

# EMS at the Apocalypse

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# Disclosures

- \* None – easy !
- \* Not an entrepreneur and rubbish at making money out of social media !



# St John, New Zealand


- \* 4.5 Million people spread over 260,000 km<sup>2</sup>
- \* Rural and urban case mix
- \* ~3500 staff
- \* 400 vehicles
- \* ~1250 Emergency calls per day
- \* 3 qualification levels with para-medicine in NZ
  - \* Emergency Medical Technician (25%)
  - \* Paramedic (60%)
  - \* Intensive Care Paramedic (15%)



# Planning for big disasters.

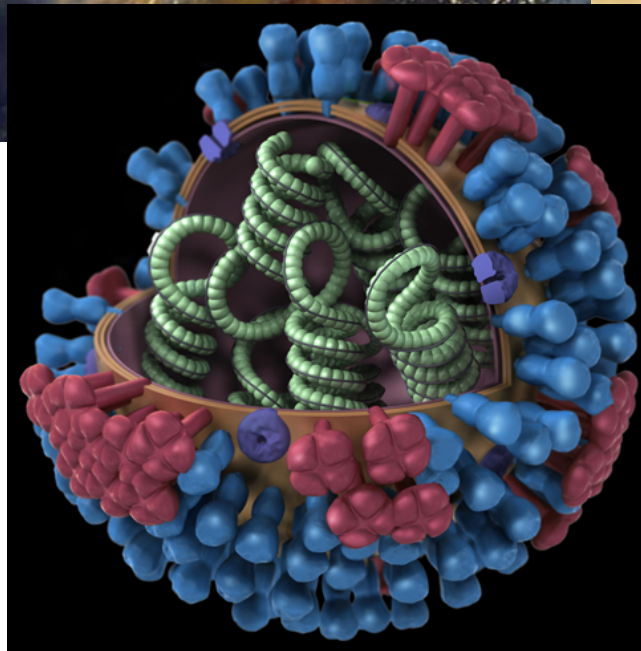
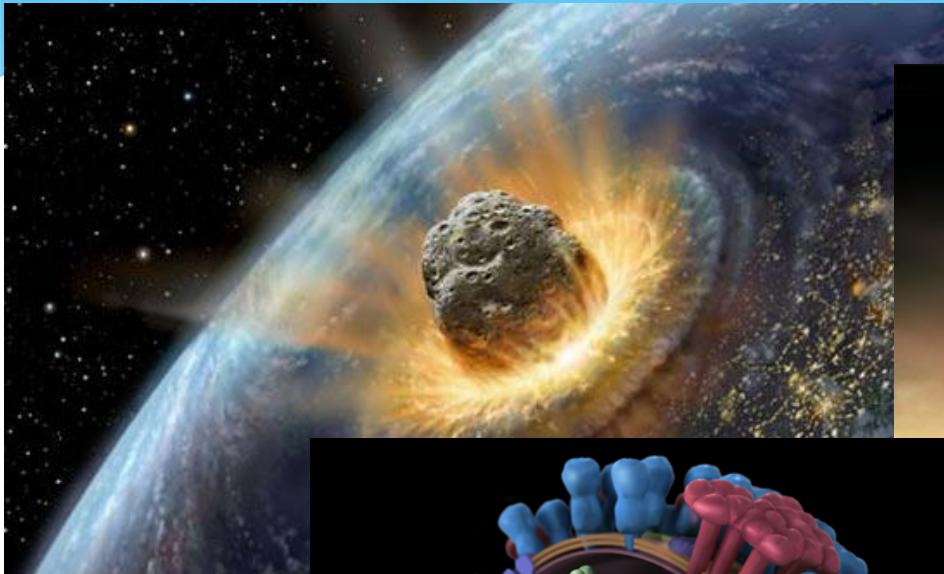


How long does a disaster last  
and who comes to help you?

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- \* Assumption of an escalating response depending on severity.
    - \* Local resources
    - \* State-wide resources
    - \* National / Federal resources
    - \* International response
  - \* How long can your service operate without resupply?
  - \* How long can you provide “hotel” service to your staff during a disaster?



# What if its bigger than big....



4-designer.com



# A new job.....

- \* Beware anyone who shoulder taps you and asks if you would like a job .....
- \* Large multi-national company. Interesting.... Not bad money either ..... But a 3 page confidentiality agreement.
- \* “Develop a strategy for the implementation and operational parameters for an emergency health service for the Australian and European Continuity of Business facilities in the event of major multi-country catastrophe for a minimum period of 1 year for staff and their dependents at these facilities”

Some big business have  
plans for the End of the  
World..... And we don't.

Are they cutting edge disruptive thinkers or are  
they paranoid and mad?

**IT'S A CONSPIRACY!**



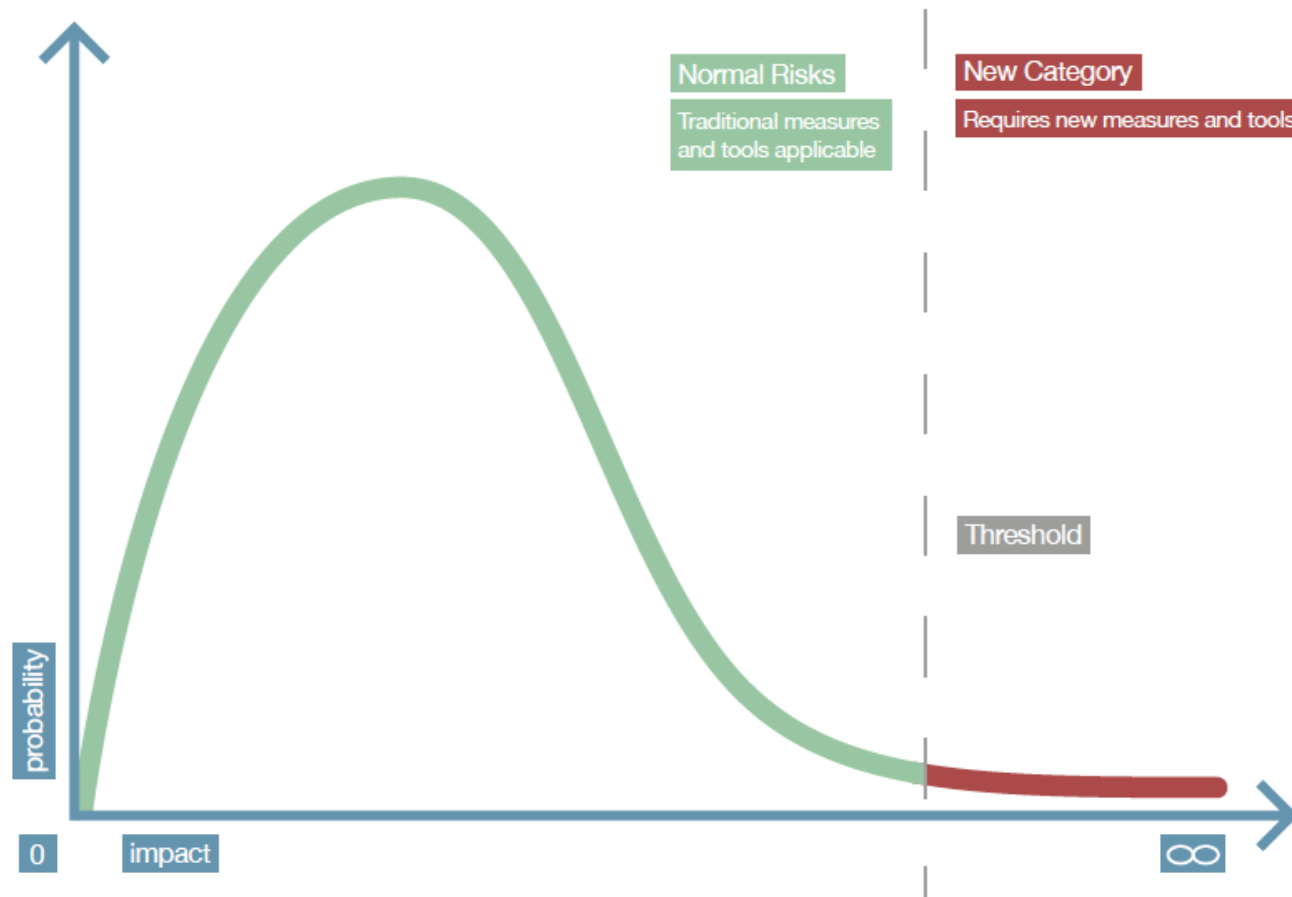
PRESERVE THE AMERICAN DREAM



# Black swan events

Low frequency / High consequence







Extreme  
Climate Change



Nuclear War



Global  
Pandemic



Ecological  
Catastrophe



Global System  
Collapse



Major Asteroid  
Impact



Super-volcano



Synthetic  
Biology



Nanotechnology



Artificial  
Intelligence




Unknown  
Consequences



Future Bad  
Global Governance

# Key points from business continuity planning:

- \* Most of our Emergency Response plans are for 72 hours to 7 days at an absolute maximum.
- \* Some big businesses are planning for disasters of > 12 months duration. Planning involves:
  - \* Looking after staff and their families
  - \* Ensuring business continuity
  - \* Track assets and debts (you cannot escape your mortgage even at the end of the world)

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- \* Fundamentally selfish model.
    - \* Consistent with underlying nature of multi-nationals?
  - \* Building bunkers and calling them “Business Continuity Centre's”
    - \* At first glance looks like a normal office.
    - \* Computers and office space like any modern business, but:
      - \* Food stored
      - \* Fuel stored
      - \* Medical systems and supplies
      - \* Shelter / Bedding
      - \* Unusual levels of security



# Families

- \* Strong focus on looking after staff's families.
- \* Assumption is employees will not come to work or stay at work if family is at risk.
- \* Significant part of \$\$ investment is in caring for families.

# Cost

- \* It is very expensive to push disaster plans beyond a few days.
- \* Current project I am working on is a multi-million one.
- \* It was the amount of money being spent which took this from realms of fantasy paranoia and made me think about it in more detail. (although it may well still be fantasy paranoia !!!)

# Should we / Can we emulate any of this type of planning?

- \* State and Central / Federal Government will not endorse spending big dollars on Black Swan events (even though they probably do it themselves)
- \* Is it over the top ?
  - \* More money than sense ?
- \* 72 hrs of delivery of service and staff support is insufficient.
  - \* How long is realistic / cost effective ?


# What can we do?

- \* Look after your employees families and make sure you support of them is part of your disaster planning.
- \* If you are only prepared for 72 hours push it out to 5 or 7 days.
- \* It is not simply about ambulances, diesel and medical supplies. Its about clean water, food, warmth and security first and service delivery second.



# Summary

- \* A lot of smart (albeit self-interested) people are prepared to spend a lot of money and resources on planning for apocalyptic level disasters
- \* Current dogma for most EMS services is that the longest period of time they are required to operate independently is 72-96 hrs before back-up / resupply – that's not long enough.

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- \* Across wider business community there is a recognition that looking after families keeps people working.
  - \* Should we reconsider our assumptions around the scale of potential disasters and our preparations for them?
  - \* Is it worth it for EMS? Is there any value for money?



*WHAT'S YOUR ULTIMATE LIFESTYLE?*

Statistically:

The end of the world is more likely in your lifetime than  
you are to win lotto !

How many people in the room buy Lotto tickets?

HOW GREAT WOULD IT FEEL?



\* Further reading if you're paranoid.....

“Global Challenges: 12 risks that threaten human civilization”

Global Challenges Foundation,  
Oxford University, 2015

## Global Challenges

 12 Risks that threaten human civilisation

*The case for a new risk category*





# Questions or Comments ?

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