

Media Release

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UN Adviser to speak at National Fire Conference

The Fire Protection Association Australia (FPA Australia) is excited to announce a world leader in sustainable development, Gary Lawrence, as a key note speaker for the upcoming 2007 Fire Australia conference and exhibition.

Gary's expertise is supported by his experience advising an extensive list of prominent sustainability bodies worldwide, including the UN's Habitat II committee, the Clinton Administration's Council on Sustainable Development, the US Agency for International Development, the Brazilian President's Office, the British Prime Minister's Office, the European Academy for Urban Environment in Berlin and the Organisation for Economic and Community Development (Paris).

Gary is currently Urban Strategies leader at Arup, a global consulting and engineering firm, ensuring his background is well suited for the upcoming conference and exhibition themed *Fire Protection and the Environment – Planning a Sustainable Future*.

FPA Australia's Executive Director, Ross Hodge stated "the theme of this year's Fire Australia conference and exhibition is appropriate as climate change, drought and sustainable cities are becoming increasingly important topics on political and technology agendas worldwide. While fires contribute to global warming and environmental damage, water shortages and pressure management programs are challenging many of the basic concepts of fire protection".

"Gary's presentation entitled '*Disaster Resilience and Climate Change*' addresses issues of climate change within the context of future sustainability and resistance. He will talk about coastal communities at risk, water and food shortages, wildfires and the economic impact of climate change", said Mr Hodge.



Gary Lawrence renowned expert in Urban Development will be sharing his expertise at Fire Australia 2007.

An overview of some of the facts to be discussed by Gary are:

- Over 17 million people in Bangladesh live at less than 1.5 metres above sea level
- Two thirds of the world's population will face water shortages by 2025
- In the US wildfires occurred four times more often during 1987–2003 than during 1970–1986
- Longer seasons and more potent wildfires are linked to global warming and earlier Springs in the Western US
- The overall costs and risks of climate change will be equivalent to losing at least 5% of global GDP each year, now and forever

“Gary’s contribution to the Fire Australia 2007 conference and exhibition is highly anticipated, and is expected to be extremely beneficial to anyone with an interest in sustainability and fire safety” added Mr Hodge.

The Fire Protection 2007 conference and exhibition will be held in Perth at the Burswood Complex, from 22-24 October. The Fire Protection Association Australia is the country’s peak body for fire safety, providing information, services and training to the fire protection industry and broader community.

For further information on Gary Lawrence, a Fire Australia 2007 full program overview or general enquiries, please visit www.fireaustralia.com.au or contact the FPA Australia on 1300 731 922.

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