

As we enter our seventh year of publication, we invite our readers to our first issue of the seventh volume of *International Journal of Emergency Services (IJES)*. In this issue, we are publishing six papers covering the themes of police leadership, value and bias, blind obedience, stress and resilience of paramedic staff, death and dying (D&D) in the fire and rescue services and the role of responsibility culture in the emergency services covering the three main services, namely, the police, fire and rescue services and the ambulance services. The articles published in this issue make a significant contribution to the emergency management literature bearing significant implications for policy and practice.

The first article by Amir Mirhaghi, Razieh Froutan, Reza Mazlom and Javad Malekzadeh, investigates the important issue of stress being encountered by the emergency services personnel. The study examined the relationship between personality traits and resilience as part of recruitment criteria in emergency medical services in a cross-sectional study conducted on paramedics in Eastern Iran. The study concluded that the paramedics with lower scores of neuroticism had higher levels of resilience showing better compliance with their work conditions in stressful situations and consequently maintained their own mental health. The authors recommend conducting psychological examinations of personality traits in recruitment and selection stages of medical emergency personnel and implementing psychological interventions for those medical emergency staff with the personality trait of neuroticism.

In our second paper entitled “Police leadership: the challenges for developing contemporary practice”, Claire Davis and Di Bailey explored how police officers understand leadership in a UK police constabulary. The study analysis revealed that police officers draw on managerial and command discourses in their understandings of leadership. A sub-theme, related to the perceived risk and visibility of the situation in which leadership is demonstrated, also emerged in the analysis. The command and managerialist discourses, evident in the construction of police leadership, also reflect the body of research literature that highlights the importance of task and “getting the job done”. This study makes a call for further research to explore the perceptions and practices of leadership of police sergeants and police staff to understand and develop future leadership capabilities for the twenty-first century policing.

Ian Drummond-Smith in our third paper explored human issues within subordinate and leader interaction in uniformed settings. The study draws on a number of catastrophic case studies, including the collision of two war ships, two Jumbo Jets, the defeat of the Spanish Armada and the failure of Hitler’s military to respond effectively to the D-Day landings. A distinction will be drawn between commanding in critical situations, which are rare, and leading in routine situations. The paper concludes that to lead the police service through the turbulent times ahead, police leaders must be on guard against blind obedience and create an environment where subordinates have a voice and will be heard. The paper also finds that “micro-management” from a remote location is ineffective and that staff must be afforded time and space at the tactical and operational levels to deliver on the overall strategy.

Irene Afful, in her practitioner’s viewpoint, critically examines whether the individual values and bias of police officers is frustrating attempts to achieve black and ethnic minority representation within the police service, especially at senior levels. It focusses on the micro-individual level examining perceptions, values and attitudes towards equality and diversity and unconscious bias while examining the impact of leadership, drawing evidence



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from her personal experiences in a UK police force. The paper highlights potential barriers to achieving a representative police service at an individual rather than organisational level and makes a number of recommendations on the role of leaders to fully embed equality and diversity into the police culture to address underrepresentation.

Our fifth article authored by Kyoo-Man Ha deals with changing the emergency response culture in Korea. It examines efforts to change the negative emergency response culture in the case study by relying on people's awareness and senior leadership. The paper systematically categorises textual data to understand the phenomenon of Korean emergency response culture. The study raises the importance of changing the Korean culture of emergency response through four factors, namely public officials' orientation, group characteristics, emergency management principles and corrupted atmosphere. The study concludes with a call for change towards a "responsibility culture" for the goal of emergency response.

Our final article by Santos Leiva, Pablo Juan, Helena Garcia-Llana, Victor Pablo, Maya Liébana and Allan Kellehear explored the issue of "death" in the Spanish Fire Services through a curriculum development study involving focus groups conducted in two fire stations in Spain. The study aimed to understand the need and resources firefighters have to deal with D&D being encountered whilst on duty and to present a curriculum to support D&D issues for firefighters. The study identified a substantial need for education regarding D&D issues for firefighters. To this end, a broad outline of a curriculum is suggested based upon the needs experienced and described by the firefighters participating in this study. The study has implications for further practice in a wider variety of settings.

As we enter 2018, we are encouraged by the response received from the readers, the rising coverage of the journal, the frequency of publication and in particular the growing inter-disciplinary nature of the journal. We are confident that *IJES* will continue to publish high-quality research relevant to the emergency community and its contents will foster debates and inform policy and practice in a wide range of settings and will be relevant for an international audience ranging from practitioners, policy makers, professionals, academics and general public.

In 2018, we are continuously building our association with academics and practitioners alike, at major international conferences by sponsoring/hosting specialist panels on emergency services management. In April 2018, *IJES*-sponsored panel on emergency services management (led by Professor Wankhade and supported by Professor Peter Murphy, former *IJES* Editor) is being organised for the third year at the 22nd International Research Society for Public Management Annual Conference hosted by the University of Edinburgh Business School in Scotland, UK. In North America, *IJES* will participate in the 20th Annual Emergency Management Higher Education Symposium, 4-8 June, 2018 in Emmitsburg, Maryland and at the 44th Annual Mid-South Sociological Association, 12-15 October, 2018. Also, Professor Miller is organising an academic session on "Emergency services responding to disasters and crisis" at the XIX ISA World Congress of Sociology, 15-21 July 2018 in Toronto, Canada.

As always, we are immensely grateful to our authors, reviewers and readers in supporting *IJES* and helping us to publish high-quality research. We value the comments and feedback from our readers and invite suggestions for future themes, topics and expressions of interest for special issues. We again renew our call for publishing with us or joining *IJES* as potential reviewers and/or on the editorial board.

**Paresh Wankhade and DeMond S. Miller**