



Researchers Call for Better Disaster Resilience: 21st Century Civil Defence

Australia's public health response to Covid-19 has proven to be among the world's best so far, but the country is less well equipped to deliver an exit strategy from the global economic catastrophe ahead. The Berejiklian plan to set up Resilience NSW is evidence of the demand for new institutional responses especially for cyber crises and climate change threats. These issues will be discussed at a [seminar on Resilience Planning after Covid-19](#) on 5 May.

The seminar will feature Professor Glenn Withers, of ANU and USW Canberra, immediate past president of the Academy of Social Sciences of Australia, and Academic Director of the Social Cyber Institute; Adam Henry, Director of Education and Research Programs at FifthDomain, an adjunct lecturer at UNSW Canberra, and a Senior Adviser at the Social Cyber Institute; and Professor Greg Austin of the University of New South Wales, a Senior Fellow at the International Institute of Strategic Studies, and Senior Adviser at the Social Cyber Institute.

Speaking ahead of the seminar, Glenn Withers said that "One key lesson of the pandemic is to have expert advice in place. Social and economic planning strengths for recovery need to be even more in evidence from Day One. There were good responses but more are required. Australia needs economic and social resilience planning that both anticipates and goes beyond emergency support packages."

"The soon to be released Australian cyber security strategy needs dramatically different approaches to education than we have seen so far," observed Adam Henry. "We have to create a new pipeline of multidisciplinary cyber crisis experts and we will need a plan for that -- especially in professional education. We can't leave this to chance again".

Greg Austin drew attention to the national Influenza Pandemic Plan of 2019. "Great plan, but it has little but health responses in it. And few people in the country knew about it. Australia needs to reconstitute a civil defence function—but one fit for the 21st century. As Premier Berejiklian has suggested, the new function has to include response planning for economic disaster caused by cyber crisis and climate change."

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3 May 2020