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# **DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION: BUILDING STRENGTH AND CAPABILITY LITERATURE REVIEW**

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and Roger Jones**

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Version	Release history	Date
1.0	Initial release of publication	20/03/2018



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Publisher: Bushfire and Natural Hazards CRC

ISBN: 978-1-86272-780-9

March 2018

Citation: Young, C., Pyke, J., Maharaj, N., Rasmussen, B., and Jones, R. (2018). *Diversity and inclusion: building strength and capability literature review*. Bushfire and Natural Hazards CRC.

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Acknowledgements:

Janine Taylor, John Beard, Steve O'Malley, Sonja Braidner, Mal Connellan, Dermot Barry, Margarita Kumnick and Lisa Jones.

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# Diversity and inclusion: building strength and capability literature review overview

The purpose of this initial literature review is to provide a theoretical basis for the research project **Diversity and Inclusion: Building Strength and Capability**, being undertaken as part of the **Bushfire and Natural Hazards Cooperative Research Centre (BNHCRC)**. The aim of this project is to develop a framework for the **Emergency Management Sector (EMS)** that supports practical implementation and measurement of diversity and inclusion within their organisations.

The review is presented in three parts, which reflect the different components of the project, organisational, economic and community. Each part is contributed by research team members who each have a specialised focus on one of the three project dimensions. As the project is using a systemic approach to the development of the framework, the literature pertaining to this area is vast. The aim of this preliminary review is to identify key areas of literature for further investigation and also to look for commonalities and differences across the three research areas to inform the future direction of the research.

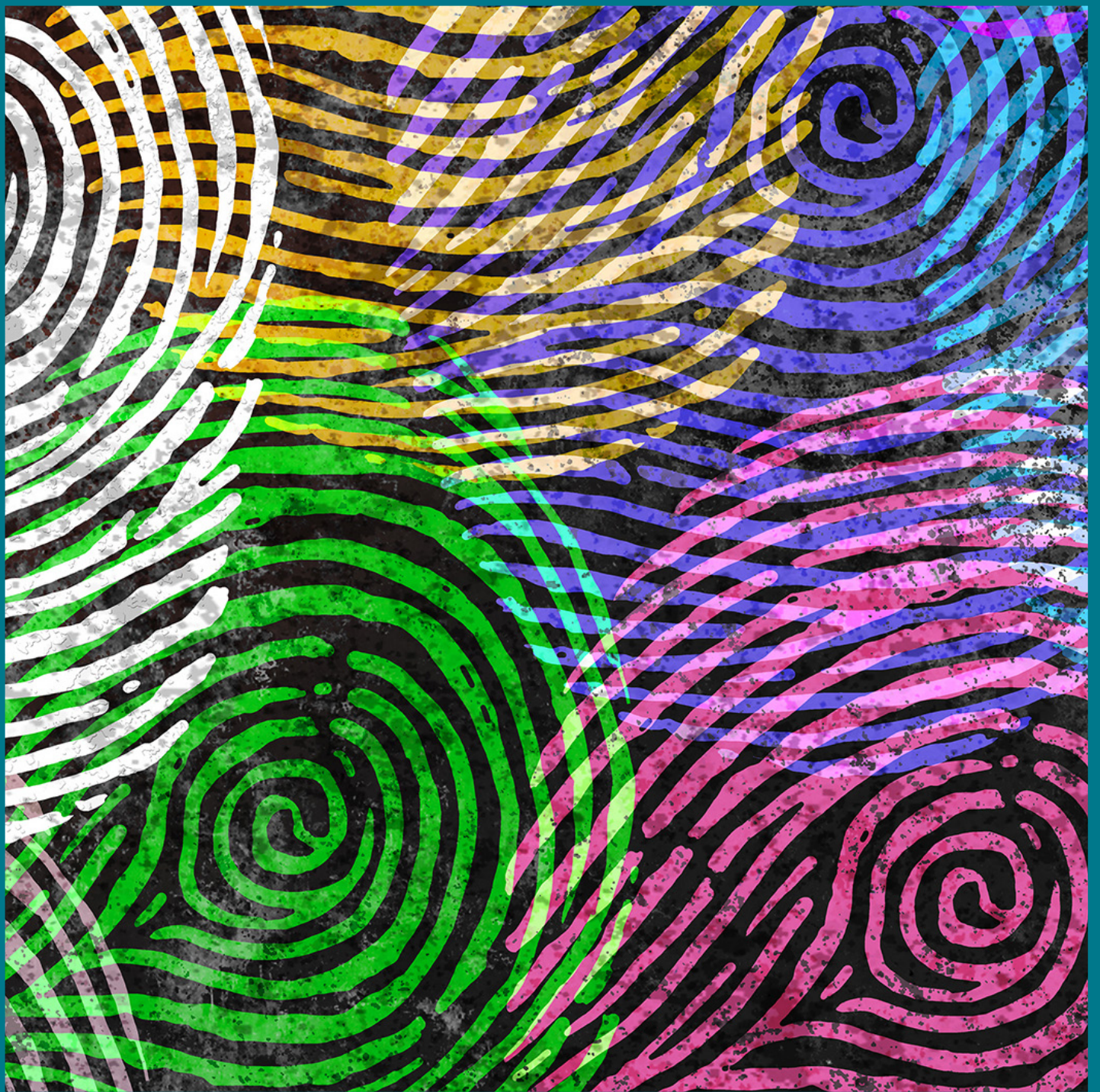
All of these reviews consider the current drivers of change for the EMS as overarching themes contained within the project. These are the need to build resilience in response to the changing social, environmental and economic drivers, and the new needs for EMS organisations, government and communities that are emerging as a result of this.

**Section 1 is written by Celeste Young and Roger Jones**, and focuses on the systemic nature of diversity and inclusion from an organisational perspective and the different aspects needed to support the process of implementation and measurement of diversity and inclusion in the EMS context. It examines the inconsistencies in research in relation to the effectiveness of diversity and looks at why they occur. It discusses the relationship between diversity and inclusion and innovation and change, and how these intersect with diversity practice. It also provides a working definition of effective diversity and inclusion, and outlines key components of the framework for EMS and areas for further research, derived from the literature.

**Section 2 is written by Neelam Maharaj and Bruce Rasmussen**, and focuses on the economic aspects of diversity in relation to EMS organisations, organisational capability and diversity benefits. It provides an overview of key aspects of organisational capability and aspects of effectiveness that support this. It also examines the current economic measurements in place, discusses these in relation to the EMS context and proposes further development of these.

**Section 3 is written by Joanne Pyke**. This section explores how the terms diversity and inclusion are deployed in relation to communities. Key debates and areas of contention are identified and discussed in the context of the issues faced by particular groups within the community. While diversity is conceptualised broadly, the issues faced by new migrants, women, people with disabilities and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are canvassed. Program responses undertaken by EMS to enhance diversity and inclusion are also discussed. The section concludes by highlighting the need to understand the complexity and context specific nature of diversity, the powerful structures that create exclusion and recognise the very dynamic population change trends currently reshaping Australian communities.

This preliminary review is a working document for the project and will be built upon and released publically in the latter stages of the project.



# Section 1: Managing difference through inclusion in emergency management organisations

Celeste Young and Roger Jones

## Introduction

**The Emergency Management Sector (EMS) in Australia is a diverse sector encompassing government departments, fire services, State Emergency Services, ambulance and police organisations. It is comprised of a paid work force and volunteers. Diversity in the EMS is generally considered to be demographic, encompassing attributes such as gender, age, race, disability and cultural diversity.**

The recent Australasian Fire and Emergency Service Authorities Council (AFAC) National Council stance – that there are ‘unacceptably low levels of diversity’ in emergency services, and the recognition that emergency services need to better reflect the communities they work to serve (National Strategy for Disaster Resilience, National Emergency Management Committee, 2011) – is driving new programs and policies in this area. There is also a growing awareness that there are a number of benefits that can result from diversity, particularly to the community. The strategy also recognises that being able to interact and communicate effectively with diverse communities is critical to the building of resilience and reduction of risk associated with natural hazard events.

The context for the EMS is changing as a result of dynamic social (changing demographics), environmental (the changing nature of natural hazard risk) and economic drivers (the increasing cost of responding to natural hazard events, resource constraints and changing technologies). These are driving the need for change and innovation across organisations in the EMS if they are to remain sustainable into the future. It is important to understand how these different factors influence and shape decision making, and the opportunities and barriers that organisations face when implementing policies relating to diversity and inclusion.

When looked at holistically, human diversity is broad, and its study bridges both the grey and refereed literature. This is because its nature is systemic, cultural and institutional – touching every aspect of society. For an organisation to be successful in this area, it needs to define the system in which diversity exists, the specific context that diversity is being implemented in, and the different stages of the process of implementing diversity. A critical part of implementing diversity is the creation of inclusive workplaces that embrace and effectively manage difference. This needs to be combined with organisational change and innovation across all levels, within and beyond their organisations. You have existing organisations, so what is being created – the organisation or a strategic approach? To do this requires an understanding of where these differences lie in the diversity system of the organisations and the communities that surround them, and where organisations have agency and the ability to act. It also requires an understanding of the interactions within specific contexts between different actors, and the personal and organisational attributes, characteristics and values that support effective diversity actions.

This review provides a preliminary overview of the literature related to systemic and implementation process-focused aspects of human diversity and their relevance to EMS organisations. It examines the diversity and inclusion literature to assess how it can support the practice of implementing effective diversity and inclusion within organisations, with a specific focus on Australian EMS organisations that work with bushfire and natural hazards. It also summarises the current context and factors that shape the Australian EMS, and provides a working definition of effective diversity and inclusion for further development. Finally, it discusses the different components that make up the process of implementing diversity policy and plans within EMS organisations, and some of the challenges for both research and practice. Its key purpose is to identify areas of literature that are potentially useful for the development of a framework to support implementation of diversity throughout the Australian EMS.

The key finding from this review is that there is currently no overarching framework that details the diversity implementation process and how this should be measured. Any such framework would need to include:

- The different phases of the process
- The outcomes, costs and benefits that result from this process across time
- The interaction between innovation and change in this process
- The organisational context, characteristics and attributes of the EMS
- The characteristics and attributes of diversity and inclusion
- Systemic assessments and measurements of effective diversity management and costs and benefits
- Identification of key mechanisms within organisations for integration of diversity into decision making, and
- Uniformity of language and definitions, and descriptions of appropriate methodologies to support the above areas.

## Literature review process

Google Scholar and Google Web were searched to identify academic literature that addressed effective diversity, inclusion, and how it is measured. In particular, we reviewed research that examines the systemic nature of diversity (especially relating to change processes that support its implementation), and innovation, which is regarded as a key benefit of effective diversity (Cox, 1994).

We also wanted to identify EMS-specific studies and grey literature that was specific to the Australian EMS. Keywords searched included: *effective diversity and inclusion, measurement of effective diversity and inclusion, diversity in emergency services/emergency management sector, inclusion in the emergency services/emergency management sector, systemic diversity, diversity systems and diversity process, change management and innovation*. These terms were also searched substituting 'organisations' for 'emergency services/emergency management sector'. Specific agency-related searches (*ambulance, fire fighters, police, State Emergency Services, government*) were also undertaken. A total of 126 documents were selected for this review.

## Summary of the Emergency Management Sector context in Australia

The key purpose of the EMS in Australia is the protection of life and property in relation to emergency management through implementing 'a range of measures to manage risks to communities and environments' (Emergency Management Australia, 1998, p39). This is implemented through activities spanning the prevention, preparedness, response and recovery (PPRR) spectrum, and requires a 'systematic process that produces a range of measures that contribute to the wellbeing of communities and the environment' (AIDR, 2004, pix).

The context in which many of these organisations operate is changing due to:

1. the increasing intensity and frequency of events due to climate change, and the increasing costs associated with these events
2. changing demographics
3. new technologies (particularly digital technology), and
4. resource constraints and decreasing volunteer numbers.

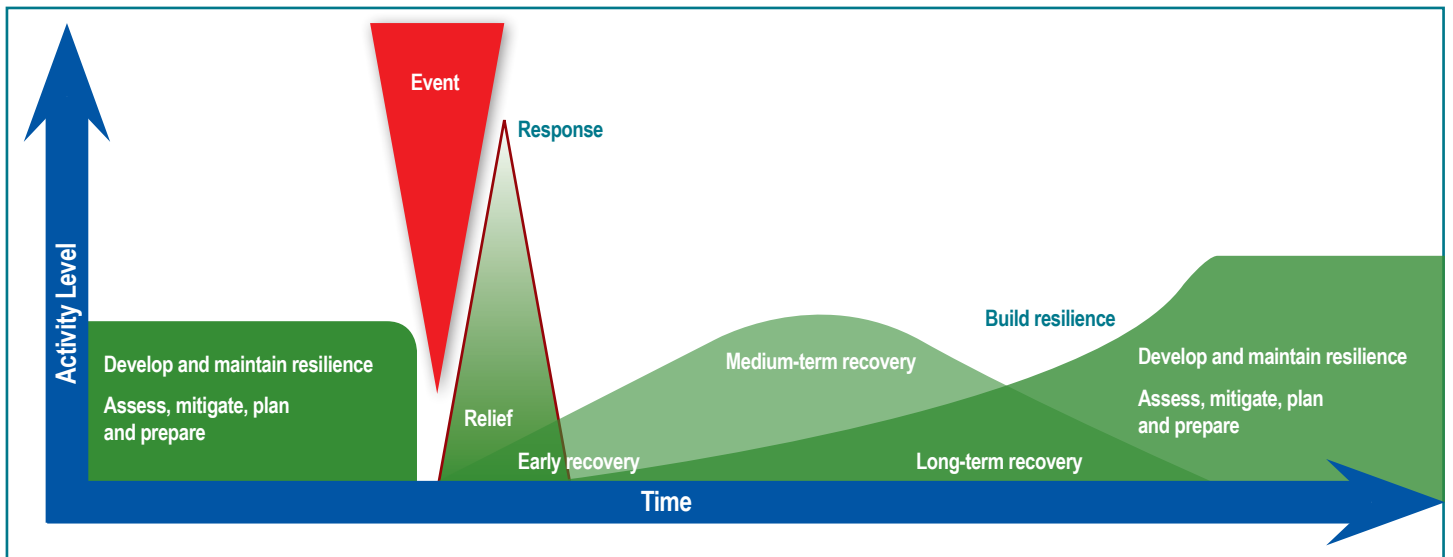
New risks and needs are emerging as a result of this – both in EMS organisations and the communities they serve. This is driving change and innovation across the EMS, and highlights the need for the development of new skills and ways of working to secure future sustainability.

There have also been structural changes in government organisations, in particular the emergence of amalgamated state organisations such as Department of Fire and Emergency Services (DFES) in Western Australia and Queensland Fire and Emergency Services (QFES), which contain both government departments and service delivery agencies. Emergency Management Victoria (EMV) has also been developed as an umbrella organisation, which coordinates emergency management across the state, and 'shares responsibility with a range of agencies, organisations and departments' (EMV, 2017).

Initiatives have been put in place to standardise approaches nationally – from a single hazard to an all-hazards approach (Emergency Management Australia, Manual 03, 1998, pix). A key activity has been the development of The National Emergency Risk Assessment Guidelines (NERAG), which are consistent with the Australian Standard AS/NZS ISO 31000:2009, and have been contextualised for the Australian EMS (AIDR, 2015).

Another key driver for change has been the introduction of resilience at a policy level and the need for its implementation into practice. The National Strategy for Disaster Resilience requires the 'collective responsibility of all sectors of society, including all levels of government, business, the non-government sector and individuals' (NEMC, 2011). As part of an ongoing process, this requires the embedding of resilience activities throughout the PPRR spectrum (Figure 1). It changes the focus of EMS activities from shorter-term tactical approaches across the PPRR spectrum, to longer-term strategic approaches that focus on future outcomes. It also requires fit-for-purpose communication that is salient and accessible for all members of Australian communities.

Understanding, acceptance and uptake of risk ownership is central to this process, and requires EMS organisations to increase understandings within communities in relation to natural hazard risk and increase their participation in the building of resilience, and to renegotiate with their communities with regards to who is responsible, who is accountable and who pays (Young et al, 2015).



**Figure 1:** Activity integrating natural hazard risk management tasks across time scales (Young et al, 2015).

This has led to the development of new policies and frameworks to support implementation, which changes the focus from working *for* the community to working *with* them – in particular the National Strategy for Disaster Resilience: Community Engagement Framework (AIDR, 2013) Community First: Safer Together (DELWP, 2015), and the Community Resilience Framework for Emergency Management (EMV, 2017).

Effective diversity and inclusion are central to this agenda, as the implementation of resilience requires EMS organisations to effectively manage and leverage diverse relationships (within and beyond EMS organisations) to meet this challenge.

## A summary of diversity and inclusion in the Emergency Management Sector

The culture of the EMS is complex because it combines government organisations and service delivery agencies. Many of these agencies originate from civil defence organisations and have a deeply hierarchical, para-military structure (Brauer, 2016; Hulett et al, 2008; Banginet, 2005). The fire services, in particular, have strong formal and informal rules and structures that require new arrivals to ‘fit in’ (Banginet, 2005). This has shaped the cultural aspects, traditions and culture of many of these organisations, and also the expectations of the communities they serve. This is further ‘complicated by historically and culturally-specific patriarchal structures within emergency services’ (Eriksen et al, 2010, p337).

There are also complexities related to what fire fighters actually do, and perceptions of what they represent. As the AFAC 2014 report states, ‘fire fighters generally do not spend much of their time fire fighting. Fire fighters perform many other equally or more valuable tasks, ranging from emergency medical response to fire protection and community engagement, as well as skills and equipment maintenance’ (AFAC, 2015, p21). The narrative of the job as dangerous and difficult (Hulett et al, 2008), however, often results in public notions of the EMS that are informed by traditional notions of heroism (Dowler, 2002).

Implementation of diversity is a process that requires change and innovation; transformational leaders who are adaptive, flexible and able to build collaborative solutions, share leadership responsibility and engender trust (Bennis, 2001; Brass, 1985) are needed. This can be at odds with pervading leadership and management styles, which are often structured around tactically-based ‘command and control’ decision-making.

This presents specific challenges for diversity implementation (and for change more generally), as Hulett et al (2008, p28) observe in relation to the culture of fire services in America:

‘These cultures tend to evolve slowly and resist change both actively and passively. Resistance tends to be particularly strong where employees remain for long careers, personal relationships are strong, traditions are maintained with pride, and employment is well rewarded (Bendick Jr and Egan, 2000). Convergence of all these circumstances in fire fighting creates a “perfect storm” supporting continued occupational exclusion.’

This culture can also change how diversity factors play out and result in different outcomes to those seen in the literature. For example, task routineness and group longevity have been shown to moderate areas of group conflict created by diversity (Pelled et al, 1999). In the case of some EMS organisations, these aspects may actually create barriers.



In March 2016, AFAC released its Statement on Workforce Diversity in the Fire and Emergency Services (AFAC, 2016a), which announced 'changes required to increase attraction, recruitment and inclusion levels across gender, racial and cultural diversity'.

They acknowledged that 'diverse workforces:

- Better reflect the communities we serve
- Assist in better understanding and effectively dealing with community risks, as well as community capabilities
- Are a source of diverse skills and new ideas, which are essential to all phases of emergency and land management, and
- Improve organisational culture through inclusion and more open communication, which in turn can enhance mental health and wellbeing'.

Over-arching federal government legislation (Australian Human Rights Commission website) relevant to diversity and inclusion are:

- *Age Discrimination Act 2004*
- *Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986*
- *Disability Discrimination Act 1992*
- *Racial Discrimination Act 1975*
- *Sex Discrimination Act 1984*.

At a state and territory level, legislation relevant to diversity and inclusion are:

- Australian Capital Territory – *Discrimination Act 1991*
- New South Wales – *Anti-Discrimination Act 1977*
- Northern Territory – *Anti-Discrimination Act 1996*
- Queensland – *Anti-Discrimination Act 1991*
- South Australia – *Equal Opportunity Act 1984*
- Tasmania – *Anti-Discrimination Act 1998*
- Victoria – *Equal Opportunity Act 2010* and the *Racial and Religious Tolerance Act 2001*
- Western Australia – *Equal Opportunity Act 1984* and the *Spent Convictions Act 1988*.

Other relevant federal legislation includes: *Work Health and Safety Act 2011* (Australian Government), *Gender Equality Act 2012* (Australian Government), and the *Public Service Act 2008*. (Australian Government). At a state and territory level, the key bodies that provide information and support in relation to equal opportunity and anti-discrimination are:

- ACT Human Rights Commission
- Anti-Discrimination Board of NSW
- Northern Territory Anti-Discrimination Commission
- Anti-Discrimination Commission Queensland
- Equal Opportunity Commission of South Australia
- Office of the Anti-Discrimination Commissioner (Tasmania)
- Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission (Victoria)
- Equal Opportunity Commission of Western Australia.

State-based frameworks and strategies that support diversity and inclusion include:

- ACT Respect, Equality and Diversity Framework (2010)
- Tasmania's State Service Diversity and Inclusion Framework 2017–2020
- Emergency Management Victoria – Diversity and Inclusion Framework (2016)
- Cultural Inclusion Framework for South Australia (2006)
- Northern Territory Multicultural Participation Framework 2016–2019
- WA Equity, Health and Diversity Strategy, 2015–2020
- Different Background, Shared Values. Queensland Public Sector, Inclusion and Diversity Strategy, 2015–2020.

As predominantly state government agencies, the EMS has a number of programs in each state and territory that pertain to:

- Increasing levels of women in the workforce generally, particularly in relation to upper level management
- Changing organisational structures
- Increasing Indigenous participation in the services and the use of Indigenous practices in bushfire mitigation activities
- Communication with culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities that aims to raise awareness, improve understanding and encourage participation to reduce risk and increase resilience
- Violence against women
- Increasing diversity and inclusion of CALD communities in the services
- Inclusion of, and engagement with, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) communities, and
- Equality, inclusion and equity.

A key challenge facing EMS organisations is how to best place and integrate diverse people into current operational activities in a way that does not position them as ‘the problem’ (Tyler and Fairbrother, 2013), rather than as a source of skill, creativity and innovation.

To date, the majority of programs have focused on greater inclusion of women in emergency services, however the majority of roles occupied by women are administrative or support roles rather than operational (Beatson and McLennan, 2005). Women are also still poorly represented in leadership roles across the sector (AFAC, 2016b), occupying 21.4% of executive positions, 10% of middle managers, 47.8% of the paid, non-operational roles, and 37.1% of volunteer roles (AFAC, 2016b).

The research in this area is relatively immature and has to identify the nature of the problem, focusing primarily on increasing the participation of women in the fire services and aspects of culture. Publications of particular relevance to the Australian context include:

- Cultural audit of the UK Fire Services (Baigent, 2001)
- Under representation of women volunteers in the fire services (Beatson and McLennan, 2005)
- Roles, identities and experiences of female emergency services volunteers in the NSW fire services (Maleta, 2009)
- How women perceive themselves as fire fighters (Branch-Smith and Pooley, 2010)
- Social dimensions of gender, and bushfire preparation and response in the Australian context (Tyler and Fairbrother, 2013).

Women as a category is diverse, and there is a need to understand the different nuances that result when they intersect with other diversity categories. For example, Yoder and Aniakudo (1997) and Yoder and Berendsen (2001), found racism and sexism combined with black women fire fighters to create an even deeper layer of subordination. Hulett et al (2008) found under-representation to be ‘double among women of colour compared to white women’ in USA-based fire services.

The fire services, however, are only one aspect of the EMS, and other agencies such as the State Emergency Service Organisations, Ambulance and Police have different organisational environments and cultures that may have different diversity implementation outcomes. There is some research relating to Police, including training practices in cultural and linguistic diversity in the police forces (Grossman, 2013).

Specific reports that pertain to diversity in State Emergency Services and Ambulance need further investigation. How these different agencies interact with each other, and how different categories of diversity intersect and respond with diversity, has yet to be fully explored. It is also important to capture lessons from other areas, such as the Defence Forces, which are transferable to the EMS context.

All of this points to a need for deeper investigation into the intersections between diversity categories and different agencies to understand:

1. where discrimination may compound if different factors combine (e.g. Indigenous woman, disabled transgendered employees)
2. how diversity manifests in different EMS organisational environments, and
3. the interactions between the different agencies and the community.

In relation to the Emergency Services, we have focused primarily on the area of bullying and harassment.

Reviews include:

- *The Independent review of an incident involving Queensland Fire and Emergency Services employees 2014*, undertaken at the request of the Premier of Queensland.
- Phase 1 Report 2015: *Independent review into sex discrimination and sexual harassment, including predatory behaviour, in Victoria Police* (2015) The Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission (VEOHRC, 2015).
- Phase 2 Audit 2017: *Independent review into sex discrimination and sexual harassment, including predatory behaviour, in Victoria Police* (VEOHRC, 2015).

VEOHRC have also recently completed a yet-to-be-released review into equity and diversity within the Metropolitan Fire Brigade and Country Fire Authority in Victoria. In May 2017, the NSW Government also instigated a review to **consider the policy response to bullying, harassment and discrimination in certain emergency service agencies**.

As the EMS is a public and community service, diversity and public service delivery cannot always be measured in monetary terms. Examples of broader benefits include community and environmental benefits, and benefits delivered from the role of diversity in increased innovation. The EMS has a large component of volunteers, which also impacts on aspects of evaluation of delivery agencies, as standard organisational assessments often do not cover this aspect (Frumkin and Andre-Clark, 2000; Salamon et al, 2011). In 2004, for example, the value of volunteerism in Queensland's emergency services was estimated to be \$300 million, based on opportunity costs attached to a standard wage estimate (Ironmonger, 2008). However, the value delivered by the services they provide (while being very difficult to cost), would be expected to be much higher.

The key reporting mechanism for diversity in the EMS is the Annual Public Service Report, which is undertaken by all state government bodies and agencies in Australia. This is compiled through survey data obtained through the Annual Public Service Survey. These reports measure different aspects of public service operations, including:

- Representation of age demographics, gender, Indigenous, disability and non-English speaking background within the workforce
- Inclusion
- Employee engagement and satisfaction
- Composition and capability of the workforce
- Organisational structures
- Connectivity with community and new engagement channels, and
- Aspects of innovation such as digital technology.

Each state produces a report, and in some states (such as NSW), agency level reports of the People Matter surveys are also released publically (NSW Government Public Service Commission, 2017). These reports provide specific (but limited) measurements for inclusion and diversity, due to the limited number of questions they can ask. As the survey is not mandatory, they only represent the percentage of the participating workforce. Some organisations, such as the Queensland Fire and Emergency Services and State Emergency Service in South Australia, report diversity outcomes in their annual reports, but this is not consistent practice across the EMS.

Overall data available in the EMS is often patchy, partial or, in the case of CALD employees, practically non-existent in some organisations, and longitudinal data available for analysis is limited. Obtaining and storing data also presents challenges, as the personal nature of some of the data needed to evaluate diversity and inclusion can only be obtained on a voluntary basis. Privacy and security concerns fall under protocols outlined in the *Privacy Act 1998*. As Childs (2006) discusses in her paper, *Counting Women in the Fire Services*:

‘The limitations of the data were acknowledged, but it was argued that these limitations reflect an historic lack of interest in diversity in the fire services, as well as poor data reporting mechanisms that need urgent review. The poor data available for public scrutiny exemplifies a lack of coordinated workforce planning across the industry as a whole’ (p33).

In terms of evaluating effective actions and the outcomes, there is currently no standard set of measures to evaluate diversity programs and interventions. As a result, the majority of assessments in this area remain ad hoc and predominantly anecdotal.

## Effective diversity and inclusion

Definitions of diversity that are relevant to organisations often depend upon the area of diversity in scope, and may include race, gender, culture, age, faith and thought. The literature contains many definitions for diversity within organisations that are often interchangeable with workplace definitions. However, to address the diversity within the EMS that spans across government, the community, the paid and volunteer workforce, the following definitions are being used for this review:

‘Diversity is the way we all differ and how those differences enable, enhance or inhibit the ability of individuals, groups and organisations to achieve individual, collective and/or organisational goals and objectives’ (Davidson and Fielden, 2004, p60).

‘Inclusion represents a person’s ability to contribute fully and effectively to an organisation’ (Roberson, 2006, p215).

‘An inclusive workplace values and uses individual and intergroup differences within its work force, cooperates with and contributes to its surrounding community, alleviates the needs of disadvantaged groups in its wider environment, collaborates with individuals, groups, and organizations across national and cultural boundaries’ (Mor Barak, 2000, p339).

Effectiveness is defined as ‘the degree to which something is successful in producing a desired result; success’ (Oxford Online Dictionary).

Even though a number of common attributes and characteristics have been found to be associated within specific successful organisations, there is a lack of consensus between many of the academic reviews undertaken in relation to effectiveness of diversity. Effectiveness is primarily evaluated through positive or negative outcomes, and shows positive outcomes (such as increased creativity, innovation, increased problem solving, broader range of contacts and information sources), and negative outcomes (such as decreased cohesion, conflict, lower performance and increased process loss) (Williams and O’Reilly III, 1998; Kalev et al, 2006; DiTomaso et al, 2007; Herring, 2009). For further analysis, see Section 2.

Cox et al (1991) presented six arguments for the benefits of cultural diversity, covering cost of not managing diversity well, reputation for prospective employees, marketing effectiveness, greater creativity, better problem solving, and greater resilience (system fluidity) where diversity should produce improved results. Ten years later, Ely and Thomas (2001, p229) concluded that ‘although [diversity] demonstrated both positive and negative outcomes, suggesting that certain conditions may moderate these outcomes. To date, however, most scholars have only speculated as to what these conditions might be.’

In relation to service organisations, Mor Barak et al (2016) undertook an extensive meta-analysis of service organisations worldwide. Even though their analysis was dominated by US organisations, they examined the relationship between the ‘visible’ shallow-level variables and ‘invisible’ deep-level variables (these concepts are discussed further in the diversity and inclusion section of this paper), which resulted in both positive and negative outcomes. Positive outcomes included job satisfaction, satisfaction with co-workers, organisational commitment, and job tenure.

Negative outcomes found were intention to leave, turnover, job stress and burnout. Choi and Rainey (2010) also conducted an extensive search through a Federal US public service database using qualitative data, and found that perceptions of effective diversity management strengthened the relationship between positive outcomes.

Steers (1975) also suggests that the types of analysis and the different models can also explain some of the convergence across the literature. Early models tended to be univariate (measuring one aspect of effectiveness), whereas more ‘sophisticated models’ used multivariate measures, where multiple aspects were measured. Steers also highlights the shortcomings relating to the scale of many assessments:

‘With few exceptions, models of organisational effectiveness have taken a decidedly macro approach, focusing their attention exclusively on such organisation-wide variables as profit, productivity, and so on. The dynamic relationships between individual behavior and organisational effectiveness have been largely ignored’ (p546).

What is effective is also dependent upon the different reasons for implementing diversity, which can be to meet legal or regulatory requirements, fulfil ethical or moral purposes or improve organisational performance (Kreitz, 2008). This complexity is further compounded by a multitude of different definitions and conceptual models that describe what effective diversity management is and how it should be applied (e.g. models for equity, profit, business improvement or public good).

Williams and O’Reilly III (1998) suggest that the different theoretical frameworks and methodologies used for analysis may also be a contributing factor. They point out the difference in outcomes between researchers (such as Hoffman), who used controlled group experiments or classroom settings that produced results of positive benefits, compared to field studies with no controls which showed a less ‘optimistic view’ (Williams and O’Reilly III, p79). This highlights the risk of carrying out traditional reductionist research that tries to control the number of variables in an experimental setting, when contrasted with a more holistic approach that investigates organisational diversity in field settings. Although the aim of a controlled experiment is to measure a ‘real’ effect, a theoretical hypothesis tested and confirmed in an experimental setting may not be transferable into organisational contexts. On the other hand, well-designed behavioural studies may offer useful insights into real-world decision making (Kahneman, 2011).

Increasing diversity sometimes runs into the is/ought problem, where how things are become conflated with how they should be (Elqayam and Evans, 2011). Normative constructs, if used uncritically, may potentially promote an idealised notion of effectiveness, rather than those with a strong evidence base. This is illustrated in the work of Cox and Blake (1991), and is highly cited in relation to benefits derived from diversity often prefaces statements regarding diversity benefits. For example, ‘If people from different gender, nationality, and racial/ethnic groups hold different attitudes and perspectives on issues, then cultural diversity should increase team creativity and innovation’. They are, however, often cited as benefits that will be obtained. While moral and ethical considerations may be central to application of diversity, clear descriptive accounts of how human decisions are being measured and applied are needed (Elqayam and Evans, 2011). It also points to the importance of context in relation to diversity implementation, as this is enacted at the local level by organisations.

This divergence also suggests a theory to practice gap. This is to be expected, as effectiveness is ascertained as the result of actions that have been undertaken, and as a result, practice often travels ahead of theory in this phase. It raises the need for more empirical evidence to understand what strategies and actions are most effective (Williams and O'Reilly III, 1998; Ely and Thomas, 2001; Herring, 2009; Piotrowski and Ansah, 2010), and to 'uncover the mechanisms and processes involved in the diversity-business performance nexus' (Herring, 2009, p220).

Research, therefore, needs to develop alongside practice as part of the learning cycle, using collaborative, co-production techniques that look at inclusion, as well as diversity. It also highlights the need for new approaches to research to more directly address the needs of those applying diversity and inclusion. Diversity is a long-term proposition and is a process of social change, which is systemic, and what is effective, needs to be understood in this context.

The lack of consensus does not suggest that diversity is not effective in specific contexts. It does, however, illustrate the multi-level and multi-faceted nature of diversity, and the importance of identifying key aspects that make up the diversity process, such as the context it is undertaken in, and the implementation process that enables diversity.

## The role of context

A key factor influencing the effectiveness of diversity is the role of organisational context (Williams and O'Reilly III, 1998; Joshi and Roh, 2009). Joshi and Roh suggest that not adequately reporting or acknowledging context not only 'obscures the important consequences of diversity in organisations, but also hampers efforts to synthesise and integrate the cumulative evidence, handicaps future theory building and limits the researcher's ability to distil the practical implications of their findings' (Joshi and Roh, 2009, p622). The use of top-down or macro data analysis to assess the effectiveness of practical application may be limited, because the information contextualising why an action has been effective is not included in the data. For example, using general census or survey data free of organisational context.

This may also explain the lack of consensus as to what is effective as what each organisation is able to achieve, and how they achieve this will be determined by their specific context so 'there is unlikely to be one best way' (Jayne and Dipboye, 2004). It is also worth noting that the majority of studies undertaken to date have focused on private organisational contexts rather than public ones, and very few have been undertaken that consider this more broadly in the EMS context.

## Systemic aspects of diversity

A systemic issue, such as diversity management, requires a systemic approach; 'to date, there has been little systematic research on the impact of diversity on businesses' (Herring, 2009, p210). As a process that requires cultural transformation, diversity extends beyond any one organisation into the structures, institutions and the society that surrounds it. The main issues for assessing diversity within the EMS require reconciling methods for assessing workplace, organisational and community diversity in a way that an action to implement diversity can be traced though to a realisable benefit of that action.

Attributing effectiveness without systemic assessment may also result in the contributing factors to outcomes being falsely attributed. For example, increase of uptake of diversity in an organisation may reflect a change in social attitudes in the community rather than the effectiveness of an organisation's activities. Systemic assessments are also important for implementation, as organisations need to identify where they have agency to act and where they do not. This includes the ability to identify opportunities for leveraging areas outside of their control, and where best to allocate resources.

Harrison (2005) describes organisations as open systems, and discusses the importance of understanding the different components both internally and externally. He defines key aspects of this system as a basis for organisational diagnosis, which have been adapted for the purposes of this review:

- **Environment (task and general)** includes all the external organisations and conditions that are directly related to an organisation's main operations and its technologies. This includes suppliers, unions, customers, clients, regulators, competitors, markets (for service provision) and products, and the state of knowledge of the organisation's technologies.
- **General environment** includes institutions and conditions that may have infrequent or long-term impacts on the organisation, including the economy, the legal systems, the state of research and technical knowledge, the community, the political system and national culture.
- **Purpose** includes strategies, goals, objectives and plans and the interest of key decision makers in the organisation.
- **Behaviour and process** includes the prevailing patterns of behaviour, relationships and interaction between individuals and groups.
- **Culture** includes shared norms, values, symbols and rituals relating to key aspects of organisational life.
- **Structure** includes enduring relationships between individuals, groups and larger units; groupings of positions and in divisions, departments and other units; formal rules (the way things should be done), such as standard operating procedures and processes; established mechanisms for coordination, human resource mechanisms and informal rules (the way things are done).

This presents a specific challenge for diversity research that often only presents limited aspects of what is a complex and multifaceted issue. Most papers and reports examine parts of the system, but do not result in holistic overviews of the system, or effectively assess the interactions between these components. This suggests that collaboration between diverse disciplines and diversity practitioners would be beneficial in bridging this gap. Ferdman and Sagiv (2012) explore this notion in relation to cross-cultural psychology and diversity, and conclude:

‘Drawing on cross-cultural research on identification with organizations in particular, and with groups in general, may contribute to fine tuning the focus of diversity research and training and to providing evidence-based frameworks that provide individuals with choices regarding the management of their multiple identities’ (p341).

Some researchers have been advocating for systemic approaches for some time (Cox Jr, 1994; Cao et al, 1999; Dass and Parker, 1999), and some models have been developed – for example, the Productive Diversity model (Cope and Kalantzis, 1997), and values-framed systemic approach to inclusion (Mor Barak, 2000, p342), (Figure 2). To date, however, there has been little uptake of these approaches by practitioners.

Conceptual models of systemic diversity are useful, as they map the hierarchical and relational aspects of diversity, but do not show how it can be implemented. The systemic aspect of diversity has been raised as important in research, but the development of frameworks that can provide effective implementation appears elusive. It is not uncommon, however, for businesses to undertake broader evaluation beyond their organisational systems in order to leverage markets as part of their business activities.

To apply this practically, the EMS would need to align longer-term organisational goals and effective service delivery in relation to the current policy directions outlined in the previous section. This requires concepts such as workplace diversity as a lever for building capability (investigated in Section 2 of this review), and community diversity (as discussed in Section 3), being integrated into EMS organisational contexts and decision-making frameworks.

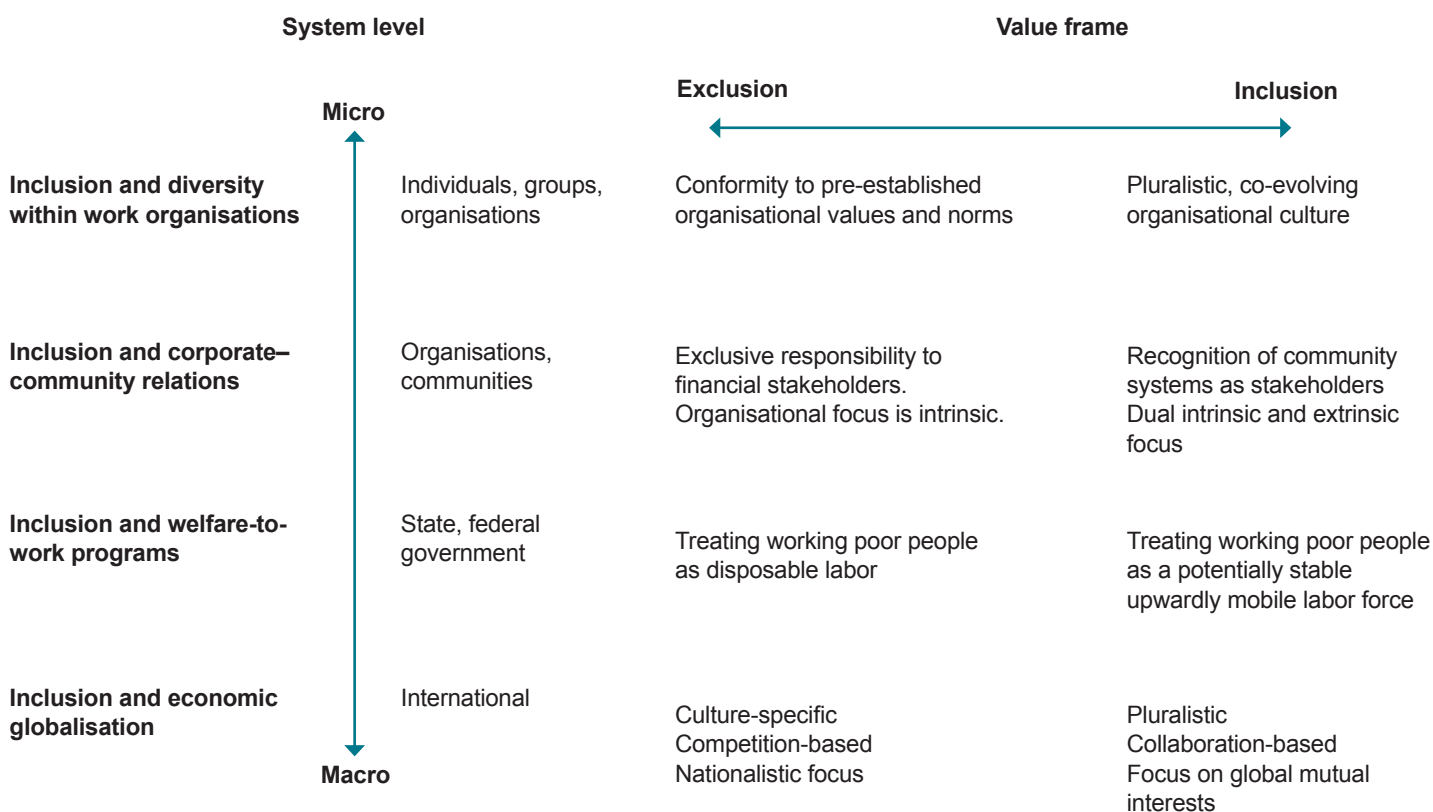


Figure 2: The inclusive workplace – a values-based model (Mor Barak, 2000, p342)

## Temporal aspects of the diversity process

Although the strategic nature of diversity implementation is widely acknowledged across the diversity literature, its temporal aspect has yet to be fully explored. Implementation of diversity and inclusion is a process of change that can take 3–5 years or more to be effective (Hulett et al, 2008). Whether a given strategy can achieve positive outcomes is highly uncertain, and the literature is now showing that a long-term commitment to clearly defined outcomes is the clearest way forward.

‘Managers must recognise that effectively implementing workplace diversity requires sustained commitment to organisational change, and also flexibility and learning. Senior managers must support diversity initiatives and be willing to commit sufficient resources to the effort. Their commitment must be made with the recognition that strategic diversity management is not an exact science, but an evolving one’ (Kreitz, 2008, p106).

As such, diversity needs to be considered as an ongoing process that needs to be invested in and sustained systemically over time to achieve effectiveness. ‘Single threaded diversity solutions, such as focusing only on recruitment, or single-approach management techniques, such as requiring every employee to take diversity training, do not create lasting change’ (Kreitz, 2008, p101). In Figure 3, Wheeler (2010) presents a maturity matrix for diversity, which also supports the notion of diversity as an ongoing process, rather than a state that is simply achieved over a set period of time.

Transition				
Characteristics	Exclusion (intolerance)	Symbolic pioneers (tolerance)	Critical mass (acceptance)	Inclusion (fully integrated)
Emotion	Disdain/ignorance	Indifference	Acceptance	Respect/value
Business performance	Suboptimal (clueless)	Suboptimal (awareness)	Increasing optimisation (pockets of excellence)	Optimal
Executive commitment	The least we can get away with	Reactive/legal compliance	“Right thing to do” Ownership	Business imperative
Leadership positions	Majority white male “Old boy’s network”	Tokenism “Pioneers”	Strong middle management, representation limited at top	Board/Executive Committee representation
Diversity focus	Minimal compliance	Compliance focus on numbers	Positive actions begin business integration	Optimising global potential
Market focus	None	None	Emerging employee ownership of business solutions/results	Integrated into all aspects of business/ teams
Customer focus	None	None	Conscious diversification of teams	Broad cultural global involvement
Employee involvement	None	Informal networks	Formal councils/affinity groups	Passionate involvement in business by all

Figure 3: Stages of Diversity and organisational readiness (Wheeler, 2010)

The transitional categories outlined by Wheeler share similarities to the categories for adoption of innovation outlined by Rogers (1962). Wheeler also suggests four areas of activity: creating, managing, valuing and leveraging, which can be used as criteria for organising and assessing tasks across organisations.

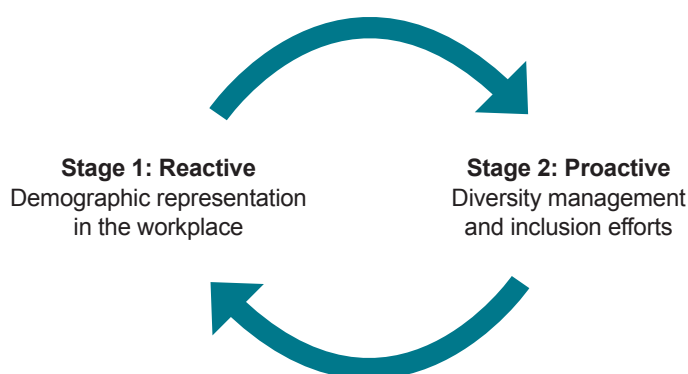
King and Baxter Magolda (2005) also proposed a developmental integrated maturity matrix for intercultural maturity based on Kegan's 1994 model of development. Their matrix uses three levels of developmental benchmarks: initial, intermediate and mature; across three development domains: cognitive, interpersonal and intrapersonal. The aim is to be able to assess how these different domains 'unfolds with time and experience' (King and Baxter Magolda, p586).

This temporal aspect of the process is starting to be assessed in other areas, with different effects in groups being examined (Srikanth et al, 2016). There is little research, however, that shows how this can be related to assess effectiveness across a process-based continuum.

## The diversity inclusion nexus

Diversity and inclusion are often represented as different but interrelated areas that overlap, however they are quite distinct from each other, and come from philosophically different spaces (Pless and Maak, 2004). Together they represent the two sides of the effective diversity and inclusion coin. In order to understand how they can be effective, it is important to define their complementarities and differences. For example, it is possible to have inclusion in an organisation without diversity, but it is not possible to have effective diversity without inclusion. In her editorial 'Inclusion is the Key to Diversity Management, but what is Inclusion?', Mor Barak (2015) discusses the growing recognition of inclusion in the workplace, especially for service organisations who need to have a diverse workforce and work with diverse communities.

Diversity and inclusion form two stages of an evolutionary process – the first stage being reactive, and the second stage proactive (Figure 4). Diversity is often described from the organisational (top-down) perspective, whereas inclusion is the personal perspective of individual's 'bottom-up' experience and response to diversity (Roberson, 2006).



**Figure 4:** A circular two-stage process of diversity and inclusion (Mor Barak, 2015, p86)

The initial phase is the representation of diverse people or physical representation of diversity in an organisation, which has also been referred to as 'surface diversity' (Singal, 2014; Mor Barak, 2015). The second is diversity management and inclusion, involving cognitive aspects that shape behaviour, which has also been referred to as 'deep diversity' (Singal, 2014; Mor Barak, 2015). The effective management of interactions across these two areas over time is a key determinant as to whether the benefits of diversity are realised.

'The concept of inclusion-exclusion in the workplace refers to the individual's sense of being a part of the organisational system in both the formal processes, such as access to information and decision-making channels, and the informal processes, such as "water cooler" and lunch meetings where information exchange and decisions informally take place' (Mor Barak, p84).

While visible/invisible and shallow/deep attributes are often used interchangeably, there are subtle differences between them worth highlighting. Classifications between papers are not consistent. The widely used classification of visible and invisible, separates obvious attributes like race, gender, age from hidden attributes such as educational status, values and beliefs (Cox Jr, 1994; Clair et al, 2005), so combines demographics, culture, experience and values/beliefs. Organisational diversity literature often separates shallow or surface level (e.g. gender, race and ethnicity, nationality, and age), and deep level (e.g. education, job tenure, cultural values) attributes (Casper et al, 2013; Mor Barak et al, 2016).



Harrison et al (1998) define surface attributes as being demographic, and deep as attitudinal. Dadfar and Gustavsson (1992) distinguish between shallow and deep culture by separating the observable aspect of culture such as customs, dress, arts and food from those not easily observable, such as values, beliefs and systems of thinking.

Both visible and invisible aspects of diversity can have positive and negative effects – especially the invisible – and require workplace and team structures at all levels to be assessed for informal rules affecting management and decision-making. This is similar in structure to institutional rules, which are both formal and informal, with stated and unstated rules. At this scale, institutional values may influence a sector-wide view on diversity. For example, the origin of many aspects of emergency services in civil defence and paramilitary structures might propagate unstated rules that discourage participation of those who do not ‘fit the team’.

Pless and Maak (2004) proposes a framework for inclusion based on the ‘founding principles of reciprocal understanding, standpoint plurality and mutual enabling, trust and integrity’ (p129), and outline the following phases for inclusive organisations:

- Raising awareness
- The development of a vision of inclusiveness
- The rethinking of key management concepts and principals
- Focus on the human relationship management systems that help implement change by translating inclusion principals into action via competencies and measurable behaviour, and fostering reinforcement, development, reinforcement and recognition of inclusive behaviour.

These key management concepts and principals are also reflected in other areas of the literature, such as Wheeler (2010), Cox Jr (1994), and Ely and Thomas (2001). They provide a pathway for the EMS to not only implement diversity more effectively, but to also address deeper organisational issues that impede performance.

## Characteristics and attributes of effective diversity and inclusion

The qualities and attributes of best practice in implementing diversity has been the focus of many studies, resulting in multiple lists of effective characteristics. For example, Kreitz (2008, p4) lists the following:

- **Top leadership commitment** – a vision of diversity demonstrated and communicated throughout an organisation by top-level management.
- **Diversity as part of an organisation’s strategic plan** – a diversity strategy and plan that are developed and aligned with the organisation’s strategic plan.
- **Diversity linked to performance** – the understanding that a more diverse and inclusive work environment can yield greater productivity and help improve individual and organisational performance.
- **Measurement** – a set of quantitative and qualitative measures of the impact of various aspects of an overall diversity program.
- **Accountability** – the means to ensure that leaders are responsible for diversity by linking their performance assessment and compensation to the progress of diversity initiatives.
- **Succession planning** – an ongoing, strategic process for identifying and developing a diverse pool of talent for an organisation’s potential future leaders.
- **Recruitment** – the process of attracting a supply of qualified, diverse applicants for employment.
- **Diversity training** – organisational efforts to inform and educate management and staff about diversity’s benefits to the organisation.

Characteristics and attributes are an important aspect of diversity, and can be found in individuals, groups, programs, organisations and institutions. They are often used interchangeably in the literature, and lack clear definition, making it difficult for practitioners implementing diversity to determine the different functions they fulfil in the diversity process.

Characteristics are ‘a feature or quality belonging typically to a person, place, or thing and serving to *identify* them’ (Oxford Online Dictionary). For example, as shown in the list above (Kreitz, 2008), top leadership commitment or diversity are characteristics. Attributes are ‘a quality or feature regarded as a characteristic or *inherent part* of someone or something’ (Oxford Online Dictionary); for example, cultural intelligence, transparency or honesty. They sit beneath these characteristics, and are often key determinants that support how characteristics are enacted to become effective. They are often expressed in terms of human values, and are the foundation upon which organisational culture, skills and competencies are built.

Characteristics are the more visible, whereas attributes are less visible and can be harder to identify as a result. This reinforces the notion discussed previously, of the visible and invisible aspects of diversity.

Pre-existing attributes may have positive or negative outcomes. As a result, EMS organisations will need to consider characteristics and attributes that currently exist in their organisations, and also identify what new characteristics and attributes are needed specifically for diversity to build competency and skills that support organisational capability. It is also important to understand what attributes and characteristics are able to be changed, and those which are not (Kramar, 1998).

Many of these attributes and characteristics have been articulated through a diversity lens, and those associated with inclusion have been less clearly articulated. Roberson (2006) undertook a study to 'untangle' these different characteristics of diversity using 42 'attributes', (although using our definition many of these would be considered characteristics). She found using qualitative data collected through 2,000 surveys, a number of shared 'attributes' that were found to be associated with both diversity and inclusion. She suggests that this cross-over may be the result of different managerial approaches to diversity, and how it has evolved into inclusion within individual organisations. She concludes that 'diversity is much more complex than is articulated in both practitioner and scholarly articles' (p234).

Individual attributes of employees, such as the authenticity, adaptability and openness, provide a basis for diversity skills development. Other individual attributes that are needed to support diversity include:

- Emotional intelligence – the ability to perceive and express emotion, assimilate emotion in thought, understand and reason with emotion, and regulate emotion in the self and others (Mayer et al, 2001, p396).
- Cultural intelligence – the ability to relate and work across different cultures (Earley, 2002).

## Values and diversity

Increasingly, values-based approaches are being applied by organisations in relation to change and performance management. This is because values are the basis of decision making, informing the beliefs that determine what is most important and what motivates action (Schwartz, 2012). Values-based approaches can provide a tangible pathway for bringing together 'multiple perspectives' (Hall and Davis, 2007) to achieve goals that are integral, and define elements of inclusion and the creation of a diverse culture. The Schwartz Theory of Basic Human Values is widely used by organisations to understand how to identify better ways to grow and manage talent. Schwartz builds upon previous work (such as Hofstede's cultural dimensions theory), and identifies ten motivationally-distinct values that have key motivators beneath them, and describes the interactions between them. The insight provided by values-based approaches can be used to both leverage differences and reduce conflict through informed negotiation.

The Public Interest Research Centres' (PIRC) 2014 report, Valuing Equality Values, used Schwartz, stating, 'Values play a key role in our concern about issues such as equality, diversity and human rights; they also influence our political, civic, and social behaviours' (PIRC, 2014).

The EMS has many organisational and institutional values that are already aligned with diversity. For example:

- Respect, integrity, courage, loyalty and trust (QFES)
- Integrity, respect, trust, responsive and innovative (Victoria SES)
- Professionalism, responsibility, accountability, teamwork, respect and care (Ambulance NSW)
- Safety, integrity, leadership, flexibility, respect support, professionalism (Victorian Police).

The importance of aligning individual human values with organisational ones was highlighted by O'Reilly et al (1991), who examined the 'person to organisation fit' on the basis of using 42 value-based competencies. They found, 'For an individual to be satisfied and attached to an organisation, the person may need both task competency and a value system congruent with the central values of the organisation' (p551).

Cennamo and Gardner (2008) used a values-based survey across three generational groups (generation x, y and baby boomers) to examine aspects of 'organisational fit', and found significant differences in the youngest groups who placed more importance on freedom and status work values. There was, however, no major differentiation between them in relation to 'extrinsic, intrinsic, social and altruism-related values, and there were no generation differences in perceived organisational values' (p902). The differences in the younger generation are important considerations for the EMS who need to build capacity to meet future needs.

## Summary

There is a vast array of literature in organisational diversity and evidence supporting both negative and positive outcomes, but little consensus as to how this relates to its effectiveness. Some of the reasons for this are:

1. Research is fragmented and, in many areas, emergent
2. Differing methodological approaches and models used for analysis
3. Different framings of diversity and definitions for aspects of diversity, and
4. The need for more systemic, contextual and temporal analysis of the process of implementing diversity.

Many reviews of effectiveness provide a snapshot of a particular aspect, which are of limited use for practitioners who need to deal with whole organisations. Partial vision may also create false measures of effectiveness, for example, organisations may not be considered effective if they are measured against those who have reached greater diversity maturity. Evaluation over time, however, can assess the effectiveness of specific programs or activities based upon their attributes, characteristics and level of maturity, and progress towards set goals.

Two themes where progress is being made are:

- Demographic diversity needs to be achieved as part of diversity management, but does not guarantee positive outcomes. Instances where positive outcomes for diverse workforces are achieved, are where they see efforts in diversity management at the organisational scale being made. Negative outcomes occur if those efforts are not made, even if the workforce is demographically diverse.
- Inclusion is a combination of accepting different groups according to demographic and cultural characteristics, plus the acceptance of individual (deep) attributes that cover values, knowledge and skill that provide an organisation with diversity. This means being inclusive of group characteristics based on demographics to the point where they do not matter, and inclusive of personal characteristics based on culture, values and experience where they do.

Taking these aspects into consideration we have developed the following definition for effective diversity: **effective diversity is the result of interactions between organisations and individuals that leverage, value and build upon characteristics and attributes within and beyond their organisations to increase diversity and inclusion, resulting in benefits that support joint personal and organisational objectives and goals, over a sustained period of time.**

## Innovation, change and diversity

Innovation is seen a key benefit of diversity, but it can also enable diversity. This is directly relevant to EMS organisations implementing diversity because of the social, environmental and technological changes are changing the communities they work with, and the nature of the risks they face. These present new workplace and service needs that are driving the need for innovation.

Innovation and change are deeply enmeshed in the process of implementing diversity and they are entrenched in the literature. There has, however, been very little consideration of their specific natures, how they interact with diversity management, and what this means in terms of implementation. There is also sparse referencing back to key parts of this literature. Change and innovation share common characteristics, in that they require transformational leadership, communication and organisational agility and flexibility. Change and innovation are highly dynamic, requiring knowledge sharing, organisational learning and the management of uncertainty and risk.

## Innovation

Innovation can be defined as the development of new values and ways of doing things through the development of solutions that meet emerging or existing needs (Rogers, 2010). For organisations, this can be achieved in different ways, such as the development of new products, processes, services, technologies, or ideas, which are taken up by markets, governments and society (Tardes, 1903). Innovation is a key component of change, as it is either responding to, or creating change, and has transformed how individuals, organisations and economies operate and think.

The most commonly understood type of innovation is market or business-related, which can change how a business or organisation operates, or how new market opportunities are created through product development. There are many different types of innovation; the most applicable to diversity being social, cultural, service-related and systemic (decision making) innovation.

## Social innovation

Social innovation is particularly relevant to the EMS, as it is primarily made up of public service organisations with a community focus. 'Innovative activities and services that are motivated by the goal of meeting a social need and that are predominantly developed and diffused through organisations whose primary purposes are social' (Mulgan et al, 2007, p8). It is proliferated through organisations whose motivation is social good rather than profit. Key aspects of social innovation are the empowerment of groups and 'changes social relations with regard to governance; enhances societal resilience and increases beneficiaries' socio-political capabilities and access to resources' (Caulier-Grice et al, 2012, p16).

## Service innovation

Service-oriented approaches to innovation are related to changing organisational process, and improving client outcomes rather than concentrating on technological innovation (Barras, 1986; Coombs and Miles, 2000). It is the 'individual and collective processes that relate to consumers', and 'emerges through an interactive learning process which is instigated by any involved parties' (Carlborg et al, 2014, p1). This has been referred to as 'reverse product cycle' (Barras, 1986), which focuses on the enablers the outcomes (such as relationships), that surround the innovation. It may also be triggered by a technological innovation. For example, the introduction of mobile phone has changed how messaging is undertaken in the EMS. Gallouj and Weinstein (1997, p2) observe that the 'fuzzy nature of their output, make it particularly difficult to measure them by the traditional economic methods (productivity) and to detect improvement or change (on the qualitative level).' This has particular ramifications for diversity in the EMS as a service-based industry, and appropriate measurements are needed to capture the benefits of innovation.

## Systemic innovation

Systemic innovation deals with scale and scope; for example, it 'is applied to a situation where an innovation system goes beyond the boundaries of a single organisation, and multiple innovations need to be coordinated' (Midgley and Lindhult, 2017, p2). It 'involves a complex interaction of public policy and reforms to legislation, changes to business and community cultures and practices, as well as shifts in consumer attitudes and behaviour' (Davies et al, 2013, p3).

Key elements include:

- new ideas, concepts and paradigms
- new laws and/or regulations across a broad area
- coalitions for change of many actors and/or across more than one sector or scale
- changed market metrics or measurement tools
- changed power relationships and new types of power structures
- widespread diffusion of technology and technology development (these can be social technologies as well as technological innovations)
- new skills or roles across many actors
- new institutions
- widespread changes in behaviour, structures and/or processes.

In terms of the EMS, systemic approaches to innovation and diversity may be needed in:

1. Areas where paid and volunteer workforce are to reflect the diversity within their communities, and
2. The role of the EMS in the areas of strategic planning, building community resilience and multiple hazard management.

## Adoption and diffusion

Adoption and diffusion are key aspects of all innovation, and refer to how an innovation is taken up and spread across society (Rogers, 2010). Adoption refers to the key stages that occur between when individuals learn about a new technology to when they adopt or take it up. Diffusion is seen from a group perspective, and refers to how grouped individuals spread this new innovation through society across time. Adoption is the uptake and use of innovation at an individual level. In his book *Diffusion of Innovations* (Rogers, 2010), Rogers defines five key stages for this: knowledge, persuasion, decision, implementation and confirmation. He also groups adopters into five categories: innovators, early adopters, early majority, late majority and laggards.

Communication and social networks are a central aspect of this model. He describes this as ‘the process through which an individual (or other decision-making unit) passes from first knowledge of an innovation, to forming an attitude toward the innovation, to a decision to adopt or reject, to implementation of the new idea, and to confirmation of this decision’ (Rogers, p163). Communication is central to this process. Rogers and Shoemaker (1971) place specific emphasis on the importance of cross-cultural perspectives and theory, and concepts from social psychology as a central aspect of this communication.

In terms of innovation related to diversity, there is little literature that pertains to how this should be measured as a benefit or specifically managed as an enabler. Arundel et al (1998), however, state that ‘many innovation activities are not directly measurable’ (p8), and highlight the need to include both tacit knowledge (e.g. knowledge that is revealed through practice and experience), and codified knowledge (knowledge that can be transferred to another for example, a written instruction of how to avoid flood waters). Exactly what type of measurements will be most applicable to the emergency services is still to be determined.

## Change

Change management is central to the effectiveness of diversity, and is the discipline that guides how organisations prepare, equip and support individuals to successfully adopt and adapt to change in order to drive organisational success and outcomes. Its key focus is the interactions between individuals, groups and leadership. There are numerous models in the literature which fall into three categories: ‘top down’, which is primarily used in profit-making organisations, ‘bottom up’, which is primarily used for cultural and social change, and a hybrid of these two, which is used for more systemic approaches to change management. Hofstede (1984) describes the process as one of ‘socio-technical activity’, which incorporates both ‘people (the human of ‘socio’ side), and the non-human resources (the technical side)’ (p81).

Cameron and Green (2012) identify four theoretical areas underpinning change models as:

- **Behavioural** – using rewards and punishment (Pavlov, 1928)
- **Cognitive** – emotions and problems are based on the way we think (Ellis Grieger, 1997; Argyris, 1976)
- **Psycho-dynamic** – understanding reactions experienced during the change process (Satir and Banmen, 1991; Worden, 2008; Kübler-Ross and Kessler, 2014)
- **Humanistic** – increasing resilience to managing change and life transitions through personal growth (Perls, 1976; Maslow and Lewis, 1987).

## Appreciative inquiry

Appreciative inquiry is a type of change management, where values are used to facilitate social change in communities and organisations through identifying and using the core values of organisations, communities and individuals to develop a foundation for enabling change through the development of collaborative narratives (Watkins and Mohr, 2001). These aspects are particularly important for diversity management, which in many cases requires changing long-standing attitudes and ways of working, which may be deeply connected to identity.

The HEAD (Higher Education Awareness for Diversity) wheel (Figure 5, overleaf) developed by Gaisch and Aichinger (2014), is designed to provide holistic diversity governance for higher education based on appreciative inquiry principals. It incorporates reflexive, shared and distributed governance, and frameworks of diversity management, starting with the individual and their diversity needs. Gaisch and Aichinger use different diversity segments, and aim to address both the cultural and the practical management of inclusion.

The Todnem By (2005) review of change management identifies different types of change. He categorises types of change as: discontinuous, incremental, bumpy incremental or continuous and bumpy continuous, and how change comes about as either planned, emergent, contingency or choice (p372–373). This is particularly relevant to diversity management, which needs to address both short- and long-term change processes.

There are different levels across which change manifests: self, the team or organisation, and the wider system that surrounds this, and learning needs to be facilitated on all levels for change to become self-sustaining. Argyris (1976) attributes the way people learn in organisations to how they think, rather than what they feel. He proposes double-looped learning as a methodology for changing underlying values and assumptions, which is important for issues such as diversity, where deeply held beliefs or ways of doing things may be a barrier, and create defensive responses that impede problem solving.

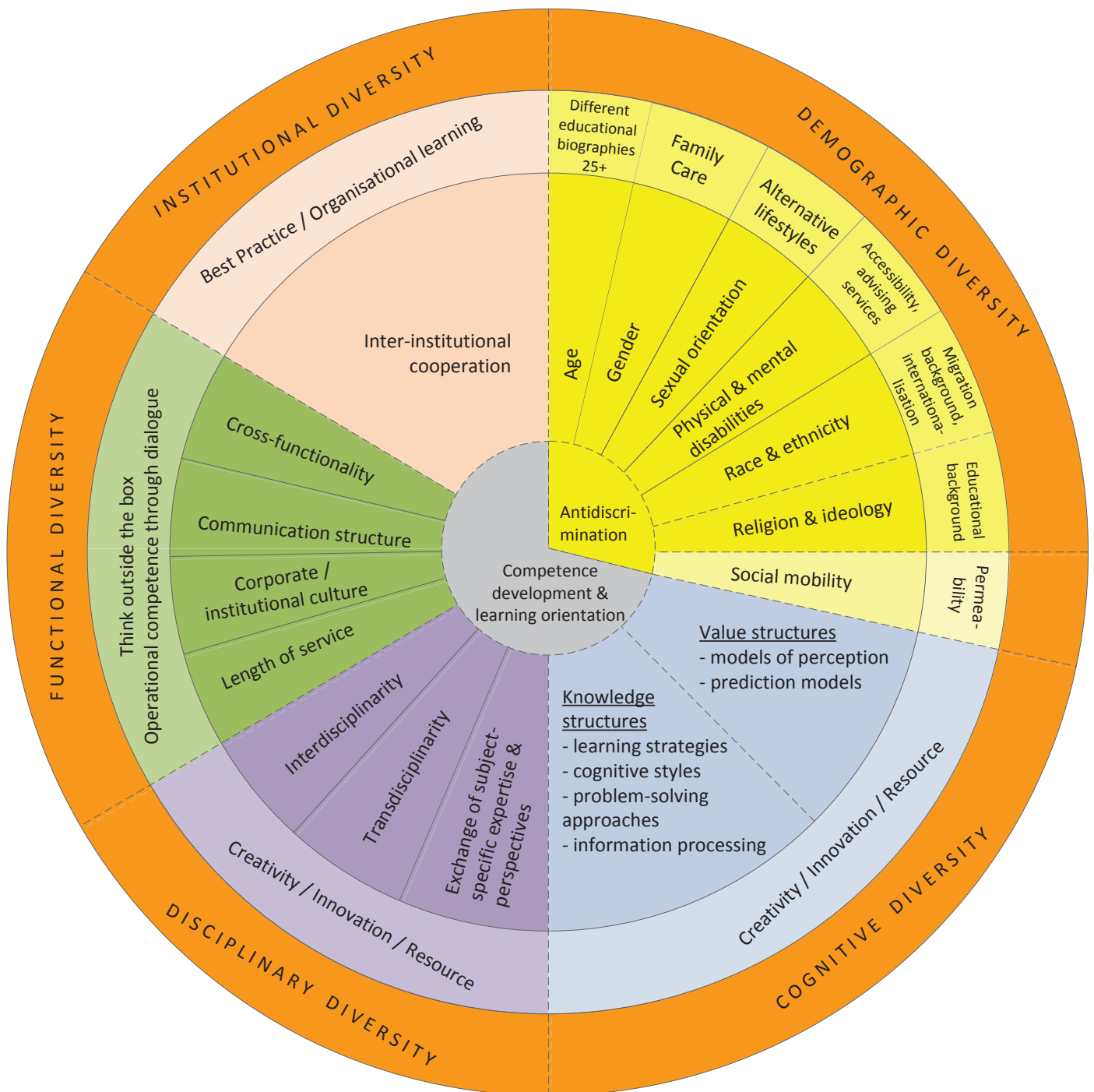


Figure 5: HEAD Wheel (Gaisch and Aichinger, 2016)

## Organisational culture

Organisational cultures provide the basis for and shape the environment in which diversity and inclusion is undertaken. Culture often manifests through values, rituals, heroes and symbols that shape practice (Hofstede, 2010). 'Organisational culture focuses on the beliefs, values and meanings used by member of an organisation to grasp how an organisation's uniqueness originates and evolves and operates' (Shultz, 2015, p5). Individuals within an organisation respond and interact to organisational structures, and functions surrounding them create the organisational culture. Martin (2001) advocates a three-perspective view of organisational culture – integrated, differentiated and fragmented – (p152), and suggests that organisations may contain more than one type of culture. Harrison (1975) proposes that there are four main types of organisational culture, which he defines as: power, role definition, task/achievement and person/support.

Organisations have both a 'surface culture', which is visible and is made up of formal rules, doctrine, dress code and organisational values and hidden elements, or 'deep culture', which is made up of 'values, beliefs and ways of thinking' (Dadfar and Gustavsson, 1992, p84).

Ascertaining what the existing organisational culture is, and what organisational culture is desired, is critical to determining what types of change may be needed and why.

As the EMS has a very deep and ingrained culture in some organisations, how change is enacted is likely to vary, and will also be shaped by factors such as organisational size and resource availability. Pfeffer (1985) suggests that the size of the organisation is also important, as it relates positively to the maturity of personnel systems.

## Failure of change management programs

Change is not straightforward, and there is body of research that discusses the high level of failure of change programs. Todnem By (2005, p2) attributes this failure to a number of factors:

- A wide range of contradictory and confusing theories and approaches (Burnes, 2004)
- Mostly personal and superficial analyses have been published in the area of change management (Guimaraes and Armstrong, 1998)
- The majority of existing practice and theory are mostly supported by unchallenged assumptions about the nature of contemporary organisational change management (Doyle and Stern, 2006).

Beer and Nohiar (2000, p88) also reinforce this by stating:

‘The reason for most of these failures is in their rush to change their organisations, managers end up immersing themselves in an alphabet soup of initiatives. They lose focus and become mesmerised by all the advice available in print and on-line about why companies should change, what they should try to accomplish, and how they should do it. This proliferation of recommendations often leads to muddle when change is attempted.’

Failure could also be attributable to organisations’ failure to evaluate their readiness for change prior to undertaking change initiatives. Readiness for change is a key factor that will enable or present barriers to change (Armenakis et al, 1993). It is a priming phase that prepares the ground for the uptake of change management initiatives. Evaluation in this area ‘enables leaders and others in their organisations to identify gaps that may exist between their own expectations about the change initiative’ (Holt, 2007, p223), so they can develop strategies and programs to proactively manage these. Holt suggests that readiness is assessed through evaluating:

1. the change process
2. the change content
3. the change context, and
4. individual attributes.

Mapping organisational and community values and attributes can also provide insight into potential areas of conflict or strengths so that they can be proactively managed.

## Diversity as a process of change

Managing diversity and inclusion requires a specific type of change process, which is long-term and systemic. As a result, diversity and inclusion dimensions that may interact with other organisational change processes, and systems need to be mapped and understood.

The Hofstede (1984) model distinguishes cultures according to the following five different dimensions:

- Power distance
- Individualism/collectivism
- Masculinity/femininity
- Uncertainty avoidance
- Long-term orientation.

Hofstede’s model provides a starting point for understanding varying cultural responses that can impact the employer/employee relationship during the change process. Harrison (1975) measures organisational ideology using four areas as a basis for assessment: power, role, task and self, and was one of the earliest models of typing. A key challenge for effective change is how to balance the need for goals, which are visible such as increasing quotas of minority groups in a way that does not create tokenistic behaviours, and outcomes that do not change underlying cultures of organisations. There is also a need to consider how to manage both task and relationship conflicts and bias (Jehn, 1995; Williams and O’Reilly III, 1998), that may arise in groups as they change structure and dynamics.

Williams and O'Reilly III (1998, p105) also list particular gendered responses found in relation to changing group dynamics:

- Higher levels of gender stereo typing in males dominated groups (Guttek, 1992)
- Hostility towards women in predominantly male organisations, but that women were less likely to isolate men when they were in the minority (Fairhurst and Snaveley, 1983)
- Women were less well integrated into male dominated groups (Kanter, 1997; Brass, 1985; Ibarra, 1992)
- When in the minority, men can be less satisfied and have 'more negative outcomes psychologically.' (Wharton and Baron, 1987; Tsui et al, 1992)

These findings, however, were not consistent across all studies, and Williams and O'Reilly (1998) suggest that further and more detailed research is needed in this area, and the composition of the groups is important to determining effect. In relation to the EMS, there is a need to understand the basis of these types of behaviours so that they can be proactively managed.

Ultimately, cultural change of any kind 'requires the willingness and desire to reassess existing value systems, mindsets and habits, to change ingrained ways of thinking, behaving and interacting, to probe and rethink seldom-questioned basic assumptions and to follow new paths' (Pless and Maak, 2004, p135).

## Diversity competencies

Another aspect in the priming phase is the identification of specific competencies and attributes needed to support activities as they provide the basis for skills development. Turnbull et al (2010, p3) suggest seven inclusion-based competencies across the different level of the organisations as a basis to build capability:

- Intra-personal – diversity sensitivity, integrity with difference
- Intra-personal – interacting with difference, valuing difference
- Group – team inclusion, managing conflict over difference
- Organisation – embedding diversity.

For further discussion on competencies, see Section 2.

## Measurement of change

How change is measured is often dependent upon the change model that is being used, and the organisation that is undertaking it. One measurement tool being used to measure change by organisations is Kaplan and Norton's (2005) 'balanced score card', which comprises three sets of operational measures:

1. customer satisfaction
2. internal processes, and
3. the organisation's ability to learn and improve the activities that drive future financial performance.

Ongoing change can also be measured through operational systems, such as quality assurance and business improvement. In the case of diversity, as it is a human resource, specific monitoring and evaluation is needed to document change and respond to this in areas such as staff behaviours, staffing attraction and retention, training, career pathways, communication and flexibility in working arrangements.

## Summary

It is important for organisations implementing diversity to understand and differentiate between these areas of theory and practice to understand how and where they intersect. It is also important to consider the strategic nature of the diversity implementation process, and the need for transitional changes to achieve longer-term change, as this will shape effective diversity evaluation and reported outcomes. For example, negative outcomes such as resistance and conflict, may be reported as ineffective diversity if they are assessed against more mature organisations. If they are assessed with an understanding of the stages of a change process, however, they may be reported as a relevant response to a particular part of a change or innovation process.

Although the diversity literature often refers to change and innovation, it often lacks key references from these areas that can be used to inform practice. Although there is a large body of literature that pertains to organisational change, its application to diversity management requires further research.



## Towards a process-based measurement tool for effective diversity

‘Organisations vary both in the degree to which they define diversity as valuable and in the amount of change they engage in to support workplace diversity. To be successful, organisations must set implementation parameters by asking themselves three questions: “[Why] do we want diversity? If so, what kind? If so, how much?” (Krietz, 2008, p102).

Ascertaining what is effective and how you might measure this in EMS organisations requires conscious decision-making processes for each organisation undertaking diversity initiatives. Criteria for measurement are determined by:

1. the objectives and the scope of diversity activities
2. the desired outcomes of these, and
3. the specific context of the organisation undertaking the activities.

There is an array of measurement methods and tools described in the literature, which illustrate the complexity of this task and the context-specific nature of the implementation. As each context and the systems that surround it has its own characteristics and attributes, it is also clear that the management and measurement of this need to be salient and tailored to each organisational context.

Until recently, most diversity reporting and research has related to establishing the state of diversity within EMS organisations, with a particular focus on the fire services. There has been little evaluation to date of the effectiveness of individual programs, and most evidence relating to this has been anecdotal or ad hoc. Until recently most diversity reporting and research has related to establishing the state of diversity within EMS organisations with a particular focus on women in the fire services. There has been little evaluation to date of the effectiveness of individual programs, and most evidence relating to this has been anecdotal or ad hoc. There are also challenges in relation to expectations of performance and what aspects of diversity should be measured (Radin, 2006), and in the case of EMS, how these can be measured.

Effective diversity and inclusion is a long-term proposition, and many of the benefits are not likely to be immediate and require strategic management. There is also a need to more fully explore the interactions between the different actors and components that are part of the EMS system so that organisations can determine what sort of diversity actions are likely to be suitable and achievable for their organisations. The hierarchical culture in many areas of the EMS also presents a particular challenge to diversity, which needs flexibility and agility, and transformational leadership at all levels of an organisation to succeed.

The following areas have been selected for further investigation to support the development of a practitioner-based framework for EMS:

- Diversity and organisational attributes and characteristics
- Phases of the implementation of diversity process: priming, implementation, evaluation, adjustment
- Actors and interactions: individual, group, organisation, networks, communities and institutions
- Tasks related to creating, managing, valuing and leveraging
- Temporal and strategic aspects of the implementation of the process diversity and programs: long-term, medium-term, and short-term. Short and long-term aims, goals and outcome
- The key components of the broader diversity system for EMS organisations; community, government, organisations
- Cost/investment: fiscal, organisational resources, human resource
- Benefits: tangible (monetary gain or saving) and intangible (wellbeing, reputational), effectiveness of service, innovation (service, technological, social)
- Organisational maturity measurement in relation to the activities above
- The development and integration of diversity measurements into human resources, quality assurance and or business improvement and budgetary reporting processes.

## Conclusion

There is currently little consistency in research as to how effective diversity and inclusion are in providing benefits. This does not mean, however, that diversity has not been effective for specific organisations, and that diversity does not provide positive benefits. It points to specific issues regarding the research to date, and the need for more empirically-based research that addresses diversity holistically, and meets on-ground needs of diversity practitioners. It also points to a broader issue of a disconnect between theory and practice, and the lack of clear understanding of how the value proposition for diversity is to be realised. The key question for practitioners at this point is not whether positive benefits are obtained, but how they are achieved.

By defining effective diversity as, **the result of interactions between organisations and individuals that leverage, value and build upon characteristics and attributes within and beyond their organisations to increase diversity and inclusion, resulting in benefits that support joint personal and organisational objectives and goals, over a sustained period of time**, we provide a starting point for developing a framework for EMS practitioners. In terms of the EMS, it requires a custom-built model that is developed through consideration of salient measures of the process of implementing diversity and the benefits derived from this, the context of EMS organisations, and the systems in which these exist. Consideration of the particular characteristics and attributes of EMS organisations and where change is possible is also important as this provides the foundation for building future skills and capabilities that support diversity. The long term nature of implementation and realisation of many benefits also require careful management of expectations of what can be achieved and when it might be achieved.

Ultimately, the key aim of effective diversity is the development of inclusive cultures that embrace and manage difference well. It requires long-term commitment to changing both individual and group behaviour, and organisational and institutional structures. It also requires proactive 'top-down bottom-up' management that addresses underlying issues that are not always visible, and engagement and learning from the 'head to the toes' of organisations. Ongoing measurement of the interactions between individuals and groups and the broader system of external stakeholders, and the outcomes and benefits that result from this are critical.

Diversity and inclusion go to the heart of how both EMS organisations and communities see and define what they do and their identities, and has a central role in the building of resilience. Reimagining and renegotiating the emergency services' identity, and the role both they and the community fulfil, is a key part of this process. Although there are challenges for the EMS, there are also many attributes and strengths within these organisations that can provide a foundation on which to build. What is clear in terms of effective diversity and inclusion, it is not how much diversity an organisation has, but the quality of the organisational culture that is created through the diversity implementation process, which determines whether the benefits are fully realised.

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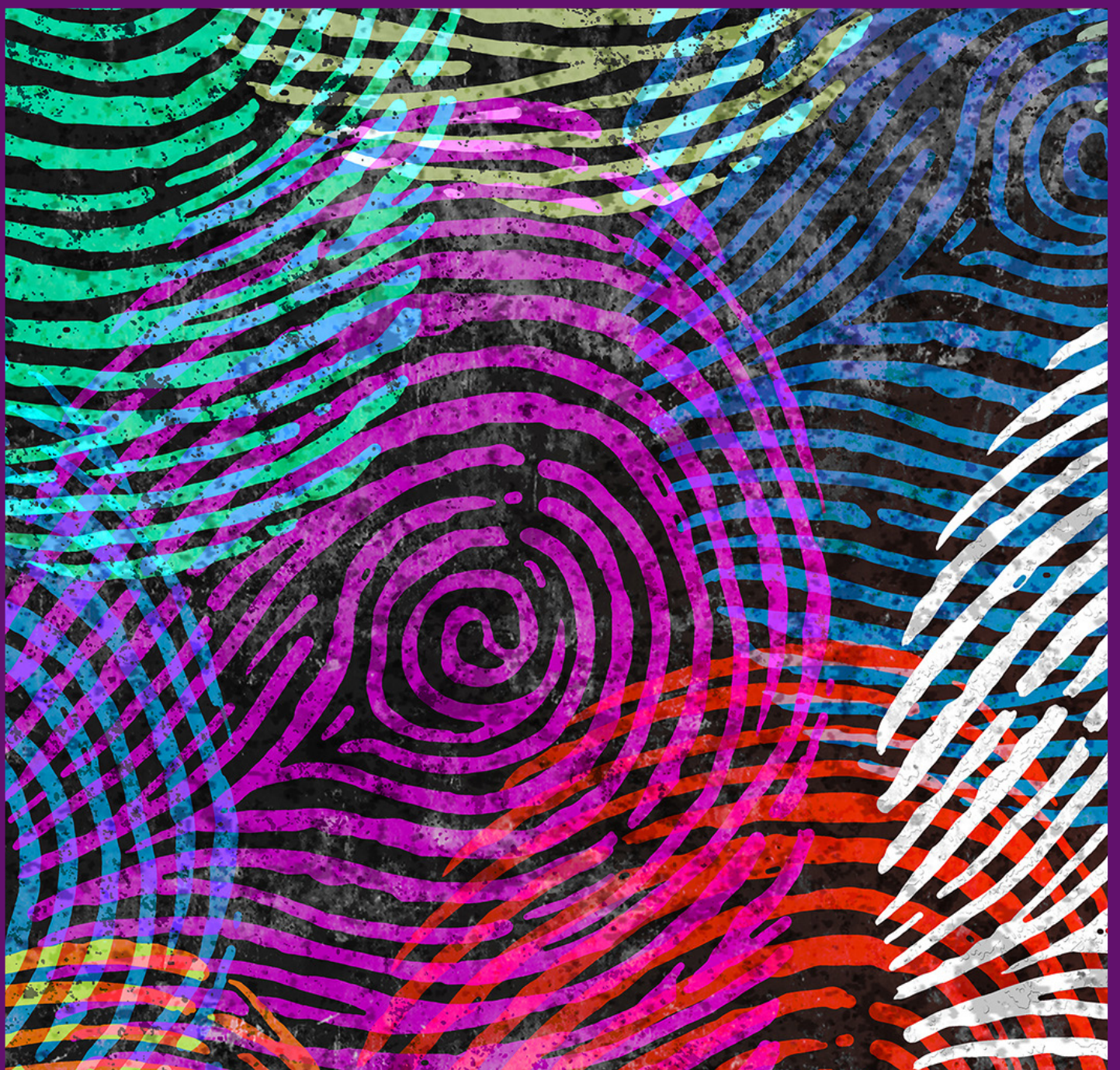
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## **Section 2: The economics of diversity and emergency management sector workforce capability**

Neelam Maharaj and Bruce Rasmussen



## Introduction

Emergency management in Australia is based on the concept of prevention of, preparedness for, response to and recovery (PPRR) from disasters. Various factors, primarily climate change have contributed to the increasing frequency and scales of disasters, such as bush fires, storms and flooding. This increasing intensity of disasters have motivated governments to place more emphasis on prevention and support recovery rather than just responding to disasters. This in turn requires governments to develop action-based resilience planning by strengthening local capacity and capability, with greater emphasis on community engagement and a better understanding of 'the diversity, needs, strengths and vulnerabilities of communities' (National Emergency Management Committee, 2011). As such, the role of emergency service providers has changed from being primarily responders to now being more active in prevention and recovery and developing closer ties with the communities that they serve. The character and functioning of communities have also changed, with there being a greater cultural diversity and significant changes in immigration and settlement patterns. In addition, there is sustained and dynamic advocacy for the social and economic inclusion of groups that have been traditionally marginalised from equal workforce participation. Women, people with disabilities, LGBTIQ+ communities, ATSI and ethnic communities each have agendas for addressing systemic discrimination and bringing about social change

At the same time, the work environment has changed on several fronts: the workforce, the workplace and work itself (Ryan and Wessel, 2015; Cartwright, 2003), due to changes in demography, skill levels (due to changes in technology) and the workplace itself.

To accommodate and deal with these changes the Emergency Management Sector (EMS) needs to itself become more diverse to communicate effectively with the communities that it serves and cope with the changes in the work environment. However, the impacts of workforce diversity are not easily ascertained. There are both costs and benefits of diversity in the workforce.

It is the aim of this literature review to identify the evidence for costs and benefits of diversity in the emergency management sector by considering the changing roles of service providers and the costs of not embracing diversity.

The impacts of workplace diversity on an organisation is in a large part due to how well the organisation manages it. Having a diverse workforce, but failing to manage it effectively could be counterproductive (Sabharwal, 2014; Hur, 2013). Diversity management effectively involves a process of managing 'inclusion' rather than a process of assimilating different groups to a dominant organisational structure (Kramar 1998). Assimilation or differentiation practices in organisations are not as effective as practices that acknowledge differences among people and recognise the value in those differences (Thomas and Ely, 1998). Diversity management in these organisations internalizes the differences among its employees so that it learns and grows because of them – where employees are on the same team with their differences rather than **despite** them (Thomas and Ely, 1996).

Alcazar et al (2013) argue that effective management of workforce diversity requires a holistic transformation of HR strategies.

Diversity management practices (Alcazar et al, 2013) include:

- equality
- flexible working times
- work-family balance
- participative performance assessment
- intercultural training
- flexible compensation.

This review is organised so that it considers the factors that are driving change in the EM services:

- Changing work environment
- National Strategy for Disaster Resilience, but also taking account of:
  - > Vulnerabilities of communities
  - > Approaches such as asset base community development
  - > Resilience systems analysis
- The Victorian Emergency Management Services.

Then it considers various aspects of workplace diversity including:

- Definition of workplace diversity
- The case for workplace diversity
- The impact of workplace diversity
- Measurement of workplace diversity
- The correlation between diversity and productivity, and
- The conclusions drawn from the discussion on costs and benefits of diversity.

The review then considers organisational capability and in particular:

- Workplace diversity management
- Inclusion
- Flexibility.

The review concludes with an economic profile of Australia's EMS.

## The changing work environment

Overall, the work environment has been undergoing changes on several fronts: the workforce; the workplace and work itself (Ryan and Wessel, 2015; Cartwright, 2003). Karoly and Panis (2004) explain that the workforce is changing with the changes in demography (higher participation by women, the elderly and immigrants) and in skill levels (with the increases in knowledge-based industries such as biotechnology, and emerging technologies such as nanotechnology). Also, with the changes in technology, rapid communications and information transmission, people are increasingly working remotely and thus changing the workplace itself. The rise in international trade of goods and services has resulted in a global consumer base (Karoly and Panis, 2004). The internationalisation of both low and high-skilled jobs has resulted in a cross-cultural workforce and there are indications that the workforce will continue to globalise (Ryan and Wessel, 2015, p163). In the area of the EMS there have also been significant changes.

## National Strategy for Disaster Resilience

Australia's National Strategy for Disaster Resilience (NEMC, 2011) states that in the past 'standard emergency management planning emphasised the documentation of roles, responsibilities and procedures. Increasingly, these plans consider arrangements for prevention, mitigation, preparedness and recovery, as well as response.' As such, the role of emergency service providers has changed from being primarily responders to now being more active in prevention and recovery.

The Strategy suggests that in emergency planning arrangements the focus needs to be more on 'action-based resilience planning to strengthen local capacity and capability, with greater emphasis on community engagement and a better understanding of the diversity, needs, strengths and vulnerabilities within communities' (p2). It further states that there is a need for a 'new focus on shared responsibility'. In turn, the Strategy calls for communities, individuals and households to take greater responsibility for their own safety and act on information, advice and other cues provided before, during and after a disaster.

The stated role of employees in the EMS has changed with the changed focus of the services it provides. To quote a senior Greater Manchester fire officer 'The job of a fire fighter nowadays has changed from not just putting out fires ... to almost being a semi social worker' (Cross, 2014).

## Vulnerabilities

The Productivity Commission (2016) detail the many factors that increase the vulnerability of communities to emergency events. The Report quotes COAG (2009) that suggested that work-life patterns, lifestyle expectations, demographic changes, domestic migration, and community fragmentation have increased community susceptibility and demand for emergency management services. Within communities (ppD11 and 12) factors that can influence vulnerabilities include:

- Socio-economic status – with the fire death and injury rates in Australia's most disadvantaged (as defined by the Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas [SEIFA], 2001), was 3.6 times that of the least disadvantaged (Dawson and Morris, 2008)
- English as a second language – with CALD communities in WA found to be more vulnerable to fire events (FESA, 2010)
- Remoteness and population density – with population growth increasing in these areas, which are also more susceptible to emergency events (Victorian Bushfires Royal Commission, 2010)
- Ageing populations – who require greater assistance in preparing for emergencies, and
- Population mobility and access to services.

The profile of the Emergency management services workforce needs to reflect the ability to address the needs of the segments of the communities mentioned above.

Community-based approaches are generally underpinned by approaches such as asset-based community development (ABCD) and appreciative inquiry.

## Asset-based community development

Asset-based community development (ABCD) focuses on community assets and strengths rather than problems and needs; it identifies and mobilises individual and community assets, skills and passions; is community driven (according to Kretzman and McKnight (1993), building communities from inside out; and is relationship driven (Stuart, 2013). Approaches such as ABCD emphasise formal asset mapping (e.g. capacity inventories), which helps in bringing people together to recognise their strengths and resources. The role of a professional then is that of a facilitator, rather than an expert, who emphasises the importance of local knowledge, culture, resources, skills and processes (Stuart, 2013). Hence, the EM service provider needs the skills to connect with the community that he/she is helping build its resilience.

## Resilience systems analysis

The OECD (2014) has developed a step-by-step approach to resilience systems analysis which builds on traditional risk management approaches, and assists in preparing for and facilitating analysis to help design a roadmap to boost the resilience of communities and societies. By focussing on the system and not the risk, their approach aims to strengthen the system that people use to support their all-round wellbeing, no matter what risks they face, building on existing capacities (p2). However, the OECD also states that the quality of the resilience system analysis is only as good as ‘the diversity and expertise of both the facilitation team, and of the participants, the quality and availability of relevant data and the quality of the underlying contextual or risk analysis’ (p3).

## The Victorian Emergency Management Sector

Emergency Management Victoria (EMV) has also released a *Community-based Emergency Management Overview* (2016a) to help ‘support people to participate in building safer and more resilient communities and organisations to connect and support each other before, during and after emergencies’ (p4). ‘Community’ is thought to be central to bushfire preparedness in Australia. Fairbrother et al (2013) find that social participation and social networks are likely to be the crucial aspects of community that play a central role in effective bushfire preparedness.

Diversity management, now in most government departments, is underpinned by Commonwealth and State anti-discrimination laws: the *Multicultural Victoria Act 2011*, the *Disability Act 2006*, the *Public Administration Act 2004*, and the *Education and Training Reform Act 2006*. It includes whole of government diversity requirements such as Cultural and Linguistic Diversity (CALD) planning, the Disability Action Plan and the Department of Treasury and Finance (2015) Aboriginal Inclusion and Employment Action Plan. The *Equal Opportunity Act 2010*, in particular seeks to provide equal opportunities and prevent discrimination in Victoria.

Victoria’s *Emergency Management Diversity and Inclusion Framework* (EMV, 2016b) emphasises the unique role of the EMS in the community, as it holds the trust of the community, and its staff and volunteers are in and of the community. Hence, ‘how it works – its culture, profile, leadership, decision-making, systems and processes – and how it connects with the community has a direct impact on the community’s safety and resilience’ (p4). The framework seeks to:

- embrace diversity and driving inclusion in the sector, and
- connect with Victoria’s diverse communities.

# Workplace diversity

## Definition

Workplace diversity encompasses diversity in a variety of areas including gender, cultural identity, linguistic background, levels of disability, age, personality, cognitive style, tenure, organisational function, or educational achievement. Diversity has also been understood to exist at two levels (Singal, 2014): surface and deep. Singal (2014) cites authors who have described surface-level diversity to have the primary dimensions such as gender, race, age, sexual orientation, while the secondary dimensions include education, marital status, work experience and functional background (Mok, 2002; Van Knippenberg and Dijksterhuis, 2000). Deep level diversity refers to cognitive diversity that is not readily apparent and hence not easy to measure (McMahon, 2011; Singal, 2014, p11). Hence, to undertake an analysis of diversity management, it is prudent to consider the time-invariant primary dimensions, and the manner in which an organisation manages diversity in relation to issues such as employment, promotion, work-benefits, and contracting practices.

## The case for workplace diversity

Emergency services have traditionally been male dominated and recruited mainly from Anglo-Celtic backgrounds.

In the foreword to Smiley (2010), Sir Graham Meldrum, former UK Chief Inspector of Fire Services, argues that lives could be saved by prevention as well as intervention through 'community fire safety' and:

'... to deliver community fire safety in an effective manner, the Fire Service has to become part of the community. People living in a multicultural community would regard it as odd if one of the services in their area was dominated by white males only. They would regard this with some suspicion and such a service would find it difficult to communicate with the people they served.'

The report suggests that the public sector in the UK has introduced a number of reforms, that placed an emphasis on equality and diversity, representation of women, and black and minority ethnic (BME) groups in public sector workplaces (p7).

The Fairbrother et al report *Effective Communication: Communities and Bushfire* (2014) noted that 'the task for communications practitioners working within bushfire agencies may be even more difficult given the quasi-military history and "command and control" style of operations of many bushfire-fighting organisations in Australia. This history and organisational set-up could, at times, impede current attempts at community engagement' (p73). It further suggests that the most common strategy for addressing CALD groups has been the translation of bushfire preparedness and safety materials, 'but this is a relatively superficial strategy and is unlikely to engage non-dominant cultural groups effectively' (Fairbrother et al, 2014, p73).

Overall, Kapila et al (2016) presented four key arguments to make the case for diversity, equity and inclusion:

- The moral or social justice case which asserts that each person has value to contribute, and we must address barriers and historical factors that have led to unfair conditions for marginalised populations – the moral perspective entails that societies should be diverse, inclusive, and equitable.
- The economic case is based on the idea that organisations and countries that tap into diverse talent pools are stronger and more efficient, and economists see discrimination as economic inefficiency – a systematic misallocation of resources. The Centre for American Progress found that workplace discrimination based on race, gender or sexual orientation costs businesses an estimated \$64 billion annually, which includes the cost of losing and replacing workers who leave their jobs due to unfairness and discrimination.
- The market case argues that organisations will better serve their customers if they reflect the diversity of the market base – in the private sector, diversity is critical to market share and the bottom line; in the non-profit sector, clients are customers who want to see themselves represented in the organisations that serve them; and donors are also customers and organisations can benefit from the resources of different groups.
- The results case is that diverse teams lead to better outputs. Page (2008) uses mathematical modeling and case studies to show how diversity leads to increased productivity. His research found that diverse groups of problem solvers outperform the groups of the best individuals at solving problems. Diverse non-profit organisations, and the diversity of perspectives within them, will lead to better solutions to social problems.

The case for supporting diversity is also supported by laws that prevent discrimination (*Equal Opportunity Act 2010*). Discrimination has impacts in various ways. Paradies et al (2015) looked at the relationship between racism and health analysing data from 293 studies reported in 333 articles published between 1983 and 2013, mainly in the US. They analysed the data using random effects models and mean weighted effect sizes and found that racism was associated with poorer mental health, including depression, anxiety, psychological stress and various other outcomes (Trenerry et al, 2012; Pascoe and Richman, 2009; Williams and Mohammed, 2009). Trenerry et al (2012) also indicated that there is emerging evidence that discrimination is associated with factors known to increase heart disease and stroke and it has links to obesity and engagement in behaviours such as smoking, and substance and alcohol misuse.

## The impacts of diversity

The impact of diversity on an organisation's performance cannot be easily ascertained. Workforce diversity has been the subject of a great deal of research and despite an increasing number of studies, few consistent conclusions have yet to be reached about the outcomes of such diversity. Joshi and Roh (2009) reviewed studies on the direct effects of diversity on performance and concluded that 60% of studies were inconclusive, 20% were positive and 20% were negative.

Shore et al (2009) examined the different dimensions of diversity (race, gender, age, disability, sexual orientation, and national origin) to describe common themes across dimensions and to develop an integrative model of diversity. They concluded that: there are contextual elements both outside and inside an organisation that influence the prevalence and impact of diversity, which also can have positive, negative or neutral effects depending on the size of the organisation and the extent to which the workforce is diverse.

Singal (2014, p11) summarises the benefits of diversity to include:

1. Diversity enlarges the pool of potential applicants and suppliers that may result in a wider selection, higher quality and lower costs (Niederie et al, 2013)
2. It often energises individual performance and increases individual-firm identification, increasing productivity and job satisfaction, reducing voluntary turnover and the costs of new recruitment and training (Mckay et al, 2009)
3. Higher job satisfaction enhances the quality of interaction between customers and employees (Koys, 2001)
4. It provides access to new networks and increases the sources of information (Williams and O'Reilly, 1998)
5. Fosters creativity and innovation (Bantel and Jackson, 1989)
6. Better cultural similarity between service providers and customers improves consumer experience and satisfaction.

The costs associated with diversity summarised by Singal (2014) include:

- Costs of communication, coordination and conflict – conflict can arise as employees from diverse backgrounds have problems with communication (Ancona and Caldwell, 1992)
- Coordination and integration costs can be sometimes greater than the benefits of creativity (Parrotta et al, 2012)
- Significant costs associated with implementing diversity programs, Hansen (2003), estimated that organisations spend \$8 billion annually on diversity training, flexible work arrangements and special recruitment (Kochan et al, 2003).

Overall, Singal (2014) compared the role of diversity in Hospitality and Tourism (HT) firms with non-HT firms, and found that HT firms invest more in diversity management than non-HT firms, because as theorised (Richard et al, 2007) diversity matters more in service-related industries than other industries and that superior diversity performance affects financial performance.

O'Reilly et al (1999) examined the impact of relational demography on teamwork and ways to ensure diverse teams function effectively. They quote an earlier study (Williams and O'Reilly, 1998) which reviewed literature on diversity in organisations, that in spite of the strong social value placed on diversity, there was evidence that intact working groups may have dysfunctional effects on group process (e.g. communication, social integration) and performance (e.g. innovation, turnover). Williams and O'Reilly (1998) concluded that for individuals, increased diversity typically had negative effects on the ability of the group to function effectively over time (O'Reilly et al, 1999, pG1). O'Reilly et al (1998) found that diversity can have negative effects on reported teamwork – but these effects depend on the composition of the group, not simple demographic differences. Hence, they suggest that it is important that research clearly and accurately elucidate the impact of diversity and move away from simple demographic effects and sweeping generalisations about the effects of diversity to understanding how these differences arise and are experienced in specific contexts.

Trener et al (2012) detail the financial costs of discrimination (p17), some of which include:

- Reduce organisational productivity, commitment, trust, satisfaction and workplace moral, as well as increased cynicism, absenteeism and staff turnover (Blank et al, 2004; Buttner and Lowe, 2010; Soutphommasane et al, 2016)
- Responding to grievances through formal mechanisms is expensive – averaging \$55,000 per case in 1999 (EOC NSW, 1999)
- Considerable resources are required to deal with the consequences of race-based discrimination through health care and social services (VicHealth, 2007)
- Direct economic costs include unemployment, early school-leaving, poor educational outcomes and involvement in the criminal justice system (Dusseldorp Skills Forum and BCA, 2005)
- Increased skill shortages in the labour market due to under-employment and over-qualification for jobs as well as increased likelihood of migrants returning to their own home country (Kler, 2006; Wagner and Childs, 2006), and
- The capacity of Australia to attract and retain skilled transnational labour is reduced due to tarnished international reputation (Babacan et al, 2010).

The authors further suggest that since employment affords opportunities for social networking and participation in society, one of the consequences of unemployment attributable to race-based discrimination in the workforce can compromise an individual's social integration into Australian society, thus reducing social cohesion (Berman et al, 2008).

## Measurement of workplace diversity

The European Commission (2003) also looked at the costs and benefits of diversity and pointed out that 'effective, systematic measurement of the costs and benefits of workforce diversity policies is essential to sustain existing programmes and to build the business case for greater investment, especially for 'non-users' (p4). The EU (2003) have developed a proposed performance measurement framework, which has three important parts (pp11 and 12):

- (1) Programme implementation – here measures cover actions by companies to facilitate cultural change ('enablers') and to remove obstacles, such as indirect discrimination. Actions here are a combination of inputs and processes. This part of the measurement framework tends to measure activities and costs.
- (2) Diversity outcomes – these are the intermediate outcomes of the actions undertaken to implement a workforce diversity policy. As such, none of the outcomes in this part of the model generate business benefits, but they are a necessary step that must be passed through before such benefits can be realised. The use of intermediate outcome measures is an important mechanism for gauging progress, and is consistent with modern performance measures and existing measurement practices.
- (3) Business benefits – this part of the model captures the business impact of investment in a workforce diversity policy. The framework is based on the types of benefit companies seek from diversity. Short and medium improvements in business performance are measured in terms of operational outcomes, rather than overall business results. Improvements in intangible assets, in contrast, form part of more strategic measures.

## The correlation between diversity and productivity

Much of the work conducted by economists about the economic benefits of workforce diversity has been at the macroeconomic level, that is the impact of diversity on the overall level of wages, productivity and innovation. This literature offers strong evidence that richer diversity is associated with higher wages and productivity of the existing population (Ottaviano and Peri, 2005, 2006; Ottaviano et al, 2007; Manacorda et al, 2007; Nathan, 2011; Prarolo et al, 2009; Bellini et al, 2008, 2013; Cooke and Kemmeny, 2016). There are also further suggestions in the literature that these labour market impacts are due to the increases in innovation, entrepreneurship and trade.

Interestingly, Cooke and Kemmeny (2016) found that in cities with high levels of inclusive institutions, the benefits of diversity are positive, significant and substantial for both migrants and natives, with spillovers of all kinds; while those with anti-immigration ordinances have an adverse impact on natives. The improved productivity through diversity has been linked to improved labour market efficiency (Kemmeny, 2014; Borjas, 2001), and these productivity enhancing effects are large enough to contribute to overall urban growth (Ottaviano et al, 2007).

These macroeconomic impacts have been found to have parallels at the organisational level, where greater diversity, which is well managed and inclusive, can have benefits in the form of greater productivity, flexibility, creativity and innovation.

Cooke and Kemeny (2017) suggest that most empirical studies that find a correlation between diversity and productivity 'lie at some remove from the behavioural foundations that underlie hypothesized mechanisms' (p1175). They explore the idea that productivity benefits from workplace-specific diversity varies according to the kind of activities in which workers are engaged. They consider the two potential axis of differentiation in theory:

1. Benefits from diversity ought to be amplified in activities that are challenging, knowledge-intensive, innovation-orientated and lacking in pre-established routines, generally described as 'problem solving' (Hong and Page, 2001; Weber and Fujita, 2004).
2. Given that spillovers are generated through interpersonal interaction, workers involved in activities that require high level of both complex problem solving and social engagement should benefit from diversity surrounding them (Cooke and Kemeny, p1176).

They grouped workers according to the task characteristics of their industries, to predict how their wages respond to changes in the diversity in their cities or workplaces. They found a robustly positive, statistically significant and substantial relationship between urban immigrant diversity and wages among workers in industries that intensively demand complex problem solving, with wages of a typical worker, who requires high level of complex problem solving, rising by an average of nearly 7 per cent to one standard deviation increase in immigrant diversity. Workers, for whom complex problem solving was unimportant, they found no significant association between city diversity and wages.

The impacts of workplace diversity on an organisation is in a large part due to how well the organisation manages it. Having a diverse workforce, but failing to manage it effectively could be counterproductive (Sabharwal, 2014; Hur, 2013). Diversity management effectively involves a process of managing 'inclusion' rather than a process of assimilating different groups to a dominant organisational structure (Kramar, 1998). Assimilation or differentiation practices in organisations are not as effective as practices that acknowledge differences among people and recognise the value in those differences (Thomas and Ely, 1998). Diversity management in these organisations internalizes the differences among its employees so that it learns and grows because of them – where employees are on the same team **with** their differences rather than **despite** them (Thomas and Ely, 1996).

## The conclusions drawn from the discussion workplace diversity

Workplace diversity encompasses surface level diversity such as gender, cultural identity, educational achievement or deep level such as cognitive diversity (Singal, 2014), which need to be recognised in order to manage diversity in an organisation.

Kapila (2016) presents four arguments to make the case for workplace diversity:

- the moral or social justice, which rests notions of equity
- economic case which cites the efficiency of diverse talent pools and the high cost of workplace discrimination and cost of replacing workers
- the market case, which argues that organisations need to reflect their customer base, and
- the results case which argues diversity leads to better outputs due to increased productivity (Page, 2008).

It is also suggested that there are health impacts and hence costs of discrimination (Paradies et al, 2015).

Overall the benefits of diversity include:

- enlarged pool of potential workers, which leads to higher quality and reduced costs
- improved productivity and worker performance, reducing voluntary turnover and costs of new recruitment
- access to new networks and sources of innovation
- fosters creativity and innovation
- cultural similarity between customers and providers improves consumer satisfaction, and
- saving on significant costs of discrimination.

Diversity has better benefits in service-related industries.

Costs associated with diversity include:

- cost of communication, coordination and conflict
- integration costs, and
- costs of implementing diversity programs.

Cooke and Kemeny (2017) found that there is a correlation between diversity and productivity, but only among workers whose activities were based around problem solving. They found no association between workers engaged in routine tasks and productivity.

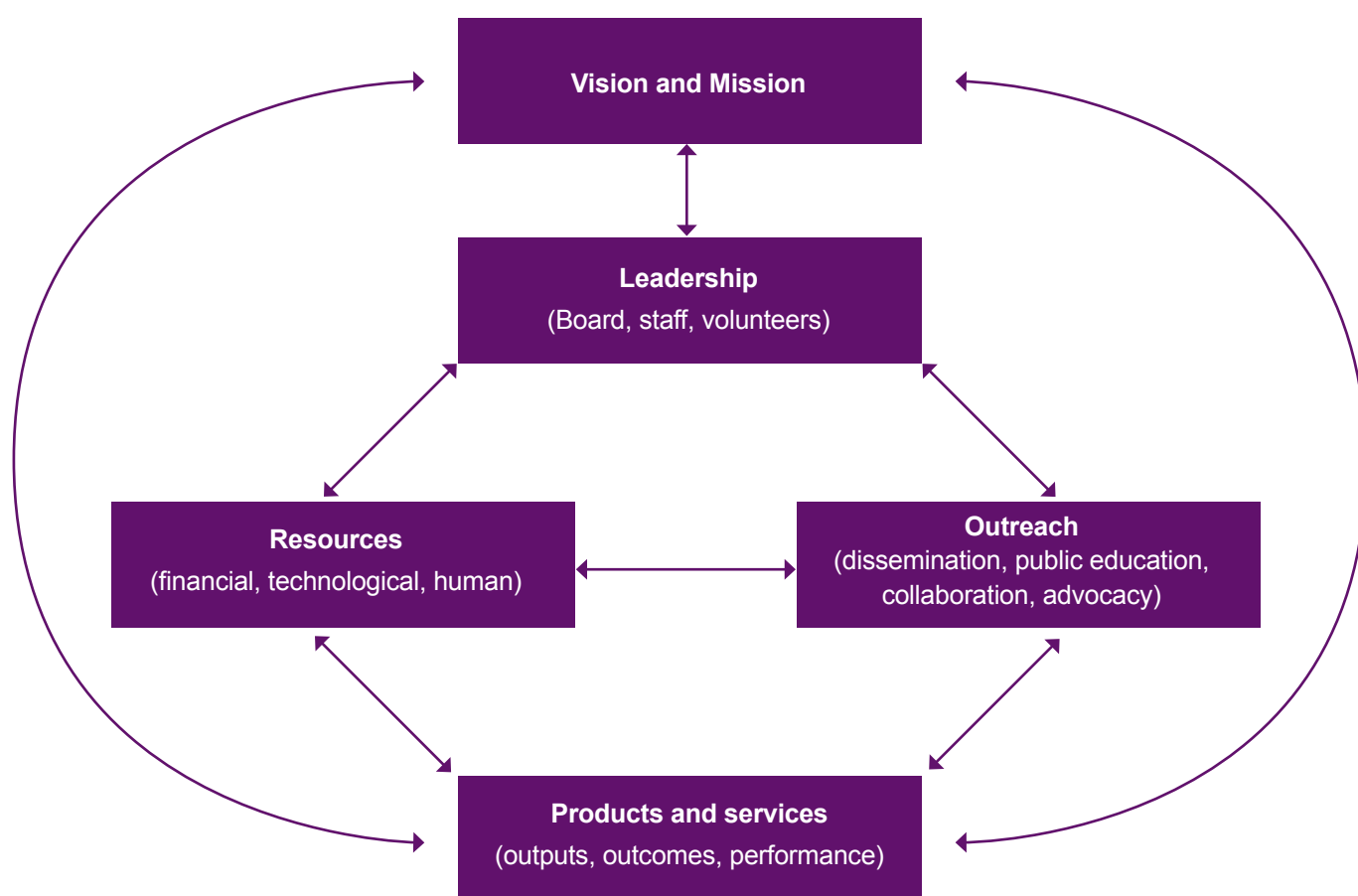
Overall, the benefits of workplace diversity can only be realised through effective diversity management, where the differences amongst the organisation's employees are internalised so that it learns and grows because of them – where employees are on the same team with their differences rather than despite them (Thomas and Ely, 1996).

## Organisational capability

How an organisation adapts to change and what kinds of learning and knowledge are necessary to cope with change depends on its organisational capability.

Di Vita et al (2001) suggest a framework for analysing and assessing potential pathways for addressing the capacity needs of an organisation, which consists of five components (see Figure 6) that are found in all organisations and intermediary structure: vision and mission, leadership, outreach and products and services (p16). As the direction of the arrows suggest all five factors are interrelated and mutually dependent on one another and each reinforces and bolsters the others. Each factor can be viewed as a possible intervention point for enhancing organisational capability.

The vision and mission of an organisation provides a basis for assessing its capacity and needs as they not only reflect the types of programs and services offered by the organisation, but also affect the other components of the capacity building model (De Vita et al, 2001, p16). These will help recruit and retain suitable leaders who in turn will set, maintain and influence the mission. The visions and mission are also articulated through its resources and share its outreach activities. De Vita et al state that 'conceptually, organizational outputs and outcomes are the product of the multiple and cumulative interactions of vision and mission, leadership, resources and outreach. These components work together to create effective outputs and outcomes' (p23).



**Figure 6:** A framework for addressing non-profit capacity building. Source: De Vita et al (2001, p17).



Organisational capability is the ability and capacity of an organisation expressed in terms of its:

1. Human resources: their number, quality, skills and experience
2. Physical and material resources: machines, land and buildings
3. Financial resources: money and credit
4. Information resources: pool of knowledge and databases
5. Intellectual resources: copyrights, designs, patents, etc. (WebFinance Inc, 2017).

Guthrie (2008) defines the resources available to organisations as:

- the 'tangible' – like their financial and physical resources
- the 'intangible' – like their reputation and culture
- the 'human' – that is, the leadership and management skills of their senior staff, as well as the specialised skills and knowledge of other staff and the way they all interact, communicate and share knowledge.

Organisational capability is recognised as a key to organisational success. The combination of human capital (peoples' skills and knowledge), social capital (relationships between people) and organisational capital (the organisation's processes), is central to building an organisation's capability (Guthrie, 2008)

Kramar (1998) suggest that the process of changing a culture to explicitly value differences, operates at 3 levels: strategic, managerial and operations. The strategic level is usually through its mission statements, the managerial level is through a critical audit of employees perceptions and compliance with the organisations core values; the operational level includes the development of diversity initiatives (Davies et al, 2016, p85).

The Queensland Fire and Emergency Services (QFES) (2017) provide a good example of how EMS organisations in Australia are articulating their organisational capability.

QFES (2017, p180) classified their organisational capabilities into the following categories:

- **Strategic** capabilities, (e.g. planning, communications and liaison, activities that enable performance and delivery of values that matter to stakeholders and the community)
- **Service** delivery capabilities, includes:
  - > **Prevention and preparedness**, (e.g. disaster management plan, training, community education, mitigation and risk reduction, etc.)
  - > **Response**, (e.g. communication, rescue, response)
  - > **Recovery**, (e.g. assessment, management, reconstruction, community care and rehabilitation)
- **Operational support** capabilities, (e.g. engineering, training delivery, research, logistics, etc.), activities that support delivery of PPRRS services
- **Business support** capabilities, (e.g. IR, HR services, culture and change management, legal and finance).

To address capability needs, QFES recognise that they need to develop:

- culture
- leadership
- developing critical talent
- service focused structure
- workforce capability.

The QFES, in specifying their capabilities and needs, exemplify the diagram above, where the leadership drive change through specifying the vision and values of the organisation (and vice versa), which then flows through to developing the critical talent and workforce capability.

## Workforce diversity management

How diversity is managed within a workplace has serious implications for the costs or benefits of diversity to the organisation. Having a diverse workforce, but failing to manage it effectively could be counterproductive (Sabharwal, 2014; Hur, 2013). Alcazar et al (2013) argue that effective management of workforce diversity requires a holistic transformation of HR strategies, For instance to increase the number of women in the workforce and to retain them, organisational cultures need to have changed (Hanappi-Egger, 2012). Effective diversity management involves a process of managing 'inclusion' rather than a process of assimilating different groups to a dominant organisational structure (Kramar, 1998). Assimilation or differentiation practices in organisations are not as effective as practices that acknowledge differences among people and recognise the value in those differences (Thomas and Ely, 1998). Diversity management in these organisations internalises the differences among its employees so that it learns and grows because of them – where employees are on the same team, with their differences rather than despise them (Thomas and Ely, 1996).

Thomas and Ely (1998) call this approach to diversity management as the learning an-and-effectiveness paradigm and it requires eight preconditions that are necessary to ensure it works. These are:

1. The leadership must understand that a diverse workforce will embody different perspectives and approaches to work, and must truly value variety of opinion and insight
2. The leadership must recognise both the learning opportunities and the challenges that the expression of different perspectives presents for an organisation
3. The organisational culture must create an expectation of high standards of performance from everyone
4. The organisational culture must stimulate personnel development
5. The organisational culture must encourage openness
6. The organisational culture must make workers feel valued
7. The organisation must have a well-articulated and widely understood mission
8. The organisation must have a relatively egalitarian, non-bureaucratic structure.

Steele and Derven (2015) recommend the following actions to foster an inclusive environment:

- **Advocate** – promoting inclusion and valuing diversity
- **Cultivate** – nurturing an ecosystem of inclusion, where diverse employees and their opinions, perspectives and ideas are invited, implemented and rewarded
- **Include** – leaders provide a visible, consistent role model and help teams to consciously address issues related to different styles of communication, cultural preferences and expected norms to promote full engagement of complementary skills and perspectives.

Derven's (2014) key findings relate to the importance of tailoring global diversity and inclusion strategies and programs to local needs; embedding practices throughout the organisation; multiplying impact through external partnerships and leveraging this as a source of innovation.

## Economic profile of Australia's Emergency Management Sector

Australia's EMS consists of fire, rescue and ambulance services. The Productivity Commission (PC, 2017) details that the total revenue for fire services (in 2015–16 dollars) had increased from \$3.6 billion in 2011–12 to \$3.8 billion in 2013–14, but had then moderated to \$3.6 billion the following year, before increasing again to \$3.7 billion in 2015–16. It also states that nationally there were 18,980 full-time equivalent paid personnel employed in fire service organisations, with the majority (76.3%) comprising paid firefighters. Another 226,509 people were volunteer firefighters in 2015–16.

The Productivity Commission (2017) has also developed performance indicators for the fire services sector. The outputs for prevention mitigation include: fire risk prevention/mitigation activities and confinement to room of origin.

For preparedness the outputs include: level of safe fire practices in the community and for sustainability: the size of the firefighter workforce. The outputs for response include response times to structure fires. The recovery outputs are yet to be developed. Fire services expenditure per person is the output for measuring efficiency.

The outcomes for the performance framework include:

- Fire death rate
- Fire injury rate
- Value of asset losses from the events.

Nationally, in 2015–16, fire service organisations attended 407 fire incidents per 100,000 people, a decrease from 490 fire incidents per 100,000 people in 2012–13 (PC, 2017, Table 9A.14).

Accidental residential structure fires per 100 000 households (an indicator for fire risk prevention/mitigation activities) was 81.9 per 100 000 households in 2015–16, and it has been gradually declining from 108.8 per 100 000 households in 2007–08 (PC 2017, Table 9A.15).

The firefighter workforce is an indicator of governments' objective to reduce the adverse effects of fire on the community and manage the risk. The PC (2016) defines the firefighter workforce by four measures:

- Number of full-time equivalent (FTE) personnel per 100,000 people
- By age group, measured by the proportion in 10 year age brackets
- A low or decreasing proportion in the lower age group and a high/or an increasing proportion who could be closer to retirement suggests sustainability problems, and
- Workforce attrition, calculated by number of FTE who exit as a proportion of number of FTE (PC 2016, p9, 13–16).

In 2015–16, there were 60.5 FTE paid firefighters employed by fire services organisations per 100,000 people, which represented a decrease from 63.5 in 2013–14. Around 63.8 per cent of the firefighter workforce were aged under 50 years and the staff attrition rate varied between jurisdictions (with no time series data on these two variables).

In 2015–16, there were 946.1 volunteers per 100,000 people, representing a decrease from 966.8 volunteer firefighters the previous year. The number of volunteer firefighters has decreased by 13.5 per cent over the last ten years. Another study (Ganewatta and Handmer, 2009) used two different methods for valuing time provided by volunteers to the emergency services: the 'global substitution' method, where an average wage rate is used to value all activities and the 'task specific substitution' method where each task is valued at its market wage rate. They estimated that the value of time given for community services, operational response, training and unit management (without standby time) averaged around \$52, \$19 and \$12 million a year in New South Wales, Victoria and South Australia respectively from 1994–95 to 2004–05. The time of volunteers including standby time was estimated to be more than \$86 million and \$41 million a year for NSW and Victoria respectively.

The PC recount the valuable role played by volunteers, particularly in rural and remote areas, by providing:

- response services
- community education, cadet schemes and national accredited training
- emergency event support and administrative roles, and
- community prevention, preparedness and recovery programs (pD9).

While the volunteers are not paid wages and salaries, there are some costs to governments who provide funds and support through infrastructure, training, uniforms, personal protective equipment, operational equipment and support for operating costs. There are also costs for employers of volunteers (particularly those self-employed), who incur costs such as in-kind contributions, lost wages and productivity, and provision of equipment (pD10).

The PC also outlines indicators such as response times, but as these are dependent on various factors such as geographic and demographic factors, they are not included here.

Efficiency of an organisation can be measured by expenditure per person. Nationally, in 2014–15 total expenditure of the fire services organisations was \$3.8 billion (in 2015–16 dollars) or \$160.3 per person in the population (PC, 2017, Table 9A.28). This had increased to \$4 billion or \$168 per person in the population in 2015–16 (PC, 2017, Table DA.3).

Annual death rates can be volatile due to the small number of fire deaths and the influence of large irregular events. To overcome this data volatility, fire death rates are presented as three-year averages, or longer time series. Nationally, in the three years from 1986–88 (PC, 2017, Table 9A.6), the average deaths per million people was 10.1, and in the most recent three-year period (2012–2014) the average per million people was 4.3 (PC, 2017, Table 9A.6).

Decreasing asset losses from fire events would represent better outcomes. However, data can vary due to issues such as under insurance, new for old policies and excess policies. The PC estimates that from 2010–11 to 2014–15, number of claims decreased from 10,837 to 9,630, domestic insurance claims increased for average claims (34.7 per cent increase) and in claims per person (a 12.3 per cent increase) (PC, 2016, p9.31). In 2015–16, household and commercial property insurance claims in relation to fire events (excluding major events) totalled \$806.1 million. Average domestic claims increased by 29.6 per cent in real terms from \$44 651 in 2011–12 to \$57 858 in 2015–16. Claims per person has a 26.9 per cent increase from \$20.06 per person in the population in 2011–12 to \$25.46 in 2015–16 (PC, 2017, p9.22). There were 2,132 commercial fire insurance claims from fire events in 2015–16 (PC, 2017, p9.22).

Deloitte Access Economics (2013) outlined the costs of natural disasters and found that investment in resilience measures would reduce the cost of disaster relief and recovery by more than 50% by 2050 (p9). Deloitte Access Economics (2016) examined the intangible costs of natural disasters and found that the total economic costs of natural disasters in Australia exceeded \$9 billion in 2015 (about 0.6% of GDP) and would rise to \$33 billion per year by 2050 unless steps were taken to increase resilience (p2).

## Conclusion

The PC has detailed indicators to demonstrate the efficiency of the emergency services. Indicators that measure the diversity of the organisation (for example, gender, ethnicity, qualifications), as well as indicators for monitoring organisational capability (such as inclusiveness, flexibility) combined with the PC's efficiency indicators would provide a more comprehensive picture of how well the emergency services sector is performing in servicing the communities that they serve and building the reliance of the nation.

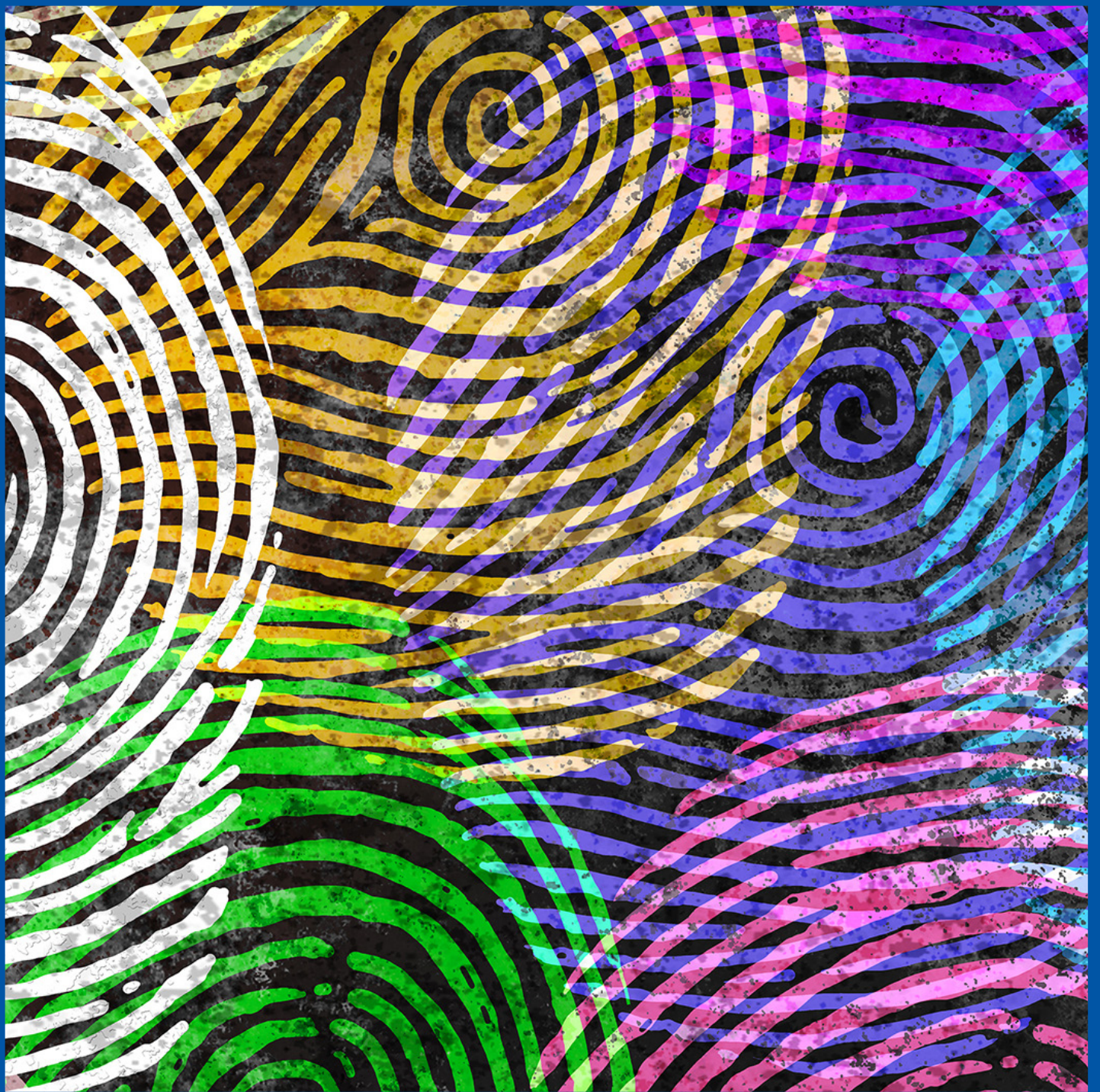
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## **Section 3: Diverse communities and social inclusion**

Joanne Pyke



## Introduction

The purpose of this section is to provide an overview of relevant literature relating to community diversity and inclusion as a component of the broader project – Diversity and Inclusion: Building Strength and Capability. The project is to be conducted over a three-year time frame with the broad aims to: identify what diversity in emergency services actually looks like; to articulate where it needs to progress; to work closely with Emergency Services personnel and community representatives; and to develop a framework and process designed to enhance diversity and capability.

The need for this project stems from recognition that emergency management services (EMS) have ‘unacceptably low levels of diversity’ and that there is a need for EMS organisations to better reflect the communities that they serve as well as to harness the skills, capabilities and resources that can be derived through the effective management and inclusion of diversity. This paper is one of three that will inform the larger project and is concerned with community diversity and social inclusion. The objectives are to identify:

- How the terms diversity, community and inclusion are mobilised in relation to communities
- The key themes in the academic literature in relation to community diversity and inclusion
- Broader demographic changes and developments that have implications for EMS planning, and
- The key debates in the literature in relation to the objectives of the broader study.

As a starting point, this review clarifies the use of the key terms of diversity, community and inclusion. Second, the report reviews and discusses key themes in the relevant international and academic literature relating to community diversity and inclusion through the literature on migration, women, people with disabilities and Indigenous people. The report then goes on to discuss how notions of community inclusion strategies have been applied by EMS. The review concludes by summarising the key debates and themes within the literature relevant to diversity and inclusion in the EMS.

## Diversity, community and inclusion

The need to understand diversity is increasingly recognised as important in many contexts – organisational, educational, and institutional, as well as more broadly in the community context. Given the focus of this section is on communities and their relationship to EMS, it is necessary to clarify how the terms diversity, community and inclusion are deployed in relation to communities within the relevant literature.

### Diversity

The need to understand diversity in Australia emerged in the 1970s in the context of a government commitment to multiculturalism, and the redefinition of the Australian national identity from being a ‘White Australia’ to a ‘multicultural nation’ (Ang, 2001, p95). This process was based on four key principles – social cohesion, cultural identity, equality of opportunity and access, and equal responsibility for, commitment to and participation in society (Australian Council of Population and Ethnic Affairs, 1982). These principles continue to underpin the need to understand diversity, in communities, institutions and organisations (Australian Government, 2016).

The term diversity, at its most simple, is used to refer to the range of differences that define individual identity. Commonly, differences are delineated between those characteristics that are visible and largely fixed, such as gender, age, race, ethnicity, personality, sexuality and physical ability with those that are subject to change such as occupation, marital status, parental status, educational attainment and other characteristics that change within the life-cycle or in different contexts (Brah, 1992). A similar delineation is also made in relation to differences that are visible (e.g. race and gender) and those that are invisible (e.g. religion, marital status, professional status) (Cox, 2001).

Which diversity characteristics are given priority, however, varies considerably according to context and for the purposes that the term diversity is deployed. For example, in the USA, there continues to be a considerable focus on race and gender due to the influence of black rights movements and feminism (Thomas, 1991; Cox, 1993); while in Australia, there has been a much greater focus on multiculturalism given Australia’s migration history of the arrival and settlement of successive waves of migrants since colonisation (Bertone, 1998; Charlesworth et al, 2005)

Simple or cohesive categorisations of diversity are increasingly critiqued, however, in light of globalisation, they are increasing global mobility, the progression of social movements and shifting global power relations. More recent definitions of diversity attempt to convey the complexity and intersectionality of diversity by stressing the broad range of group and identity affiliations that each individual embodies (Bloemraad, 2011; Walby et al, 2012). More critically, cultural theory questions the extent to which diversity characteristics such as gender and age for example, can be treated as a stable and cohesive variable. Rather, it is argued that diversity needs to be understood as a relational process (Braedel-Huhner and Muller, 2016) in the sense that what is considered ‘diverse’ is derived from complex interactions within a given context. For example, the meanings and conditions of ‘youth’ varies widely across cultures. For some cultures and contexts, reaching adolescence

marks the beginning of adult status and responsibilities, while in others, the status of being a 'youth' extends well into the 20–30 year old age group (Ryan and Musiol, 2008). These differences are not only cross-border delineations, but can extend across contexts within countries and localities such as urban/rural contexts, rich/poor neighbourhoods, and across religious or national communities that co-exist within the same place, city or region.

A related development in understanding diversity comes from migration studies and anthropology that draws attention to major changes in population characteristics. Vertovec (2007) explores the implications of these trends as population 'super-diversity', '... a notion intended to underline a level and kind of complexity surpassing anything (that) has been previously experienced.' (Vertovec, 2007, p1024). He calls this transformative development the 'diversification of diversity' (2007, p1025) which brings major policy and research implications. The emergence of 'super-diversity' arises out of multiple and related trends including:

- An increase in the net in and outflows of migrants
- Immigration by much wider number of countries
- Increasing numbers of languages spoken and the emergence of multi-lingualism
- Increasing religious diversity
- The expansion of migration channels and immigration statuses including workers, students, spouses and family members, asylum-seekers and refugees, irregular, illegal or undocumented migrants, new citizens
- Changes in age and gender mix within the new migration trends
- Changing place and spatial patterns of settlement, and
- Transnationalism – with trends including circular and pendula migration and the strengthening of diasporic ties.

While Vertovec (2007) is focussed on Britain, the trends described are global in character and highly resonant in the Australian context. These characteristics are described in more detail later in this review, but growth trends such as temporary labour migration, international education, visiting friends and relatives (VFR), asylum seekers, religious diversity and an overall increase in international visitation (TRA, 2017), have a significant social, political and economic impacts (Mares, 2017).

## Community

More broadly, changes in demographics have a major impact within communities, generating challenges for planning, service provision and the maintenance of social cohesion and inclusion. As discussed widely in the literature, the term community is a highly normative term, deployed for multiple intentions with reference to diverse elements. While community is primarily deployed as positive, denoting social belonging, collective wellbeing, solidarity and support (Crow and Mah, 2011), it is also used to identify social problems of marginalisation, exclusion, social isolation and so forth (Mooney and Neal, 2008). While there is no one agreed definition, community refers broadly to shared territory or space (either physical or virtual), common life, collective actions, and shared identity (Theodori, 2005, p662). Types of communities are commonly delineated as communities of place, interest and identity (Willmott, 1986).

For the purposes of this review, the use of the term community is foregrounded by both place and identity, given that the interest is in relation to communities, diversity and inclusion in the EMS. EMS operations are necessarily place-based, and are thus operated and delivered within a given spatial context. At the same time, communities based on identity (e.g. culture, gender, disability) are only loosely bound by territories, particularly in the context of the rapid changes in population movements and mix. For example, temporary migrants and international students might settle within a given place or locality for relatively extended periods of time, yet have little attachment or social ties within those boundaries (Mares, 2017).

Research on Australian diasporas also suggests that citizens who are migrants or children of migrants may sustain homeland and/or transnational ties that are of greater meaning and significance than local ties. These ties may be much more important to identity and belonging than the local community and be sustained over generations post settlement (Ben-Moshe et al, 2012). For example, the social ties of Tongan citizens in Australia are strongly tied to transnational family and community ties, and commonly travel frequently between Tonga, New Zealand and Australia. Reciprocal connections are sustained through remittances to Tonga, hosting visiting friends and relatives from their homeland for extended periods, and ensuring that their children sustain Tongan cultural practices, beliefs and values (Pyke, Francis et al, 2012). For many Tongans, a sense of community is more strongly shaped by the homeland and the diaspora than by the often temporary place of settlement. This is a key and emerging consideration in relation to community cohesion and inclusion. As Mansouri and Lobo (2011, p2) comment, in order to imagine social inclusion, it is necessary to move beyond local or nation state boundaries and '... recognise the multiplicity of local and global connections that situate us socially and spatially ...'. This is particularly relevant to EMS where the communities that are served, are only partially defined by geographic location.

## Social inclusion

The need to explore diversity is also closely related to the ideas underpinning social inclusion – a concept that has widely guided social policy development since the early 2000s (Silver, 2010). Social inclusion refers to ideas of equal citizenship, membership, belonging and social cohesion. It is a deeply normative term that flags the need to fight exclusion with the goal of social inclusion. The term was first employed in France in the 1970s to refer to those who were not covered by the social insurance system and was then applied more widely throughout European countries during the 1980s (Nelms and Tsingas, 2010). During the 1990s, the European Union adopted a social inclusion framework as the lens for addressing social and economic policies in general. It was particularly adopted in the UK in association with ‘Third Way’ politics, and as Giddens (2000) claims, became a social policy ‘buzzword’ in Europe during the 1990s. Social inclusion policy was adopted more recently in Australia and was an idea that strongly influenced Labour party policy through the 2000s (Nelms and Tsingas, 2010).

Social inclusion became a particular focus of social policy in 2007 with the election of the former Rudd Labor Government and a number of governance, policy and planning agencies were established to ensure the implementation of social inclusion policy objectives (Kurzak, 2013). The intention was to move beyond material measures of welfare such as poverty. Rather, the focus is on understanding the complex and related set of factors that enable people to engage in society. According to Kurzak (2013), key measurements of exclusion include: consumption and the capacity to purchase goods and services; production and participation in economically or socially valuable activities; political engagement and involvement in decision making; and social interaction and integration with family, friends and community. Since the election of a coalition government in 2013, the term has lost prominence as a social policy framework, yet continues as a guiding principal for many advocacy platforms (Saunders, 2015). For example, the recent launch of the global ‘Women, Peace and Security Index’, incorporates the three dimensions of inclusion, justice and security as the basis for measurement of changes in women’s inclusion in peace and security policy (Klugman et al, 2017).

While the term is notoriously difficult to define, broadly it refers to ‘connectedness’ and ‘belonging’ within a given community or context. It is also an active term that denotes more than the guarantee of equal opportunity or addressing the processes that create social exclusion. Rather, it requires the active engagement of all agents – institutional, structural, and individuals, in creating inclusionary conditions. The term is also strongly associated with the recognition of social capital as a key ingredient to economic success, and that social exclusion is a major and structurally threatening cost to government. These costs arise through health and welfare costs as well as diminished human capital.

Part of the reason that inclusion is difficult to pin down is that the term is based on context specific social relations. Exclusion occurs through social practices that generate insiders and outsiders. The process of exclusion may or may not be intentional or necessarily active, but the effect is that broader social relationships remain unfulfilled. Outsiders may exclude themselves due to a sense of not belonging, shame or an incapacity to participate. People with disabilities, for example, may lack the mobility, the confidence or the sense of entitlement to participate in general community affairs. Thus, exclusion is commonly a passive process, created by mechanisms that are powerful due to their relative invisibility. For example, women’s low representation in leadership roles is commonly explained as being due to women’s preference to focus on family responsibilities (Hakim, 2004), an explanation that ignores the opaque conditions that discourage women to aspire to leadership roles.

In addition, as Silver (2010) points out, exclusion is rarely absolute. Insider and outsider groups have ‘asymmetric sensitivities’ and can engage in certain types of interchange and social interactions while boundaries remain intact. In a small community, for example, insiders and outsiders may play on the same football team, but this engagement might have little impact on broader community social relations. Off the field, outsiders might still experience marginalisation in other forms, such as in terms of employment opportunities.

Social exclusion is also relative. What belonging means is situation specific and it is difficult to compare levels of inclusion across countries, or other divides such as urban and rural. A further problem with the measurement of inclusion is that the reasons for exclusion are complex and unlikely to be able to be measured or explained by a single indicator. For example, low income may contribute to poor health, inability to secure employment, or the incapacity to develop skills necessary to create opportunities. Cultural difference, gender discrimination and other characteristics might also contribute to poor life opportunities. The intersectional nature of the problems, makes the development of indicators difficult and requires looking at the reasons for exclusion within its context.

Inclusion is also a nuanced term and is often applied synonymously with terms such as integration. Integration, however, infers a level of compliance with pre-determined rules or a social order that maintains the status quo. ‘Assimilation’ is also a related term that is also commonly used, however, this is suggestive of the need for cultural change in order to gain acceptance within a dominant or host community. The intention of inclusion is to convey a different meaning that is accommodating of social, cultural or national differences in plural or multi-cultural societies (Silver, 2010, p195).

Overall, social inclusion refers to the capacity of individuals to participate in work, education, communities and decision-making. It is a process that is context specific, relative and embedded in social relations. As a policy framework, inclusion is widely considered to be a necessary pre-condition of social cohesion and in turn, social and economic wellbeing (Papillon, 2002).

## The measurement of social inclusion policy – principals and indicators

Since the widespread adoption of social inclusion in the 1990s, the development of measurable indicators has been an ongoing and global endeavour. Social inclusion principals and indicators were primarily developed by the European Commission (EC), although models developed in individual EU member countries have had a particular influence. The Danish model of 'flexicurity' was particularly influential. As described by Nelms and Tsingas (2010, p6), flexicurity is '... government policies which provide income support, retraining and life-long learning systems, with a view to balancing the need for workplaces to be flexible against the needs of workers for employment security.'

As the concept of social inclusion spread to Asia and Australia, multiple models and frameworks of social inclusion have been developed and implemented. Prominent social indicator frameworks include Burchardt, Le Grand et al (2002), the European Commission (2006), the UK government (Social Exclusion Unit, 1997), and in Australia, the Social Inclusion Board (2009).

The concept of social inclusion was adopted in Australia initially by the South Australian government in 2002 and other states followed suit. It was adopted by the Australian government in 2007 with the election of the Rudd Labor government, and the Australian Social Inclusion Board was established as an advisory body in the area. The Australian version of social inclusion was heavily influenced by Amartya Sen's capabilities approach (Sen, 1985) which broadly refers to ensuring that individuals enjoy the conditions and freedom to lead the kind of life that '... he or she has reason to value' (Sen, 1999, p87). Geography has also been an important consideration in Australia with recognition that place and location has an important influence on people's social and economic engagement (Nelms and Tsingas, 2010).

While there is no exact agreement on indicators across the various frameworks developed internationally, Huxley (2015, p50) observes that there has been some agreed general conclusions drawn about the nature of indicators and what they should encompass. Firstly, social indicator frameworks identify the dimensions of social exclusion. Drawing on some well-known frameworks, Nelms and Tsingas (2010) summarise seven dimensions of social inclusion. These include:

1. exclusion from the labour market
2. exclusion from adequate resources
3. exclusion from social support and networks
4. exclusion from services
5. exclusion resulting from being located in a particular area
6. exclusion from local and/or national decision-making
7. exclusion through poor health and/or wellbeing.

Against each of these dimensions, various indicator frameworks have been established to enable the measurement and evaluation of progress towards social inclusion. A summary of these are very usefully set out by Nelms and Tsingas (2010, pp62–66), however, the Australian government social indicators included 33 indicators spanning six broad domains (Saunders, 2015). Some of the indicators are readily measurable and quantifiable using national census data. For example, unemployment rates, income, infant mortality, life expectancy and educational attainment are all measures that can be readily identified. Others, however, rely on subjective measures that are notoriously difficult to ascertain. For example, 'fear of experiencing violence' is one indicator that relies on qualitative data that is not readily available through most national data collection systems (Saunders, 2015). In addition, the concept of social exclusion requires that it is the relationship between social conditions that determines real levels of exclusion/inclusion. One indicator in itself, such as employment or poverty levels, also says little about overall individual or community wellbeing or inclusion. As Saunders (2015) comments, the links between indicators, such as life expectancy and other measures of inclusion, is not clear. To this end, there have been multiple attempts to develop aggregate indexes of social inclusion (Burchardt, Le Grand et al, 2002, Scutella, Wilkins et al, 2008) although the relative merits of such aggregations is an ongoing debate (Saunders, 2015, p147).

## Challenges of social inclusion

While the influence of social inclusion on social policy and advocacy has been extensive, there are multiple criticisms and ongoing debates. First, the goals of social inclusion are described as 'utopian' and with lofty goals that can inadvertently decrease wellbeing for some groups unable to really achieve full inclusion in the context of limited resources. For example, Jackson (2015) argues that social inclusion policy fails to recognise the negative impact of limited social resources on those unable to engage in community life unassisted. People with significant intellectual disabilities, for example, can actually have a lower quality of life when inclusion policies proscribe independent, community-based living without the necessary support to achieve real inclusion. In a related theme, social inclusion has also been criticised for being a 'smokescreen' and an excuse for government inattention to direct material welfare needs (Saunders, 2015).

A further criticism stems from its limited capacity to cope with diversity or the concept of self-exclusion from mainstream society. Vincent (2009) uses the example of how the concept is ambiguous for Maori people, as it is conceptually incapable of acknowledging the specific needs and rights of Maori as Indigenous people and treaty partners. Social inclusion is similarly limited in its application for ATSI, ethnic minorities and potentially religious communities in the Australian context. This is the basis of ongoing debate where the counter argument is that the concept of self-exclusion suggests the power to make choices when expressed preferences may in fact be a rational response to a hostile or discriminatory society (Morehead, 2005).

More fundamentally, social inclusion indicators are cumbersome, difficult to measure and a cause for ongoing debate about the meanings, processes and purposes of expensive monitoring and evaluation measures that are unlikely to see major change over short and medium term time periods (Vinson, 2009; Silver, 2010).

Despite these tensions and contestations, the development of social inclusion policies, principles and measures has been an influential global enterprise in recent decades. Despite being largely abandoned by the current Australian government, it remains an important focus of social policy efforts internationally and various social policy agendas. Generally, there is recognition that social inclusion is a 'move in the right direction' insofar as it has provided an holistic framework for understanding disadvantage, encouraged the development of evidence-based discourse about the nature of exclusion/inclusion, and provided a basis for identifying where gaps in data exist in relation to the effective monitoring of social inclusion (Lobo et al, 2011). Also important is that the pace of change in the composition and dynamics of communities is rapid, and social inclusion policies may offer a nuanced framework capable of identifying new and emerging trends in social wellbeing. The following section discusses some of the key changes in population trends that need consideration in the development of diversity and inclusion frameworks, as well as describing the key advocacy platforms of groups that have traditionally been marginalised.

## Drivers of community change

The 2016 ABS Census reveals some very strong changes in Australian population trends. The overall population is growing at above world averages at 1.5% per annum, and total population is now 24,774,198 million. The increase in population was fuelled by 785,200 in natural increase and a further 1,005,100 in net overseas migration. Nearly half of Australians (49%) were either born overseas or have one or two parents who were born overseas. Australia's cultural mix is also changing. While England and New Zealand were the two most common countries of birth after Australia, the proportion of people born in China and India has increased. Australia is increasingly multi-lingual, is older and religiously diverse (ABS, 2016a).

Population change is largely due to globalisation, unprecedented global mobility, and government social and economic policy, as well as industry growth trends with growing demand for both skilled and unskilled labour. Alongside these trends, long-standing social, anti-discrimination and advocacy movements continue to shape change. Gender equity, LGBTIQ+ rights, ATSI claims for self-determination and land rights, rights for people with disabilities and anti-age discrimination are all prominent in broader public discourse. Terrorism and the impacts of climate change are also shaping mobilities and behaviours. Each of these trends and platforms have implications for diversity and inclusion in communities.

## Multiculturalism and 'new' migration

As highlighted earlier, the changing mix of migration is a major influence on communities and how they function. These changes occur in the context of Australia's long-established multicultural policies that were introduced in the 1970s to replace the former assimilationist policies that guided post-war migration. Successive governments have consistently reaffirmed the policy with the most recent policy update being delivered in March 2017 by Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull (Australian Government, 2017). The statement reaffirmed the core principles of multiculturalism and Australia embraces cultural diversity through: shared values; shared rights and responsibilities; shared vision; valuing diversity; economic participation; and social cohesion. Despite a robust and ongoing critique (Soutphommasane, 2016), Australia prides itself

on being one of the most successful examples of multiculturalism in the world. This success is supported by measures of social cohesion that show that the vast majority of the Australian population are supportive of a multicultural community. For example, 98 per cent of respondents to the Scanlon Foundation survey agree that people of different backgrounds get on well together in their local area (Markus, 2015).

Commonly cited explanations for this success include that: there is widespread acceptance of the value of multiculturalism as a nation-building project; there has been a long-standing focus on celebrating and valuing diversity; that it is based on a compact of citizenship and the insistence of common abidance with democratic values; and it has been consistently supported by robust policy and anti-discrimination legislation (Soutphommasane, 2012).

A further explanation for successful multiculturalism is the progressive recalibration of migration policy since the 1970s. While post WWII immigration was largely from Europe and based on the nation building goal to increase population, from 1979, migration to Australia was assessed against the first 'points test' or 'Numerical Multifactor Assessment System' that was used to weight different characteristics such as family ties, skills and language proficiency (Mares, 2016, p36). Colour of skin and national origin no longer matters. Migration policy is now strongly skills-based and the requirement for immigration, in short, is youth, English-language fluency, good health, professional qualifications and work experience (Mares, 2016, p36). The effect of this, as born out in changes to the migration mix, is that Australia's migrant intake is global in origin with the majority coming from countries in Asia.

A related development is the introduction of temporary migration or 'new' migration as it is sometimes called (Whitewell, 2002). This was initiated primarily from the 1980s through the creation of visa categories for working holiday makers, international students, skilled workers on temporary 457 visas and New Zealanders (Mares, 2016). In addition, temporary visa holders include visitors, temporary graduates and humanitarian entrants who hold temporary protection visas. As of December 2016, there were 2,091,490 temporary entrants in Australia – an increase of 5.3 per cent from the previous year (Australian Government 2017). Temporary visa holders come from across the world and there are considerable differences in the national mix according to the visa category. For example, Chinese students dominate the student visa holder categories and represent 19.9 per cent of all international students, while the largest proportion of working holiday makers are from the UK (18.7%). However, in aggregate, the most numerous nationalities include: New Zealand (30.9%), China (8.7%), India (7.9%), United Kingdom (7.8%), USA (2.8%) and other countries (41.9%) (Australian Government, 2017).

The introduction and growth of temporary migration is widely applauded as a major success enabling Australia to effectively 'try before you buy' migrants that effectively address skill shortages, build human capital resources, improve access to international markets, and strengthen trade and diplomatic ties (Hawthorne, 2005). The benefits of temporary migration are immediately apparent. For example, international education has effectively underwritten the cost of providing higher education (Forbes-Mewett, Marginson et al, 2009) and the close nexus between international education, repeat visitation and the related increase in visiting friends and relatives is a major boost to the tourism industry (Glover, 2011; Pyke et al, 2013).

At the same time, despite the widely promoted view that temporary migration is 'frictionless' (Favell, Feldblum et al., 2007), there is increasing attention drawn to the emerging implications as numbers grow along with economic reliance on temporary migrants. As Mares (2016) argues, there are potentially very important implications for social cohesion and the undermining of the citizenship contract encompassed by multicultural Australia. Some of the issues include:

- There are now many temporary migrants who have been in Australia for extended periods under various temporary visas (Mares cites the ABS figure of 18,600) who have been here for more than eight years). Mares (2016) questions the ethics of such extended periods of settlement without full citizenship rights in often precarious circumstances.
- The interwoven process of temporary and permanent migration is overlooked in migration policy. For example, where the temporary migration experience has been insecure and tenuous for asylum seekers, it might be reasonable to assume that there be either the capacity or the will for full social engagement once citizenship is achieved. Temporary migration, particularly for vulnerable entrants, creates the conditions for long-term social exclusion and a threat to cohesion (Mansouri, 2002).
- Temporary residents are vulnerable to exploitation in the labour market (Reilly, 2015).
- 'New migrants' are commonly dependent on diaspora networks and rely on the scarce ethnic community resources established by earlier migration waves. Temporary migration potentially generates conflict within those communities due to homeland political tensions and competing claims of cultural authenticity (Baldassar and Pyke, 2013).
- Temporary migrants are exposed to 'hidden traps' and the health and safety impacts of accidents, disasters and illness can be harsh in terms of cost and future prospects for permanent residency (Mares, 2016).
- Temporary residents, and international students and working holiday makers, are particularly exposed to safety risks due to precarious employment, the need for affordable accommodation and travel patterns (Nyland and Forbes-Mewett, 2008; Babacan et al, 2010).

The points above reflect just some of the questions emerging in the literature in relation to the impacts of Australia's migration policy. The overall consideration is that the change in the migration mix, and the conditions under which migration occurs, has potentially significant implications for the social cohesion that successive multicultural policies have nurtured. These implications are coupled with the human challenges that are raised by globalisation, climate change and world events. Most notably, political extremism, terrorism and rising anti-Islamic sentiment are identified as real threats to the Australian multicultural project and social cohesion as played out by events in Europe and the US (Soutphommasane, 2016).

While migration patterns are clearly and notably a major influence on community inclusion, ethnicity and cultural background are only one dimension of social relations and the influence of age, gender, physical ability, indigeneity and other characteristics intersect as important dynamics of social relations. Much social policy development has been informed by long-standing advocacy platforms that demonstrate social inequality and propose measures for change.

## Women and gender

The campaign for equality for women has evolved through multiple phases of feminism over centuries. In the Australian context, the key phases can be identified as the suffrage movement (late 1980s – early 1990s), second wave feminism in the 1960s/70s where the claim was for equal rights under the law, and postmodern feminism or DIY feminism in the 1980s/90s where the focus was on understanding intersectionality and the differences between women and global feminism (Archer Mann and Huffman, 2005). There is now a fourth wave of feminism that is driven by social media, and a focus on social justice and an opposition to sexual harassment and violence against women (Rivers, 2017).

Despite the achievement of legislative equality over the 1970s and 1980s, women remain at a relative disadvantage on many measures relevant to the core dimensions of social inclusion discussed above. For example, in the labour market, women continue to be concentrated in lower paying industries at the lower end of organisational hierarchies. This persistent gender segregation is the main explanation for the gender gap in pay that has hovered between 15 and 20 per cent for twenty years. As concluded by a recent Senate enquiry, 'A woman working in a female-dominated industry would on average, earn almost \$40,000 less at total remuneration than the average full-time total remuneration of a man in a male-dominated industry.' (The Senate Finance and Public Administration Committee, 2017, pxvi). In relation to health and wellbeing, 'Australia has a disturbingly high rate of violence against women' (Australian Human Rights Commission, 2017). For example, a 2016 study found that intimate partner violence was the greatest single health risk of women aged between 18–44 and that 87 per cent of all women had experienced violence since the age of 15 (ABS, 2012). These, and other measures, show consistently stark gender inequalities on across all social inclusion dimensions.

There is now a large amount of literature concerned with documenting and explaining the persistent inequalities that impact on women's safety (Australian Government, 2004), health (Healey, 2008), care responsibilities (Folbre and Bittman, 2004; Leahy et al, 2006), financial security (S4W, 2006), wellbeing (Waring, 1988), employment opportunities (Pocock, 2006a), career progression, and participation in leadership roles (Silvestri, 2003; Still, 2006; Doughney, 2007; Kellerman et al, 2007).

A dominant explanation for gender inequality is that women are positioned relatively disadvantageously in the labour market and the community due to multiple, institutional, structural and systemic conditions that generate barriers that impede women's full participation in the community and the labour market (Pyke, 2013). The effect of these barriers over the life course is cumulative with negative impacts on physical, social and economic wellbeing (Nussbaum et al, 1995).

A central tension in the literature, however, is the extent to which women can exercise agency over unequal conditions and the relative power of structures and institutions in generating barriers that reproduce unequal gendered power relations over time (Clegg, 2006). A theme in the literature is that women's disadvantage is a function of choice and that women have a natural preference to shy away from exercising power, leadership and authority whether over their own personal health and circumstances, in communities, or in the labour market (Hakim, 2000). The logical extension of this theme is that, if women want equality, they need to 'lean in' (Sandberg and Scovell, 2013) and 'work harder' (AAP, 2008). The counter argument is that while women do have agency, the degree women have the capacity to exercise choice is highly dependent on culture, context, and other conditions such as age, income and care responsibilities. Theories of choice also ignore the power of institutional structures that were designed by, and in the interests of men. Strategies to 'fix women' do little to change the conditions that create inequality in the first instance and effectively '... leave the status quo untouched.' (Ryan, 2017)

Following from this, a further development in the literature is the importance of recognising the heterogeneity of women and the need to recognise the intersections of class, age, indigeneity, ethnicity, culture, religion and so on in relation to the life circumstances and opportunities of any one individual or community (Walby et al, 2012). Sex and gender is only one, albeit fundamental, dimension of how and why women are positioned as they are (Clegg, 2006). Current gender equity policy now reflects this attention to intersectionality, yet understands 'women' as being a primary category of analysis and consideration in the implementation of social inclusion and gender equity policy.

Current issues for women in Australia are usefully encapsulated in a recent report by the Australian Human Rights Commission (AHRC, 2017) which builds on previous research and consultation processes. The report is based on a national consultation process and identifies priorities for advancing equality for women – priorities that are shared by Australian and state government policies for women. The key priorities are focussed around three main themes and include:

- eliminating violence against women
- enhancing women's economic security, and
- increasing women's voice and diversity in decision making.

Cutting across each of these themes is recognition of particular issues faced by rural and remote women, the need to recognise intersectional disadvantage, the ongoing need to address occupational and vertical workforce gender segregation, the need to recognise women's over-representation in precarious and underpaid work, and the need for greater provision and access to services. Increasing women's capacity to contribute to issues that affect health, wellbeing, community cohesion and financial security is also a priority for those contributing to the consultation.

The Australian Human Rights Commission has an important role in relation to women's policy with the statutory responsibility under the *Sex Discrimination Act 1984* and it addresses complaints, investigates human rights issues, provides advice and undertakes research. Women's policy is also developed and implemented through government Offices for Women, the Workplace Gender Equality Agency, as well as being a central policy focus for many NGOs and advocacy organisations such as the Victorian Women's Trust and the International Women in Development Agency (IWDA). Overall, the issues surrounding inequality for women have been prominent in social and policy discourse for many decades. Progress towards gender equality, however, is commonly described as 'much too slow' (Lyon, 2016).

## Disability

Physical ability is a further characteristic that is central to considerations of diversity and inclusion. According to the Australian Network on Disability, disability is defined as any condition that restricts a person's mental, sensory or mobility functions. It may be caused by accident, trauma, genetics or disease. It may be temporary or permanent, total or partial, lifelong or acquired, visible or invisible. Over four million people or more than one in five people in Australia have some form of disability. Importantly, a further 2.7 million people identify as being a carer of a person with a disability. The majority of carers are women and one third of carers report having a disability themselves (ABS, 2016).

Against social inclusion measures, people with disabilities face considerable disadvantage. People with disabilities experience high rates of unemployment, discrimination, poor treatment as customers and experience significant barriers to accessing community services and facilities such as libraries, cinemas, shops and schools. Key claims by disability advocates include the need to uphold the rights of people with disabilities to live with dignity and autonomy, to have access to services, live free from discrimination, and to address social exclusion and negative attitudes (National People with Disabilities and Carer Council, 2009).

The exclusion of people with disabilities is primarily explained by systemic conditions that prevent people with disabilities from being able to exercise ability and agency. One dimension of this is social attitudes that reflect intolerance of difference coupled with a built environment that prevents access to social and economic activities (Olakulehin, 2013). As made explicit by consultations leading up to the development of the Australian National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS), that despite the levels of resourcefulness of people, the level of exclusion experienced by many people with disabilities is profound. As expressed by Rhonda Galbally, Chair of the National People with Disabilities and Carer Council:

'We live in one of the wealthiest countries in the world and yet all too often people with disabilities struggle to access the very necessities of life – somewhere to live, somewhere to work. All too often they are unable to access education, health care, recreation and sport – the very things most people in the community take for granted... They are often isolated and alone. Their lives are a constant struggle for resources and support' (National People with Disabilities and Carer Council, 2009, pvii).

The major initiative designed to improve access and opportunities for people with disabilities is the NDIS which is currently being introduced across Australia. The NDIS is administered jointly between the states and the commonwealth, and entitles people with a disability to individualised packages of funding to support independence and economic participation. It is a market-based model where each individual receives money that can be spent on services of their choosing. As an 'insurance' scheme, the NDIS is a departure from previous welfare style payments. Rather, the intention is to invest in people's independence and participation in the community and the workforce with the aim of reducing long-term costs (Buckmaster, 2016).

With the scheme currently being rolled out, it is too soon for the impacts of the NDIS to be seen. There are, however, many critiques being offered. One problem is that, due to how the planning processes of each package is managed, the scheme will not actually offer control over the type of support that can be received. Each plan has to be 'approved' and, currently,



no opportunities for making amendments by the recipient prior to the final approval process are offered (Palmer, 2017). A further problem is that many people with disabilities are likely to miss out on coverage by the scheme. These include people who do not think of themselves as having a disability, and people who might not know about NDIS or how to access it (Fisher, 2017). This exclusion will occur given that the design of the NDIS relies on people requesting support and making informed choices about how to use it. People with multiple and complex needs, or those who are excluded from information channels by language difference, incarceration or remote locations, are all examples of those who might miss out. This is a particular problem for many Indigenous people who have a higher incidence of disability and multiple and complex barriers to accessing services (Gilroy, 2016).

The NDIS is based on a market model, which also has substantial implications for not for profit organisations that deliver disability services as well as employ disability care workers. As an individualised funding model, the capacity of services to provide the level of support and assistance that might be required is questioned (Gilchrist, 2016). The concern is that not for profit agencies may be poorly equipped to manage a less predictable source of funding, to offer decent working conditions to disability service workers, and withstand competition from private service providers. Private providers themselves are exposed to the risks of running a business in a style similar to that, which has been seen by services such as Uber (MacDonald, 2016).

Despite these critiques, there is much optimism in relation to the spirit of the NDIS. There is wide agreement that the individualisation of social support and care will bring new opportunities for control, choice and participation for people with a disability (MacDonald, 2016). At the same time, the new scheme potentially provides a stronger platform for community engagement by EMS with a greater diversity of the communities that they serve.

## Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people

While it is agreed that the Indigenous cultures of Australia are the oldest living cultural history in the world, there is continued debate about how long Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (ATSI) people have been living in Australia with estimates of between 50,000–65,000 years. There were an estimated 600 different aboriginal nations, each with territories across Australia at the time of European colonisation in 1788 (Australian Government, 2017).

According to the 2016 Census data, there are 649,200 people who reported being of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander origin representing 2.8 per cent of the total Australian population. The greatest proportion live in the Northern Territory (25.5% of the NT population), but the largest number (216,000), live in NSW. The population is relatively young compared to the overall population with a median age of 23 years compared to 38 years for non-Indigenous people. One in ten ATSI people reported speaking an Indigenous language at home and 150 Indigenous languages were identified. One third (35%) of ATSI people live in capital cities compared to 68 per cent for non-Indigenous people. Between 2016 and 2011, the ATSI population increased by 2.5 per cent. Improvements were also seen in Indigenous income with 20 per cent of household incomes of more than \$1,000 compared to 13% in 2011. Education levels also improved with the proportion of ATSI people aged 20–24 years who had completed Year 12 increasing more than a third from 37% to 79%. Despite the improvements, however, there remains substantial differences between Indigenous and non-Indigenous outcomes. Indigenous household income is roughly half that of non-Indigenous households and non-Indigenous. Year 12 completion rates are roughly one-third greater (ABS, 2016).

The experience of Australia's Indigenous people since European colonisation is a story of deliberate exclusion from colonial society. As Checketts (2016, p20) describes, Indigenous people have been managed and controlled through four main policy eras: protection, assimilation, self-determination and normalisation. The 'protection' era, from 1880–1940 (Altman and Rowse, 2005, p160) was defined by Aboriginal Protection Acts which defined Aborigines as separate from the larger population and set out the conditions for 'dealing' with Aboriginal inhabitants. The Acts were based on ideas that Indigenous people were racially inferior and that their survival was not feasible alongside colonial society. Aboriginal people were forced onto aboriginal reserves where they were to live out their days in peace, but under the firm control of government (Altman and Sanders, 1991).

An assimilationist policy framework extended roughly from 1930–1970. In this period, it was believed that half-caste children might readily assimilate into European society if separated from their full-blooded relatives (Checketts, 2016, p20). State and territory governments set about systematically removing half-caste children and placing them in homes and institutions.

From the 1950s, amidst social rights movements, pressure built for Aboriginal access to equal civil, political and social rights (Rowse, 2000). This caused the shift to the policy phase of self-determination (1970–2004) which was marked by the 1967 referendum to have Aboriginal people counted in the census, followed by the establishment of the Office and Council for Aboriginal Affairs whose job it was to develop and implement Indigenous policy and programs. Subsequent policy directions were built on the expressed desire of ATSI people to live independent from mainstream society, and a regional and local

service infrastructure was established for ATSI people to manage their own affairs. The democratically elected Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC) was the body charged with bringing about ATSI self-determination at a Commonwealth level.

Under Prime Minister John Howard, ATSIC was abolished in 2014 and the control of Aboriginal services was shifted to government departments. This action ushered in the phase of 'normalisation' which, as Checketts (2016, p22) describes, saw a shift in national discourse from self-determination and reconciliation towards mutual obligation, shared responsibility and normalisation. This shift was justified, first due to heavy criticism of the functioning of ATSIC. The second major event was the findings of an investigation into child sexual abuse in Aboriginal communities in the Northern Territory. This triggered government legislation that established the 'Northern Territory Emergency Response' and measures such as welfare quarantining and the compulsory acquisition of land – measures that lasted for five years and followed by the 'Stronger Future Policy' in 2011. This allowed stronger government control over Aboriginal communities, to address alcohol abuse, restrict welfare payments, manage school attendance and other measures designed to improve community wellbeing. From an Indigenous perspective, this period of policy is viewed as a further attempt 'to isolate and intervene in Indigenous peoples' lives.' (Checketts, 2016, p23).

On all social inclusion measures, the outcomes for ATSI people are poor. According to recent longitudinal research, ATSI families widely experience low labour market activity, high rates of sole parenthood, high rates of rental housing and a substantial minority with inadequate housing due to disrepair (Walter, 2016). According to Biddle (2013), there was not a single Census area where the Indigenous populations has better or even relatively equal outcomes compared to non-Indigenous people. Some of the major inequalities between Indigenous and non-Indigenous populations include: infant mortality is twice as high; ATSI people are ten times more likely to die from coronary heart disease; death due to illicit drug use is twice the rate for ATSI people; ATSI people are twice as likely to be unemployed or not in the labour force; and life expectancy is ten years less for ATSI people (Australian Indigenous HealthInfoNet, 2017).

In 2007, 'Closing the Gap' became a major national policy framework established to achieve health equality for Aboriginal people. The aim is to reduce disadvantage among ATSI people with respect to life expectancy, child mortality, access to early childhood education, educational achievement, and employment outcomes. It is a formal commitment made by all government to achieve ATSI health equality within 25 years. The project has been continuously evaluated since its full implementation and according to the most recent evaluation, while there has been some progress towards meeting key targets, this progress is patchy (Wright and Lewis, 2017).

Indigenous inequality is widely explained as the result of racialised structural social processes. It is an outcome of history and unequal black/white relations. The experience of racial discrimination is a reality of life for Indigenous people (Walter, 2016). The application of social inclusion measures is also particularly problematic for Indigenous people. For example, measures of income do not necessarily reflect wellbeing for Indigenous families. As Walter (2016, p75) argues, 'Even for households with higher incomes these data are not necessarily an indicator of life-course advantage. Such higher income is more likely to be a temporary phenomenon for Indigenous families.' Life conditions are materially and culturally different for Indigenous people, and the connections and causal relationships between social indicators have greater complexity than for other marginalised populations. Overall, however, Indigenous Australians continue to measure poorly against social inclusion and wellbeing measures, and how to improve conditions for ATSI is a topic of long-standing and continued policy debate.

## Other dimensions of diversity

The discussion above focuses on four key dimensions of diversity that are highly dynamic and are shaping rapid change within communities. In part, these are highlighted due to their prominence in social policy and the size and significance of the populations concerned. While it is useful to focus in on these specific categorisations, they are obviously not discrete and the intersections of gender, culture, disability and indigeneity are equally important considerations. There are, of course, many other diversity dimensions that have a strong influence over the make-up of communities. Age, religion, ethnicity, sexuality and so on, exert a powerful influence over the character and cohesion of communities. The major purpose of the discussion, however, is to highlight the scale and complexity of Australian diversity and some of the challenges and opportunities that arise for the EMS in relation to driving effective diversity in the EMS. The following and final section briefly summarises how the EMS have attempted to incorporate diversity within EMS operations.

## Diversity, community and inclusion in EMS

This final section briefly explores the intersection between diverse communities and the EMS. There is a disparate body of work within the academic literature that is related to the topics of diversity, community and inclusion in relation to emergency management services. Within this, there are some discernible themes that include: a focus on the needs and vulnerabilities of specific communities; population vulnerability; the need for better communications between communities and the EMS; as well as critiques of the ways in which the EMS approaches the topic of diversity, community and inclusion. Specific themes include:

- The development of models to harness the capacities of communities more effectively in the emergency planning and response phases (Hocke, 2003; Newman, 2006; Hashemipour, 2017)
- Need for emergency services themselves to develop greater cross-cultural awareness (Wajs-Chaczko, 2008; Mills and Miller, 2015)
- The education of diverse communities to improve preparedness, response and recovery to emergencies (Carr, 2015)
- Specific planning and design of services to improve safety and response for specific and diverse communities (Knight, Parr, 1998; Knight, 2001; Ozcurumez and Wylie, 2008; Bachman, 2012)
- Uneven impacts of disasters and emergencies and the particular impact on, and conditions of, specific populations such as rural and remote communities, older people, people with disabilities, ATSI communities and women (Scanlon, 1997; Enarson and Fordham, 2001; Hazeleger, 2013; Boon, 2014; Every, 2014; Every, 2015; Singh-Peterson et al, 2015)
- The need to engage local or Indigenous knowledge to inform emergency planning and response (Skertchly and Skertchly, 2000; McLachlan, 2003; Jones, 2016)
- The complexities in addressing emergency response issues with visitors or temporary residents (Drabek, 1997; King and Gurtner, 2005; Pyke et al, 2016)
- A further theme addresses the conflict inherent between the provision of universal services and difficulties inherent in effective delivery to diverse contexts (Ozcurumez and Wylie, 2008).

Cross-cutting the literature are reports on programs that seek to specifically respond to the varied needs of diverse groups and communities. Programs include addressing community safety in emergencies (Elsworth, 2009) and increasing broad community participation in emergency planning and recovery (Webber, 2017). Cultural awareness programs have been conducted (Fozdar and Robert, 2010), as well as programs to increase the cultural diversity of volunteer emergency workers (South Australian Volunteer Services, 2014). Of particular relevance to this project was an investigation of the barriers and opportunities for communities in NSW in relation to volunteering with the Rural Fire Service (Birch and McLennan, 2007). The findings of this study showed very low awareness, willingness and capacity for volunteering in the service due to a range of barriers and concerns. Most of these programs, however, are of a pilot or fixed-term duration and applied at various locations across the country. As a more long-term measure, there have also been strategies developed to better incorporate gender considerations into emergency planning (Parkinson et al, 2017), as well as for ATSI communities (Newman, 2006).

The theme of community participation, however, is particularly prominent in the efforts to build community resilience to emergencies as a flow on from government policy directions set at all levels of government, within emergency response agencies and by NGOs (e.g. NEMC, 2011; Emergency Management Victoria, 2017; VCOSS, 2017). In this policy context, resilience has become somewhat of an umbrella term in relation to the connections between the broader community and EMS. Norris et al (2007) describe 'resilience' as a metaphor drawn from the natural sciences that refers to a material or system that can return to equilibrium after a shock or displacement. The term resilience is widely applied to human resilience at both an individual level as well as to communities. When applied in reference to an emergency or natural disaster, community resilience generally refers to the capacity of a coupled human-environment system to adapt to stress and change (Pyke et al, 2016).

In summary, while there is a relatively large and growing literature related to diverse communities and emergency management, this literature is disparate and largely focussed on discrete population groups located within geographic localities. This approach to community and diversity is shaped largely by long-term agendas developed through anti-discrimination and affirmative action platforms and movements that aim to promote equality of opportunity and address systemic discrimination. Such movements have been progressively consolidated by equal opportunity, anti-discrimination and affirmative action legislation that defines and affirms the rights of population groups that experience barriers to social inclusion in the full sense, either economically, socially or culturally. As reflected in the emergency services literature, these groups include women, people with disabilities, ATSI, and people from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds. The shared interests and needs of each of these categorisations remain of central importance to social policy, as well as to their significance within consideration of community diversity.

## Conclusion

The purpose of this review is to provide an overview of diversity, community and social inclusion in Australia to inform the larger project, *Diversity and Inclusion: Building Strength and Capability*. This has included a discussion of the key terms and how they are deployed in relation to communities. The paper goes on to discuss drivers of change and explores changes relating to key dimensions of diversity including multiculturalism and migration, women, people with disabilities and ATSI. It is acknowledged that there are many other dimensions that intersect – age, religion and sexuality for example. However, the aim is to highlight key drivers of change in Australian communities. The paper concludes with a brief overview of research and programs that have been implemented by the EMS.

Throughout the discussion, key considerations for the development of diversity and inclusion strategies are highlighted. First, the nature of diversity in the community is rapidly changing due to accelerated global mobility, the growth of temporary and circular migration, the increasing phenomenon of transnationalism, and the intensification of global risks arising through climate change and terrorism. One in ten residents in Australia now live here on temporary visas and are effectively non-citizens or ‘metics’ as Mares (2016) calls them. Mares takes this term from ancient Athens where resident foreigners enjoyed the right to conduct business, but were excluded from membership in politics and decision-making. This phenomenon, coupled with the expansion in places, circumstances and cultures from which migrants come from, mean that Australia is increasingly ‘super diverse’ (Vertovec, 2007). As such, simple categorisations of diversity, based on gender or culture can no longer capture the complexity of diversity within contemporary Australian communities. Existing literature on diversity management, productive diversity or effective diversity, are critiqued for being based on oversimplified categorisations of distinct population groups, rather than understanding the complex heterogeneity between and within communities.

These patterns of migration also have major implications for communities and the sense of ‘place’. People from culturally diverse backgrounds, and new and temporary migrants, are less likely to find their sense of community in a local geographic area. Rather, diaspora and homeland ties are more likely to define identity and sense of belonging than the immediate local community. This has major implications for the EMS that is strongly place-based.

Social inclusion itself is a concept that is fraught in its application to diverse communities. While the term refers to concepts such as belonging, participation and wellbeing, the measurement of inclusion is particularly difficult when applied to communities or individuals that face complex and multiple disadvantage as well as to cultures that incorporate different concepts of wellbeing. Meanings of inclusion for Australia’s Indigenous people and families are poorly captured by existing inclusion frameworks.

Disadvantage for women, people with disabilities and ATSI is also firmly entrenched and resilient to change. The implication is that the productive potential of large groups of people is being under-utilised at a cost to social and economic development.

EMS efforts to enhance diversity and inclusion have been largely limited to short-term projects focussing on specific population groups. Such projects have been widely dispersed and relatively narrow in scope. The broader literature on community diversity suggests that such efforts increasingly need to recognise the complexity of diversity, the powerful structures that create exclusion, and the recognition of the very dynamic population change trends currently reshaping Australian communities.

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