



The Emergency Planning Society
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TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

Research findings from Andrews and Duggan's 'Social Distancing and Reimagining City Life' project has been of enormous value to the Emergency Planning Society (EPS). Their work has led to several key changes that will be of significant benefit to the Society's membership, and to our understandings of what good emergency planning looks like. This positively impacts on how we might help support our members to develop their professional practice, which will have significant wider societal benefits.

Our members come from a mix of Public, Private, Commercial, academic and training providers and Third Sector organisations working at different levels along with students studying emergency management either full time or part time. We have between 1200 – 1300 members in total from across the UK and internationally. Our main purpose is to enhance the profession, support those working within the resilience field and provide a voice to influence change at strategic levels. We achieve this by:

- Providing the Professional Standards necessary to work effectively and ethically within emergency management and resilience including:
 - **A Competence Framework of Professional Practice for Resilience**
 - **Professional Code of Conduct** to guide professional behaviour and ethics.
 - **Learning Pathway** provides different routes into the profession based on level of experience, role length of time in the role and common foundations
 - **Continued Professional Development Scheme (CPD)**. Supporting our members 'professional development through provision of opportunities for learning and recording through our (CPD) thus encouraging learning and development to become conscious and proactive.
- Means to share best practise, knowledge, skills, expertise and experiences
- Mentoring
- Influencing policy and change.
- Collaborations & Consultation

Having read their research report ('Performance as City Pandemic Response: Innovations to Innovate'), we invited them to an informal conversation about the work. This led to their hosting an 'EPS Huddle', exploring innovative approaches to emergency planning through the lens of performance studies. As a result of these engagements, we invited them to run a series of workshops for our members, including a plenary workshop at the Emergency Services Show and international Security Exhibition.

Andrews and Duggan's research revealed a critical gap in the ways we address approaches to coping with workplaces stresses in emergency planning, particularly through and as we emerge from Covid-19. Our members were collectively experiencing a need for processes and practices of decompressing from work and means of taking breaks even during live events. This was particularly important for new members of the EPS. Responding to this newly identified need, we invited Andrews and Duggan to develop what they termed a 'toolkit of creative strategies for personal debriefing'. There are established procedures for debriefing after a particular incident, this is normally at an organisational or inter-agency level, not at individual or team level.





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These de-briefs would focus on the technical aspects of any response and would not consider the human element of any response or rather how an individual reacts to a crisis situation before during or after that crisis. This in turn resulted in lessons gathered during the de-brief process were identified but not learnt. To learn to do something differently whether process, procedure or action requires a change specifically to things like routine, behaviours, muscle memory and learned behaviours etc. The toolkit provides an enormously beneficial new approach to debriefing that centres on individuals and teams that opens the space for individuals to consider things from a different perspective, to use things like creative thinking as an approach to problem solving, that reduces fear of change and provides some tools that will support an individual with the emotional aspects of crisis and acceptance of the need for change (lessons learned) So important is this contribution that it has been integrated into our recently updated core competencies framework.

Indeed, Andrews and Duggan's research led us to recognise the need for wider, significant changes to our core competencies framework. The framework represents the fundamental principles, skills and expectations our members to demonstrate and abide by to work within the field and maintain the level of Member of the society. They are the foundations on which all EPS members base their professional practices.

The changes we made as a direct result of Andrews and Duggan's research, included:

- Embedding tools of performance practice and thinking (framed as 'creative practice') as fundamental to the work of emergency planners and to meeting the expectations of the core competencies.
- Placing creative practice at the centre of our core competencies framework, acknowledging these as fundamental skills and behavioural approaches for our members, rather than framing them as an implied generalised characteristic.
- A recommendation that all members engage with and embed the principles of 'A Toolkit of Creative Approaches to Personal Debriefing' - that we commissioned Andrews and Duggan to produce on our behalf, because of the impact their research had on our thinking.
- Solidifying our long-held sense that individual lived experiences are of fundamental importance to rounded professional practice. Andrews and Duggan's work on performance and resilience provided a vital way of addressing this, specifically by providing tools to engage with lived experience in professional contexts.

These changes represent important, beneficial improvements to the usefulness of the core competencies. They will have direct impact on the professional practice of our 1200+ members, as well as on future members (approx. 200 + per year). The previous version of the strategy was published in 2011 and we expect this version to be in place for at least 8 years with update reviews annually or in the event to significant changes to legislation etc. As a result, Andrews' and Duggan's research has had a swift impact on our work that contributes to the future of emergency planning in the UK and internationally.





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This will have an indirect impact on the safety, security, and resilience of organisations, places, and communities across the UK. While hard to definitively track this, our members are at the centre of emergency planning and resilience strategy and practice in all aspects of life in the UK. So, these changes constitute impact that will be of benefit to a considerable proportion of UK society.

Finally, the core competencies form a foundation for education programmes and CPD processes in emergency planning across the UK. The organisations which adopt the core competencies embed the principles and frameworks for learning in all aspects of their provision. Andrews and Duggan's research will be of benefit to emergency planners at all stages of their careers.

Building on our work with Andrews and Duggan, we look forward to future collaborations.

Yours sincerely

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Emergency Planning Society

