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Media Release: 8 November 2010

Australian Government backs national children's program on natural hazards education

The Australian Government through the Attorney-General's Department (AGD) 2010-2011 National Emergency Management Program, is funding a children's awareness and education campaign focused on natural hazards including floods, storms tsunamis and cyclones.

In November this year, a national campaign consisting of 10 x 30 second TV commercials, using the Li'L Larikkins 3D animated* characters will launch, supported by other promotional activities including a school resources kit, a local SES unit "how to" toolbox and other social marketing initiatives. Lead characters, Trev and Bob**, will wear orange safety vests to reinforce awareness of the SES.

Australian emergency service agencies currently deliver a range of community education, awareness and engagement programs, to increase community preparedness for a variety of natural hazard events. Traditionally these programs have targeted adults as the decision makers within the family and broader community. However, the influence of children as household advocates is well known. For example, focusing on children as advocates has been used successfully by fire agencies to encourage parents to fit smoke alarms and change batteries.

The same attention has not been given to educating children about natural hazards including floods, storms, cyclones and tsunami - UNTIL NOW .

Inquiries into bushfire and other natural disasters repeatedly acknowledge the need to increase levels of knowledge and preparedness across the broader community. As natural hazard events become more frequent, and potentially more intense, an approach based on generational change is required if communities of the future are to become more resilient in being prepared.

Naomi Brown CEO of the Australasian Fire and Emergency Service Authorities Council (AFAC) said AFAC are delighted to be working with the SES in every State and Territory to support this campaign.

"The 30 second commercials will be screened nationally and supported by communications programs to local SES units/groups to assist them engage their local community, including schools. In addition, a curriculum kit, planned for early next year, will be sent to every State, Independent and Catholic primary school in Australia. I applaud the backing of the Australian Government to this very worthwhile initiative," she said.

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OR

The SES media unit in your State/Territory

***More about the Li'L Larikkins 3D animation series.**

Li'L Larikkins is a 26 half-hour 3D animation series created and produced by the Ettamogah Group, in Melbourne Australia and will screen on Network TEN.

****More about Trev and Bob**

*Two of the Li'L Larikkins gang who wear orange safety vests for the safety campaign, to represent SES agencies. **Bob the dog** a loveable hound who provides a constant source of laughter to all the animals. His abiding quality is his loyalty and love for **Trev** – a junior myth-buster and mechanical genius rolled into one. His inventions are often the cause and solution to all the gang's problems.*