Australian Institute for Disaster Resilience

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AEML – Australian Emergency Management Library

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

1. **What is the AEML?**
    The Australian Emergency Management Library is a nationally accessible source of emergency management information. Resources in the library reflect the diversity of information in the sector. Content spans themes including disaster recovery and business continuity, leadership skills and effective risk management. The library houses resources of national interest and significance. Since opening in 1956, the library has grown into one of the largest of its kind in Australia, providing services to universities, local governments, individuals and the emergency management sector.

2. **Why is the AEML being decommissioned?**
    The AEML library is being decommissioned as part of a broader transition to a digital first model. This change reflects the evolving needs of the world, reduces physical storage requirements, and enables more dynamic ways to share knowledge.

    AIDR has been contracted by NEMA to manage the AEML and oversee its decommissioning as a formal contract deliverable. As part of this process, items will be reviewed for archiving, redistribution, or public giveaway.

3. **What will happen to the library resources now that the library is being decommissioned?**
    We are currently working on an audit of all AEML resources to assess their relevance, sensitivity, ownership and potential value. Once this process is complete, resources will be either digitized, reallocated to another library, transferred to the National Archives or made available to the public through a giveaway or book sale. Final decisions will be based on content type, ownership and long-term borrowing need.

4. **Will any resources be made available online?**
    Many AEML materials are already available online via existing platforms. We are currently auditing the collection to work out which resources are available online or via other libraries. For those that do not fall into these categories, with support from the Home Affairs archiving team, we will consider digitizing selected resources on a case-by-case basis.

5. **How are decisions being made on what to keep or discard?**
    We are considering several factors when deciding what to retain, digitize or make available to others. Some of the criteria include who published the resource, whether it is unique or available elsewhere, its relevance, and its potential public interest or historical value. This assessment is part of a broader audit currently underway.

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6. **Who can I contact if I have specific questions about a resource?**
Please contact us via library@aidr.org.au

7. **I am interested in obtaining a particular resource. What is the process for this?**
If you are looking for a specific resource from the AEML, please email us via
library@aidr.org.au with the details of what you are after. We will check its availability and
let you know if we are able to pass this resource on. Please note that if the item is available,
you will need to arrange collection at your own cost.

8. **Will the public still be able to access these resources, once the library is fully
decommissioned?**
Many AEML resources are already publicly available/accessible online via other existing
platforms. For materials that are not currently available, we are working through an audit to
determine the best approach. Some resources may be digitized, reallocated to other
libraries, or transferred to public archives such as the National Archives or the National
Library of Australia.
As part of this process, the **AEML library lookup website** will be decommissioned, and we
will be exiting our agreement with AELIA for shared library resources. We are committed to
preserving access to DRR knowledge where possible and will share more information as
plans progress.

9. **What is being done to maintain historical or culturally significant items?**
We are reviewing each item individually to determine its significance and whether it's
already held by another library or institute. We are keeping detailed records of this process.
Items that are not held elsewhere and are considered historically or culturally valuable will
be reallocated to appropriate repositories such as the National Archives, to ensure they are
preserved and accessible in future.

10. **How do I stay up to date with the progress?**
We will be sharing monthly updates through the AIDR newsletter and posting regular check
ins on our social media channels. To subscribe to the AIDR Newsletter, please email
enquiries@aidr.org.au. These updates will include key milestones, opportunities to engage
with the process.

11. **What will happen to the items that are not digitized or retained?**
Resources that are not selected for archiving or digitization will be considered in the first
instance for reallocation to other libraries. Where appropriate, some resources may be
available to the public through giveaways or a book sale. This is our way of thanking the
community for being part of the library for sixty years.

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12. Where and when will the book sale be?

We are still finalizing the details, but we are aiming to hold the book sale in time for Christmas – perfect for stocking your stockings with something meaningful and soaked in history. Keep an eye on the AIDR newsletter and our social media channels for updates, and if you do grab a book, we would love to see your festive photos – email us at impacts@aidr.org.au

13. Will any rare or significant publications be excluded from the book sale?

Yes – any resources identified as rare, historically significant or not held elsewhere will be excluded from the book sale. These resources will be prioritised for preservation to ensure that these important resources are retained.