

Title	Description
Fake news in the field: How to spot it in a crisis and what to do about it	Disasters can be a lightning rod for disinformation and misinformation: impacting emergency responders and the communities they protect. Recent examples around the world have shown just how vulnerable we can be to disinformation in the crises caused by disasters, and how this can put lives at risk. This session will focus on global and local examples of what disinformation looks like in the field and provide a quick rundown of disinformation: why it's so rampant, how it works, and why it's a problem. You'll then be shown how to assess the risks of fake information, and some effective ways to respond.
Beyond the stereotypes – bridging the generation gap	When you're working in a team spanning three different generations, it can feel like everyone is speaking a different language. Gen Z won't notice it unless it's on TikTok. Millennials have an acronym for everything. Gen X expects a reply to their email within five minutes. And Baby Boomers are still wondering why nobody answers the phone anymore. Every generation has its stereotypes... but how much of it is actually true? Join a panel featuring volunteers from across the generations as they unpack the myths, challenge the stereotypes and answer the questions we've all been thinking but rarely ask. Why do different generations communicate so differently? What makes each generation feel valued and appreciated? And what does every generation wish the others understood? Through honest stories, plenty of discussion and audience questions, this session moves beyond the headlines and stereotypes to explore the unique strengths each generation brings to a team while exploring practical ways to communicate, collaborate and build stronger relationships across every age group.
Marina boat fires – understanding the joint emergency response	With the number of marinas and boat pens continuing to grow across metropolitan and regional areas, understanding how to respond to marine-based fires has never been more important. A recent spate of vessel fires has highlighted the unique risks these environments present. In this insightful session, hear from emergency services personnel involved in the response to a boat fire at Hillarys Marina earlier this year. Presenters will walk you through how the incident unfolded, the complexities of operating in a marina environment and the coordination required between firefighters and Marine Rescue. Explore the key challenges of marina firefighting, including access to vessels, close proximity to public infrastructure and the potential for rapid fire spread. You'll also gain valuable insight into how Marine Rescue supports and works alongside firefighters to achieve safe and effective outcomes. This session is essential for anyone involved in marine response or looking to better understand the risks and realities of firefighting in these complex environments.
Behind the scenes of the Appelbee rescue	The dramatic rescue of the Appelbee family, swept out to sea in January, captured the attention of communities across Western Australia. While 14-year-old Austin's incredible effort to swim for help became widely known, what unfolded behind the scenes was an equally remarkable emergency response. In this compelling session, hear directly from the emergency services personnel involved in the operation as they share insights into the critical roles they played, the challenges faced and the decisions made under pressure. Gain a deeper understanding of how multi-agency coordination, timing and teamwork came together to bring the family to safety. This is a rare opportunity to go beyond the headlines and learn what it really takes to execute a complex search and rescue in extreme circumstances.

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Managing and responding to lithium-ion incidents	Recent lithium-ion battery incidents, including the Maddington Battery Hazmat Fire, highlight the growing risks and operational complexities associated with emerging energy technologies, as well as the support and critical importance of coordinated, multi-agency response. In this session, hear from key agencies involved in the incident, including the DFES Incident Controller. Together, they will provide an overview of how the event unfolded, the challenges encountered and the decisions made in a dynamic, evolving environment. Gain valuable insights into the unique hazards posed by lithium-ion battery incidents, explore lessons learned from a multi-agency perspective and consider opportunities to strengthen preparedness, coordination and response strategies for future events. This informative session is essential for anyone seeking to better understand lithium-ion hazards and the evolving approach required to manage them effectively.
Interstate deployments – lessons from the Victoria fire response	The 2025–26 summer fire season in Victoria saw catastrophic conditions declared across multiple regions, with more than 436,000 hectares burnt and over 1,590 structures impacted. As the situation intensified, Western Australia deployed more than 60 emergency services personnel to assist, including DFES staff and volunteers from brigades such as Lancelin, Quinns Rocks and Albany. In this engaging session, hear directly from those who were deployed as they share their experiences on the ground as firefighters, Incident Controllers and support personnel. Gain insight into the challenges of operating in a high-tempo, large-scale interstate incident and the realities of working in unfamiliar conditions. Discover how resourcing was managed during a period of sustained emergency warnings and explore the key differences between firefighting in WA and Victoria – from operational processes and radio communications through to fuel loads and terrain.
Vertical rescue across diverse terrain – insights from the Pilbara and Great Southern	Not all vertical rescue is the same. Western Australia’s landscapes vary dramatically – from the rugged gorges of Karijini National Park to the steep and exposed terrain of Bluff Knoll – each presenting unique challenges for emergency responders. This session explores how crews adapt their approach across these vastly different environments, drawing on operational experience from both the Pilbara and Great Southern regions. Hear how teams prepare for, plan and execute rescues in locations where terrain, remoteness and environmental conditions can significantly influence outcomes. Discover the key differences in tools and techniques, preparation and training requirements, and the impact of terrain and environmental factors on rescue operations. This session is ideal for anyone looking to broaden their understanding of vertical rescue and gain practical insights into operating effectively across WA’s diverse and demanding landscapes.

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The power of storytelling – from a grassroots movement to a global symbol of hope	From the first blue tree painted in rural WA to a movement now recognised across Australia and beyond, Blue Tree Project has grown through the power of storytelling, community connection and people willing to show up for one another. In this session, Kendall will share the personal origins behind the blue trees and how a simple, visual reminder sparked difficult conversations around mental health. With a strong focus on regional communities, this presentation reflects on the vital role volunteers play in creating healthier, more connected places to live. It is a reminder that meaningful change often starts small, with one story, one conversation and one person choosing to make a difference. Please know I'm flexible regarding the wording here - so please feel free to tweak if needed. Also, I couldn't remember if you needed a photo, so I have attached one just in case.
Improving flood intelligence in WA – insights, tools and your role	Flooding remains one of the most complex and dynamic hazards to manage, making timely, accurate intelligence critical to effective response and community safety. This session provides an overview of how flood intelligence is developed and used across Western Australia, including how agencies work together to build a clearer picture of flood behaviour and risk. You'll gain a high-level understanding of flood warnings, gauge readings and Bureau of Meteorology forecasts, and how these inputs support decision-making. Experience a live demonstration of the new Flood Intelligence Platform and explore how it enhances situational awareness, supports operational planning and delivers actionable data during incidents. Learn how observations from the field contribute to building a more complete intelligence picture and discover how staff and volunteers can play an active role in this process. This is a valuable opportunity to deepen your understanding of flood intelligence and see how your contributions can directly support safer, more informed emergency response across the state.
Contemporary rescue - bringing together changes to equipment, space creation and extrication	Road crash rescue is constantly evolving. Advances in vehicle design, alternative fuel technologies, casualty extrication techniques and rescue equipment are changing the way emergency responders manage incidents. In this informative session, discover how DFES is adapting its road crash rescue capability to keep pace with these emerging challenges. Hear about the impact of modern vehicles on rescue operations, the latest developments in extrication practices and the opportunities new technologies present for improving response outcomes. Presenters will also share how DFES is modernising its equipment, training and operational practices to ensure personnel are prepared for the road crash rescues of the future. This session is ideal for anyone involved in rescue operations and interested in how innovation and capability development are helping to reduce extrication times, enhance operational effectiveness and achieve the best possible outcomes for patients.
El Nino and other global circulations – what they mean for WA	Western Australia's weather is influenced by a range of powerful oceanic and atmospheric circulations that operate across the globe. From El Niño and La Niña to the Indian Ocean Dipole and the Southern Annular Mode, these drivers can shape everything from rainfall and temperatures to bushfire risk and severe weather. In this informative session, discover how these large-scale patterns influence seasonal conditions across WA and learn about the different ways they interact to affect our weather. Presenters will explain the science behind these global circulations in a practical and easy-to-understand way, highlighting their relative impacts across different regions of the state.

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	The session will also explore what current indicators are telling us ahead of the upcoming summer season, including what emergency services personnel and volunteers should be watching for in the months ahead. This is a valuable opportunity to deepen your understanding of the forces that drive WA's weather and how they can influence emergency preparedness and community resilience.
Engaging your local community through Social Media	Social Media platforms like Facebook, Instagram and Tik Tok are often the first place people turn to for news, emergency information or simply a daily scroll. Australians are spending more time online than ever before, making social media one of the most powerful ways to reach your community. In this session, you'll learn how to use your local BGU social media pages to inform, educate and engage your audience. We'll explore how consistently showing up online builds trust, strengthens community connections and ensures your messages are seen when they matter most. Whether you're introducing your BGU, showcasing training, sharing safety advice or celebrating team achievements, there are countless ways to tell your story. Our social media team will share practical tips, tricks and best practices to help you create engaging content that will make an impact.