

# CRISIS RESPONSE

VOL:14 | ISSUE:1 | DECEMBER 2018

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## GREY RHINOS & BEYOND

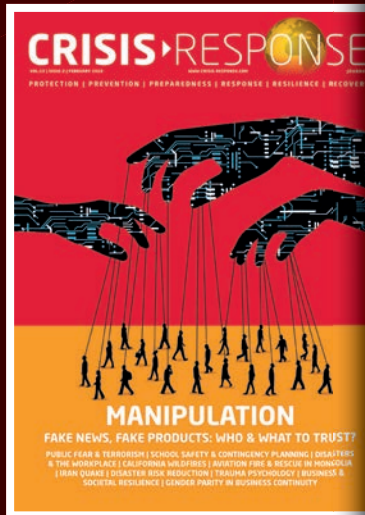
### EMERGING RISKS & INTERCONNECTION

Insider threats | Communities: Climate, volunteers & learning | Data & contextual awareness | Hybrid threats | Large incidents & misinformation | Morandi Bridge Collapse | Canada wildfires | Urban civil-military co-operation | Business continuity | Aviation humanitarianism | Terrorism & security | Drones | Hurricane Florence

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# contents

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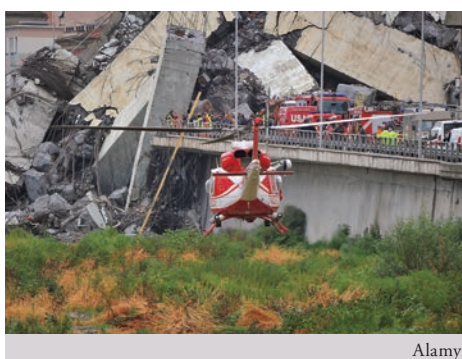
Crisis Response Journal is published quarterly; it is available by subscription in hard copy, digital and online  
subs@crisis-response.com

Published by Crisis Management Limited, Soudes Place Farm, Westcott Road, Dorking RH4 3EB, UK  
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Printed in England by The Manson Group, UK  
ISSN 1745-8633

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<b>News</b> .....	4	<b>Misinformation and fake news</b> .....	30
<b>Comment</b> .....	8	The fallout from one of Russia's deadliest fires in modern history was intensified by mistrust and lack of effective communication, says Lina Kolesnikova	
David Rubens says 2018 has been a challenging year for anyone involved in any aspect of security, risk and business continuity management			
<b>BCM &amp; Resilience</b>		<b>The evolution of smoke detectors</b> .....	34
<b>Turbulent times</b> .....	12	The time people have to exit a burning building has been decreased with the advent of modern, synthetic materials, according to Key Network Partner, UL	
Like it or loathe it, Brexit creates an opportunity to engage organisations in establishing, developing and testing their resilience, according to David Evans		<b>Security &amp; Counter-terrorism</b>	
<b>Social media signals to monitor risk</b> .....	14	<b>The tip of the spear against terror</b> .....	36
Machine learning and artificial intelligence can provide immediate situational awareness, says Key Network Partner, Dataminr		Robert McAlister and Naser Arabyat take a look at what's on offer at the King Abdullah II Special Operations Training Centre in Jordan	
<b>Insider threats</b> .....	16	<b>Assessing the current al-Qaeda threat</b> ....	40
How can we improve informed awareness and hedge against high consequence, low probability events such as insider threat breaches? Josh Kurjan investigates		A UN report offers a stark reminder that al-Qaeda remains a serious danger, reports Roger Gomm	
<b>Realistic rehearsals</b> .....	20	<b>Hybrid threats</b> .....	44
Key Network Partner Conducttr develops technology and methodology for clients to write and run their own realistic crisis exercises, writes Robert Pratten		Can a natural disaster be a hybrid threat? What is the role of the military after disasters? How do disasters influence states, especially fragile ones? Alois Hirschmugl investigates	
<b>Contextual awareness</b> .....	22	<b>Environmental issues in hybrid warfare</b> ....	49
Today's massive influx of data is changing the anatomy of technology in business and the landscape in which organisations operate, says David Prior		Four years of conflict in eastern Ukraine have led to thousands of deaths, and the effects on the environment and infrastructure are threatening thousands more people, says Serhii Ivaniuta	
<b>Incident &amp; Safety Analysis</b>		<b>Natural events</b>	
<b>The Morandi Bridge collapse</b> .....	24	<b>Civil-military co-ordination</b> .....	52
Luigi D'Angelo describes the operational search and rescue efforts after a bridge collapsed in Genoa, plunging vehicles to the ground and killing dozens of people		David P Polatty and Ronak Patel explore how urbanisation and climate change will dominate the future of humanitarian action and present a new landscape for militaries and civilian organisations	
<b>Hurricane Florence</b> .....	26	<b>Climate resilience in Europe</b> .....	56
Frank Blackley outlines preparations taken ahead of Hurricane Florence striking Wilmington, North Carolina, this August		Rosalind Cook, Sirkku Juhola and Jaroslav Mysiak say we have a window of opportunity to deliver a safe and sustainable world, but we must act now	

## Morandi Bridge collapse, Italy p24



Alamy

## Shopping centre fire, Russia p30



Maxim Kiselev



## comment

### Wildfires in Canada ..... 58

Landscape fires are likely to become an increasingly significant source of carbon dioxide emissions, not to mention the damaging cascading effects they have upon communities, warn Casey Brunelle and Joseph Satenstein

### Air coalition in Indonesia ..... 62

Chris Weeks reports on how a coalition of eight nations provided emergency air freight services for humanitarian aid after October's earthquake and tsunami in Central Sulawesi, Indonesia

### Moving humanitarian air cargo ..... 65

Key Network Partner Volga-Dnepr Airlines is often first on the ground with urgently needed humanitarian aid

## Community & Societal

### Zero-responders: A force multiplier? ..... 66

Chris Cocking explores Lord Kerslake's recommendations after the Manchester Arena bomb attack of 2017 as they relate to the concept of zero-responders – in other words, members of the public who are first on scene at an incident

### Community Emergency Response Teams .. 68

Local, state and federal government agencies do not have the capacity to help all citizens during all stages of a crisis, and nor should they, according to Robert Fagan. But individuals can prepare to cope during the critical period before first responders may be available

### Promoting recovery ..... 72

Bernice George and Rebecca Sundhu explore how first aid can promote growth and recovery in school staff following a critical incident

### Minecraft and Lego for DRR ..... 74

Children are often ignored when developing disaster risk reduction policies, yet their participation is an essential element for safer communities. Three researchers from New Zealand describe a project that builds children's resilience through play

### Innovation for resilience ..... 76

How can societies become more resilient in the face of ever more threatening disasters? João Dias describes a European project that aims to help

### Managing a three-year emergency ..... 78

Cordula Dittmer and Daniel F Lorenz examine how European instruments and budgets have been adapted to provide long term humanitarian assistance within EU territory

### Setting fire to buildings ..... 82

David Rush brings details of a research project looking into the complex dynamics of informal settlements and fire safety

### Helping those displaced by Boko Haram .. 84

Andrew Brown gives a personal perspective on safety and security of humanitarian personnel, based on a recent visit to north-east Nigeria

## R&D

### Humans first in the digital age ..... 86

Can digitisation revolutionise the way we deliver aid, or are we at risk of dehumanising the sector? Anastasia Kyriacou investigates

### Situational awareness ..... 88

FirstNet gives emergency managers greater access to real time information than ever before. Charles Murph says that it is now time to think about how to manage the ever larger volumes of data that will ensue

### Drones and public safety ..... 92

Some consider the absence of a public safety programme to be dangerous and even negligent, contends Charles L Werner, because it means that incident commanders are not getting a vital three-dimensional view of incidents

## Regulars

### Events ..... 94

### Frontline ..... 98

**T**he CRJ team has been busy! In the last few months, we have taken

part in the Major Events International Conference, the Crisis Conference 2018, the European Forum for Disaster Risk Reduction (EFDRR) in Rome, the International Disaster Response Expo (IDR) and International Security Expo. And it was a genuine pleasure to meet so many readers and authors from our community.

The EFDRR was co-organised by the UNISDR and the Italian Civil Protection Directorate and I was honoured to moderate a panel on 'Emerging and interwoven risks', a natural progression from an earlier session on 'Addressing the Grey Rhino and Black Swan'.

The audience engaged enthusiastically with the panel on issues ranging from societal factors to the role of the banking and private sector in disaster risk reduction, food security and, most importantly, how climate is the overarching threat that will affect just about every sphere of our lives. We all could have talked for much, much longer.

At the IDR in London, my presentation took the theme of 'Trends in Disasters'. This was a logical continuation of the themes raised at the EFDRR and which run through this edition, bringing in the added threads of security, geopolitics, societal division and polarisation, and how hybrid threats can exploit crises to influence thoughts and actions (p30, 44 and 50).

I examined how ageing and young demographics will affect disaster preparedness and response planning, and how thwarted aspiration and poorly-served young populations link to migration, geopolitics and urbanisation. I touched upon fragile states in disasters (p44), how economies and geopolitics must be framed within environmental and climate factors, along with how today's crises are challenging our existing funding mechanisms (p78) and how different response actors can work more closely with each other in disasters (p52).

Our social and political frameworks seem to be disintegrating at a time when they are needed the most, especially when we consider the gargantuan Grey Rhino of climate change and increasingly extreme weather events.

All this leads to some sobering conclusions. We are not doing enough. We are *still* working in silos. Some sectors are *still* not engaging sufficiently. We are *still* not standing back and seeing the big picture. These high impact risks are all highly likely – so why are we not confronting them in a unified way?



### EU humanitarian help in Greece p78



Michele Brusini | 123rf

### IDPs in Nigeria p84



Andrew Brown



# Innovation for resilience

How can societies become more resilient in the face of ever more threatening disasters? How can crisis management practitioners strengthen their capacity building in a structured way to improve response to unpredictable natural or human-caused disasters? **João Dias** describes a European project that aims to help

**I**nterconnected societies require responses that are innovative, dynamic, broad thinking and wide-ranging and there is a European project that helps practitioners achieve these goals. **Driving Innovation in Crisis Management for European Resilience (Driver+)**, financed under the EU's Seventh Framework Programme, creates an environment for practitioners to address the operational gaps they face and to find ways to overcome those gaps. The project also provides the tools and environment for practitioners to learn about innovative socio-technological solutions, and assess them in simulated contexts, so that they can evaluate how the solutions respond to their needs.

Practitioners have been absolutely central to the Driver+ approach right from the beginning; they were invited to identify challenges and needs they face and open calls were then held for solution providers to present innovations and how they could address them. One of the main pillars towards achieving the project's goals is its trials – four large events designed to let users assess how these new solutions can actually help them address their needs and contribute to their capacity building.

Each trial presents a different scenario under

simulated conditions. Users are then able to evaluate in a concrete way how the solutions respond to their needs and see the potential added value of these solutions in managing large-scale incidents. The feedback they provide is invaluable, as it allows solutions with high innovative potential to be improved even further and it contributes to building up the know-how of the way trials are carried out.

The first trial was held during May 2018 at the premises of the Main School of Fire Service, Poland's principal educational institution for crisis management professionals.

The scenario in this particular trial consisted of an industrial accident that simulated a toxic spill, affecting two neighbouring countries. This trial demonstrated the added value of a more integrated high-level crisis management system in the EU, in terms of improved situation assessment and awareness, co-ordination, resource pooling and sharing, and cross-border co-operation. It also demonstrated the potential benefits of a Common Operational Picture (COP) at European level and featured solutions that were designed to improve interoperability between agencies. Participants evaluated three very different solutions in virtual and outdoor contexts and assessed how well their

pre-identified operational gaps had been addressed.

The second trial, held in France in October 2018, was based on the scenario of a wildfire threatening urban interfaces, a topical background considering the devastating forest fires that have affected Greece and Sweden this summer. The aim was to improve co-operation and co-ordination between organisations and agencies from different countries.

The trial investigated how the selected solutions could improve crisis management by developing interoperability and co-ordination in response operations, and supporting a common understanding among those involved. The project's next two trials will take place in The Netherlands and Austria during 2019.

Another major pillar of the Driver+ project is the Innovation for Crisis Management (I4CM) events, which are designed to facilitate interaction between a broad spectrum of stakeholders, including policymakers, practitioners, experts and industry representatives. In September 2018 the project organised the third edition of I4CM, held in Warsaw at the Copernicus Science Centre.

## Broad spectrum of stakeholders

I4CM's main purpose is to bring people from the crisis management sector together in a meaningful way and this meant the programme went beyond a regular conference; it was an interactive event where participants were encouraged to exchange experiences and learn from each other. Beyond the conference's three panels, I4CM hosted workshops and demonstrations of: The Driver+ test-bed infrastructure (the environment that allows practitioners to simulate crisis scenarios and assess the solutions); the portfolio of solutions (the web-based catalogue that showcases solutions and allows practitioners to search for the most appropriate response to their questions); the trial guidance methodology and guidance tool (which assists practitioners with designing, conducting and assessing trials for themselves); and the Crisis Management Innovation Network Europe (CMINE – a community of practice to exchange experiences with peers and other experts). A hands-on demonstration of these tools was also provided to demonstrate how these vital components of the project work together.

Participants could also learn about other European crisis management projects, networks and solutions in I4CM's workshops, marketplace and poster area. Sixteen solution providers took part, some of which have been selected to take part in the first two Driver+ trials. This allowed them to learn about the state of play of innovation in crisis management across several areas.

Another added value of I4CM lies in how it fosters networking and the exchange of synergies and experiences between participants. By bringing together people with different policy and operational backgrounds in a dynamic event, I4CM encourages productive discussions in several formats and allows its participants to learn from each other.

During the conference, discussions were held on the topics of interagency and cross border co-operation, sharing and co-ordinating information and the importance of standards development in crisis management. Speakers stressed the importance

of information sharing among practitioners and agencies, within and between countries. They provided examples from their own experience, including the lack of co-ordination between rescuers and the latest developments in crisis management practice. Indeed, some of the core messages at I4CM were about the importance of information sharing and how this is not just about technology, but also about creating a culture of sharing. There are concrete examples of how this is changing: the European Commission supports the replication of communication protocols across the EU and provides assistance to authorities who want to do this.

Standardisation also enjoyed a significant exposure at I4CM, with a dedicated panel discussion in which examples were given of how standards are being developed and adopted at a European and global level. "Standards are some of the most powerful tools we have," said Patricia Compard of the French Ministry of Interior, pointing out that practitioners can achieve a common language and harmonised processes and practices, as well as greater trust between stakeholders at all levels.

The EU is assisting practitioners with developing standards that can be applied throughout all member countries.

Philippe Quevauviller of DG HOME highlighted how standards are part of the Commission's Secure Societies programme and added the Commission has: "Established networks with practitioners and we can tell you if your idea can become a standard to be used by organisations."

The third edition of I4CM attested to how the Driver+ project is contributing to the development of a European crisis management culture and how its approach is being used by policymakers and practitioners to improve and innovate, when it comes to handling disasters and building capacity. The success of the event highlighted the need for closer and more ambitious exchanges and connections within the European crisis management community.

## Author



JOÃO DIAS is a European Affairs professional working for Public Safety Communications Europe (PSCE), which is a partner in DRIVER+

For more information about the project, visit:

[www.driver-project.eu](http://www.driver-project.eu)

Participants learn about the Driver+ tools at I4CM



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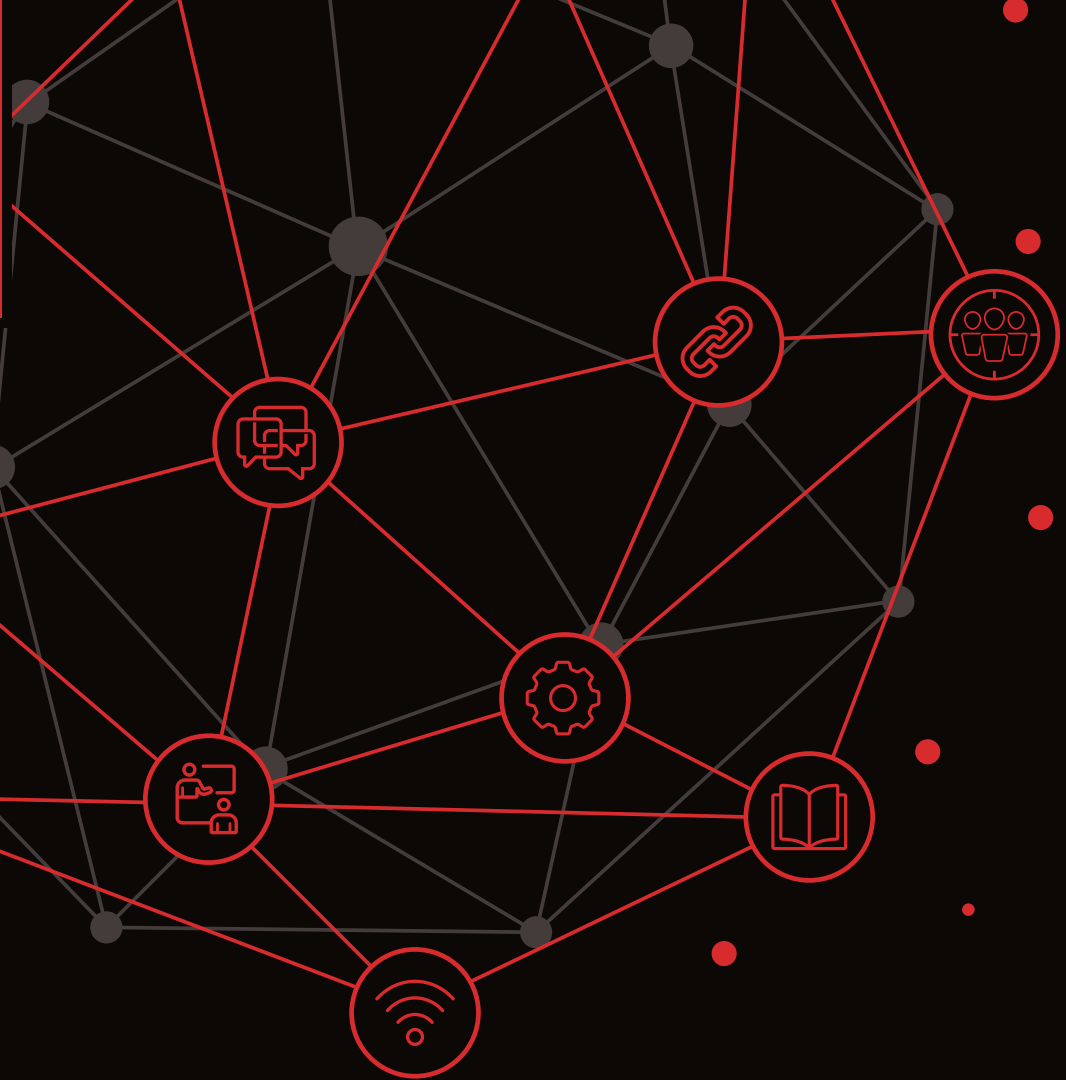
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