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## MEDIA RELEASE

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### In the wake of fires, flood planning and emergency management on the radar

Floodplain planning and flood emergency management experts will gather in Albury Wodonga next week (17 – 20 February) to work towards a more unified national approach.

More than 320 national and international delegates will attend *“Bridging the States, one floodplain, one unified approach”* ([www.floodconference.com.au](http://www.floodconference.com.au)).

The Attorney General, the Hon. Robert McClelland MP, will open the conference on Wednesday (18 February).

During the conference, speakers will cover themes such as flood mitigation and planning, emergency response, climate change and changing standards, risk management and flooding for environmental values. Highlights will include:

- International perspectives – speakers will include; **Paul Osman** from Illinois who oversees coordination of floodplain mapping, flood disaster response and flood mitigation for more than 1,000 communities. Paul will also talk about the major floods in the mid west, US, that occurred last year and draw comparisons with major floods in Australia, such as those recently experienced in northern Queensland. **Dick de Bruin** who has extensive experience in Asia and South America and composed an overall master plan for the development of the Ganges river in India, will talk about 400 years of management of the Rhine River. **Dr Phil Mitchell** will talk about flood management in New Zealand.
- Top line national speakers will include; **Bruce Esplin**, Victoria’s first Emergency Services Commissioner, **Dr Rob Vertessy**, the Chief Hydrologist from the Bureau of Meteorology, and **David Harriss**, a senior executive from the NSW Dept of Environment and Climate Change
- “Flood smart”- a community program that seeks to prepare ‘at risk’ communities for floods and storms events. A pilot is running in Wodonga;
- Flood forecasting - from rainfall to emergency response ; a technology focussed presentation will highlight how a GIS based system can provide a planning tool for emergency response

Delegates will also join technical tours to sites along the Murray River floodplain. These will include; Wonga Wetlands, West Albury, a new emergency management centre at Albury airport; and local subdivisions where delegates will inspect flood detention, planning and zoning issues.

A welcome reception will be held at the Albury Library Museum on Tuesday from 6pm – 7.30pm

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**Photo/interview opportunities:** The Attorney General will be available for interviews from 10am – 10.15 on Wednesday, 18 February. For further information contact: Mary-Anne Scully, North East CMA Media & Communications – **Tel: 0408 685 225**