

BEING DISASTER-LITERATE

TARANAKI EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT CONFERENCE 2020



The Taranaki Emergency Management Office hosted its first half-day conference on 29 November. It was an opportunity to build a wider understanding of disaster.

Three prominent speakers shared their insights with more than 100 attendees: GNS Science volcanologist Brad Scott; MetService forecast operations manager Chris Nobel; and Dr Sarb Johal, clinical psychologist and former Associate Professor in Disaster Mental Health at Massey University's Joint Centre for Disaster Research (in conjunction with GNS Science).

Brad Scott, who chairs our Taranaki Seismic and Volcanic Advisory Group, spoke on our seismic and volcanic risks along with the types of activity we might see from Mt Taranaki should it erupt. He also discussed the forecasting tools available to GeoNet, the Volcanic Alert Levels, and the challenges of forecasting exactly what a volcano might do.

Chris Noble took us through our weather hazards and the combination of factors that lead to severe weather events. He showed the impact of climate change on Taranaki weather patterns, with projections of more rainfall during winter, a potential increase in drought conditions in South Taranaki, growing intensity of storms and increase in winds (though not as strong as in other regions).

Sarb Johal talked about how we can design in a way that is responsive to the needs of people when they face challenges. He advocated a human-centred design approach and presented a process for design-thinking and factors for the successful implementation of this planning approach.

The day was also an opportunity to thank all our advisory groups and partner organisations for their considerable contributions over the past year. A brainstorming session on a number of planning questions drew thoughtful input.