



*The worst in nature.  
the best in us*

Volunteers Managing Safety  
NSW State Emergency Service  
“Take 5” Program

Tassie Fire Conference 2007  
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# Content



- Brief background of NSW State Emergency Service (SES)
- Why the need for risk management?
- Outline the “Take 5” program
- Why the program works?
- Where too with the program in the coming years?
- Conclusion & further information

# Who we are – NSW SES



- Combat agency in NSW – Floods, Storms, Tsunamis
- 10,000 volunteers & 180 staff across the state
- State Headquarters
- 17 Regions
- 228 Units
- Other major operational functions – Road Crash Rescue, Vertical Rescue, Land Search

# Why introduce TAKE 5?



- Need to keep people safe in a high risk environment
- Differing views and behaviours regarding safety (diversified work organisation)
- Seeking cultural/behavioural change
- Public safety training package
- Legal compliance vs organisational commitment

# The “TAKE 5” program



- Not a new approach to risk management
- Basic tools – visual
- Needed to create a base level of understanding of risk management
- Implemented through Maintain Team Safety Training Package, Team Leader Training and integral to all training resource kits
- Promoted and reinforced consistently in everything we do

Take **5** before you start



The illustration shows a right hand with five fingers. Each finger has a yellow circular sticker with a black number from 1 to 5. The thumb (1) holds a red octagonal stop sign. The index finger (2) has a thought bubble containing a lit lightbulb. The middle finger (3) holds a round clock face. The ring finger (4) holds a white ruler. The pinky finger (5) holds a small monitor displaying a green ECG line with a red alarm light above it.

- 1 Stop, stand back, observe
- 2 Think through the task
- 3 Identify hazards
- 4 Assess and control risks
- 5 Continually monitor risks

# The Risk Matrix



**H** = Critical. Stop work until something is done. Plan controls for immediate implementation.

**M** = Moderate. Set time scales for action as soon as practicable.

**L** = Low Risk. Manage by routine procedures and monitor.

LIKELIHOOD	CONSEQUENCES				
	Catastrophic	Severe	Major	Moderate	Minor
Almost Certain	H	H	H	H	M
Likely	H	H	H	M	M
Possible	H	H	M	M	L
Unlikely	H	M	M	L	L
Rare	M	M	L	L	L

● ASSESS







● CONTROL

● MONITOR

## Hierarchy of Controls



Control risk by:

	1 Elimination
	2 Substitution
	3 Isolation
	4 Engineering
	5 Administration
	6 PPE



# Why the program works!



- Directed primarily at volunteers
- Directed primarily at an Emergency environment (culture)
- About empowering the volunteers to make decisions on the ground
- Philosophy rather than a process
- Flexibility
- Acceptance of volunteers
- Understanding of “why” it was introduced
- Move from rules based to risk management approach

# Where the program is headed



- Extension of risk management
- Corporate level
- Activity/Site specific level
- Integral to capability of organisation
- Driven by the organisation

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# Conclusion



- Program specific to SES
- Working for us – quantitative & qualitative measurement
- Continuous improvement and evolvment
- OHS Management System
- Further information on the conference disk

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