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**THE RESPONSE TO AND RECOVERY
FROM THE 2004 EASTERN BAY OF
PLENTY FLOOD EVENT**

A thesis presented in partial fulfilment
of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Philosophy in Emergency Management
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Abstract

Incident Management Systems used in New Zealand have their origins in the fire-fighting organisations of the United States of America in the 1970's. They began in an atmosphere of disciplined quasi-military emergency response organizations. Emergency management research, theory and practice have since evolved to incorporate comprehensive facets acknowledging disasters are about people, individually and collectively and their environment. Emergency Management now includes addressing psycho-social aspects.

New Zealand emergency services adopted the Coordinated Incident Management System (CIMS) as a result of a requirement following the Cave Creek disaster of 1995, where a multi- agency response to the event was found to be unsatisfactorily managed. Emergency management in the modern era now requires the orchestration of many and varied agencies and organisations including government and non-government organisations. These organisations are not necessarily suited to command type management styles and during a recovery phase of an incident, an approach involving a coordination style is more appropriate than a command style.

An examination of the 2004 eastern Bay of Plenty flood event highlights that improved coordination by using a suitable incident management system benefits the response and recovery process. The Eastern Bay of Plenty community has social and cultural characteristics that impact on the effectiveness of emergency management outcomes. An incident management system that improves communication within the multi-agency organisation and between an emergency management organisation and the disaster-affected communities contributes to overall trauma reduction by stress reduction and facilitating early support and interventions. This allows where necessary, for modern emergency management to use systems that can utilise the unique community cultures, structures and networks that form the dynamic communities that they serve.

If disasters magnify pre-existing social and community problems then the incident management system model used in a disaster can determine the degree of magnification.

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