



Strategic Command Program

Designed to enhance the command and leadership capabilities of senior leaders responsible for managing emergency management events of national significance.



Duration

5¹/₂ days residential



Location

AIPM, Manly NSW



Delivery dates

Sunday 15 June - Friday 20 June 2025



More information

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Cost

\$9900 AUD (inclusive of GST)

Reputation

The AFAC Strategic Command Program (SCP) has built a strong reputation for providing high-quality leadership development for senior leaders involved in complex emergency management events in Australia and internationally. Many participants have gone on to secure senior executive positions, with several achieving the role of Commissioner.

Who should attend?

- Superintendents, Commanders and public safety senior managers from emergency management sector from Australia and in the region.
- Executive level 2 and SES 1 officers from Commonwealth agencies.

Program outcomes

- Anticipate and analyse the key stakeholder and political factors involved in national emergency management events.
- Develop personal awareness of behavioural defaults and patterns when decision making; and exercise sound judgement during periods of uncertainty, transition and change.
- Display political astuteness when delivering independent advice while preserving productive and professional working relationships.
- Use a variety of leadership techniques to engage and influence stakeholders from different areas on public safety challenges that need creative solutions.
- Communicate with executive presence to inspire confidence, trust, credibility, and authenticity with the public during major events.
- Sustain executive performance and personal resilience when managing long-term multiple concurrent events effectively.
- Expand professional networks and relationships across the emergency management sector.

'Hard to isolate one key learning. The best aspects of the program are learning from each other, the insights from leaders in our industry and the chance to renew professionally.'

Why do the Strategic Command Program?

Senior leaders working in emergency management are faced with increasingly complex and novel challenges. These situations demand more than just operational competence; they require advanced strategic and conceptual skills.

To successfully lead in such environments, senior leaders must be able to strategically analyse problems, synthesise information from a range of sources, anticipate trends, balance interests, and make decisions in environments characterised by ambiguity and rapid change.

The Strategic Command Program focuses on building strategic command and leadership capabilities to respond to these events with the highest level of performance.

How is the program designed?

The program is designed to address the demands of emergency management senior leaders during a major event with national implications for public safety. The capability areas of exercising command during complex crisis events, political astuteness, decision making acumen during continuity and change, executive presence and personal adaptive capacity are weaved throughout: all placed against the context of a multi-jurisdictional response to large scale and often protracted emergency management events.

The program is designed around three key elements: a cohort welcome; a residential workshop experience; and development of an individual leadership philosophy.

A pre-residential virtual workshop of half cohort size will provide a relaxed and informal environment for participants to meet the AFAC SCP Program facilitators, fellow participants and be both welcomed by the CEO of AFAC and provided a general overview of the program.

A weeklong intensive residential workshop experience provides a range of presentations, syndicates, case studies, off-site activities, reflective sessions and skills workshops; all supported by Commissioners/CEOs, a range of executive leaders in public safety and AFAC SCP alumni. Together, they provide unique value in contextualising the design and offering tacit professional knowledge, experience and perspectives to complement research, theories and development approaches.

Participants are given the opportunity to create and present an individual leadership philosophy to their peers, drawn from the residential experiences and intended to deliver organisational value to the teams and communities they serve. All stages of the program are led and delivered by the AFAC SCP faculty to ensure a tailored, challenging and supportive environment for all participants.



AFAC Leadership Development Faculty



Rob Webb
Chief Executive Officer

Australasian Fire and Emergency Service Authorities Council (AFAC)

Rob is an experienced leader in the emergency management industry. A meteorologist, and formerly Deputy CEO at the Bureau of Meteorology, he built experience across multiple jurisdictions covering some of Australia's most damaging natural disasters. Rob specialised in extreme weather services and led the Bureau's national weather, flood and climate forecast and warning operations.



Mr Andy Combes
AFAC Facilitator

Executive Leadership Development and Executive Coaching

Andy provides senior executive leadership development, executive coaching and conflict resolution services for public safety leaders across Australia. Andy has partnered with AFAC on the delivery of the Strategic Command Program since 2017.

Andy holds a Masters of Leadership and Management from the University of Canberra, a graduate of Australian Command and Staff College from the Department of Defence, and has completed the Art and Practice of Leadership Program at the JFK School of Government at Harvard University. Andy is an accredited Executive Coach across a range of both individual and leadership team coaching disciplines.



Mr Shane Fitzsimmons AO AFSM GAICD
AFAC Facilitator

Shane is currently Managing Director, SAF Leading Advisory, the Board Chair of Youth Insearch Foundation (Australia) Inc, the National Emergency Medal Committee, and the NSW Connectivity Innovation Network.

Shane served as the inaugural Commissioner of Resilience NSW from May 2020 to December 2022, an organisation established as the lead agency for disaster recovery with a focus on social, economic, infrastructure and environmental outcomes. This appointment followed a distinguished career with the NSW Rural Fire Service (NSW RFS) of over 35 years, as both a volunteer and salaried member.



Ms Sandra Lunardi OAM
Director Workforce Management, AFAC

Sandra is the Director of Workforce Development at the Australasian Fire and Emergency Service Authorities Council (AFAC). This directorate involves human resources management, employee relations, learning and development, work health and safety, volunteer management, and digital immersive learning.

With over 25 years of experience in fire and emergency services and more than a decade in the education sector, Sandra has been instrumental in developing common standards in prevention, preparedness, response, and recovery across public safety organisations. Sandra holds multiple degrees and postgraduate qualifications in education and management.



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'The Strategic Command program offers great insight to yourself, your peers and your contemporary leaders. The immersive experience provides a safe and supportive environment to go beyond transactional thought and test some traditional command assumptions.'

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