopping centres with their buckets collecting donations. Don't walk around them, stop and put your hand in your pocket.

- There is also an Australia wide lottery that can be found at www.surflottery.com.au with tickets also available at some shopping centres. Prizes include homes, cars and gold bullion.

With so many options available to us it really isn't hard to get in and lend a hand.



Joining

It is easy to get involved. Just contact your local surf club and they will supply you with all the information you will need to get your kids signed up or even yourself. To find the club nearest you just go to

www.slas.asn.au

Australia





As a young adult travelling the world is the most exciting and prominent thing on my wish list. To imagine, leaving the comforts of a familiar location and lifestyle to live and work in a completely unfamiliar place and start anew! Of course, being a New Zealander, what better place to start my world travels than the sunny Gold Coast!

Travelling To Australia

- A Personal Account

I would dream about it all day, that pure white hot sand under my back as I sunbath by the surf or go to those renowned theme parks my friends always blabbed to me about. The eagerness to get to that warmer climate mixed with the deep sadness of leaving close friends and family behind does not really let you focus on the more important things of travelling. Sure you remember to pack your toothbrush, extra pairs of socks and a single toilet roll (you never know when this may come in handy) but what about when you're actually over there.

Australia is like New Zealand's big brother, sure we squabble and quarrel with one another over sports but surely there are no real major differences to be concerned about? Wrong.

There are many differences to be taken into consideration, no matter how big or small, when you come into a new country.



Triple Zero

I have been living here just over two months and have experienced already a number of circumstances and differences in the way of living based around that of emergency services. Lack of knowledge with such issues could've caused a potentially crucial situation or even a life threatening accident. Take the emergency services number that I only became aware and informed of in my new job, a whole month after being in Australia. I stopped and thought "wow, how could I have not known that?"

Easy really, an emergency service is not the first thing to cross your mind when you enter a new country and it's not something you go searching for until you need it.

Had something happened to myself or others around me, I would not have known the simple number to ring and get help straight away.

Triple zero (000) is the number to call for police, fire and ambulance services. This is one number you definitely should know when you enter the country. It should almost be a rule that airport staff teach this to new comers before they leave the airport.

Creepy Crawlies

Australia is home to some amazing animals and also various creepy crawlies such as snakes and spiders. The hidden aspect to knowing this general fact is the danger that these creatures can pose.

I recall a moment my partner (also a kiwi) told me a rather amusing story of an encounter with a Red Back spider one day at work. Here he was, not fazed about this little creature, until his work mates told him to put the spider outside or (better still) kill it. My partner did not know he was in a situation that wouldn't have ended on a positive note as it was a poisonous spider. Being unaware of this he was blind to the danger.

With today's modern medicine there are only a few cases where Red Back spider bites have proven fatal, still, I wouldn't like to become one of those few. So a decent knowledge of venomous creatures and how to acquire antidotes would not go a miss in my books.

Australia has about 2,000 species

of spider but most are relatively harmless to humans. Funnel Web spiders (indigenous to Sydney) and Red Back spiders (found throughout the country) are perhaps the most venomous spiders in Australia. Most spiders are relatively harmless to humans and it is important to know that first aid for a venomous spider bite depends on the species of spider.

If you have been bitten by one of these species of venomous spiders, signs and symptoms to look out for may include: redness and itching, increasing pain, nausea, vomiting, sweating, dilated pupils, uncontrollable muscle spasms and unconsciousness.

Some first aid suggestions if bitten by a Funnel Web or Mouse spider are to firmly bandage the affected area, and splint if possible. Make sure that the person lies still, because not moving will help to slow the venom moving through the body.

If bitten by a Red Back or White Tailed spider, wash the bitten area thoroughly. Do not bandage because the pressure will increase pain, also apply an ice pack if possible.

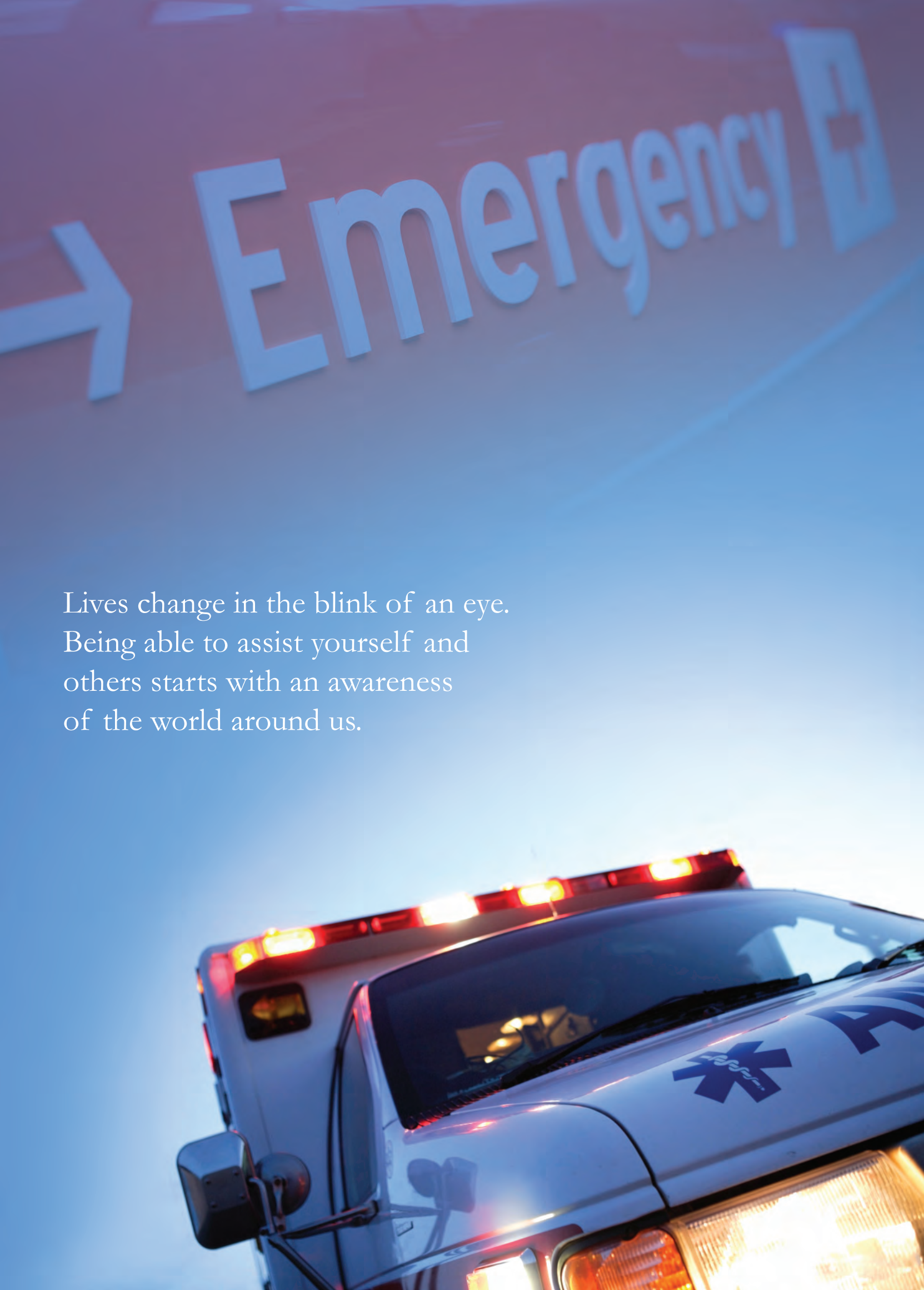
Seek immediate medical help for bites from a Funnel Web, Mouse, Red Back or White Tailed spider, and always call triple zero (000) for an ambulance in an emergency. Alternatively rush to the nearest emergency department or hospital.

For more information you may call the Australian Venom Research Unit on 1300 760 451.

Visitors and new residents alike should be cautioned that Australian wildlife can be dangerous. From jellyfish to crocodiles, sharks, poisonous insects, spiders and snakes, the continent is home to numerous varieties of wildlife that require respect and in turn knowledge of their whereabouts and what to do if encountered. Many accidents can be avoided with increased awareness, speaking out about the do's and don'ts of potentially life threatening wildlife. It may pay to ask someone or read up on the different types of animals and insects that could be harmful to you.

Pay special attention to signs and warnings around you, and don't go toying with spiders that enter your home or work place.





Lives change in the blink of an eye.
Being able to assist yourself and
others starts with an awareness
of the world around us.