About the Contributors

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Alan N Beard is a reader in Fire Safety Engineering at Heriot-Watt University, Edinburgh, UK. His research is in the broad area of modelling in relation to fire safety, including deterministic and probabilistic modelling, as well as qualitative research, in particular applying the concepts of systems to safety and natural disasters management. More generally, he is helping to develop a framework for the acceptable use of fire models in fire safety decision-making. Dr Beard is Co-Editor of The Handbook of Tunnel Fire Safety, which was published in 2005. He studied physics at Leicester University and in 1972 was awarded a PhD in theoretical physics from Durham University.

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David Chester is a graduate of the Universities of Durham and Aberdeen and has spent most of his academic life at the University of Liverpool. He is currently Reader (Associate Professor) in the Department of Geography, and has worked on volcanoes and volcanic hazards for more than thirty years. A priest in the Anglican (Episcopalian) Church, David Chester has more recently become interested in religious responses to natural disasters.

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About the Contributors

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Flavio Fuart has worked as Scientific/Technical officer at the Joint Research Centre of the European Commission since 2005, with a one year break when he worked as free-lance consultant for the UN. He develops user interface components, analytical tools for media monitoring and domain-specific derivations of the EMM system. He shows particular interest in MedISys as he had previously worked for ten years as Project Manager, Software Architect and Developer in the R&D department of a leading Slovenian solution provider of information systems for the healthcare sector. Flavio holds a University Degree in Computer Engineering from the University of Ljubljana.

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Erik van der Goot is one of the original developers of MedISys/EMM and started work on open source monitoring in 2002. He has developed many of the EMM components, is responsible for the overall system design and is still actively developing software. He currently leads a team of 20 developers and researchers working on open source text information mining and analysis. His original background is in Mechanical Engineering, he holds an MSc in Computer Science and has been developing software since 1978. Erik is Dutch and has worked in the Netherlands, the UK and for the last 14 years at the JRC in Italy.

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Matina Halkia is an architect engineer and human computer interaction expert. Her core research interests lie in augmented reality/ICT applications in physical/architectural space. She is currently working on emergency response map validation and urban analysis for remote sensing applications in human security contexts. She has studied History of Art and Architecture at Tufts University under a Fulbright Scholarship and Media Arts and Sciences at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. She has worked as an interaction designer in Boston (1997-1998), and as principal investigator at Starlab Laboratories, a technology think-tank, in Brussels (1998-2001). Since 2001 she works for the Joint Research Centre of the European Commission, currently at the Global Security and Crisis Management Unit, as a scientific officer.

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Delilah Al Khudhairy graduated with a first class honours BSc (Eng.) and PhD degrees in Materials Science Engineering from London University. She was employed at British Gas, UK, before joining the Joint Research Centre, European Commission, in 1990. Her research areas have covered x-ray and electron scattering (scanning and transmission), x-ray diffraction, numerical modelling, and remote sensing. She has been the head of the Global Security and Crisis Management, GLOBESEC, Unit at the Joint Research Centre since 2004. Today, the GLOBESEC Unit specialises in open source text information mining and analysis, geo-spatial information extraction and analysis, statistical data mining and analysis, and collaborative crisis management technologies. On the basis of this expertise, the GLOBESEC Unit provides scientific and technical support to EU policies concerned with crisis management.

Pierre Kuonen obtained a Master degree in electrical engineering from the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology (EPFL) in 1982. After six year of experience in industry he joined the Computer Science Theory Laboratory at EPFL in 1988 and received his Ph.D degree in 1993. From that time, he steadily worked in the field of parallel and distributed computing. First at EPFL where he founded and managed the GRIP (Parallel Computing Research Group) then at the University of Applied Science of Valais. Since 2003 he is full professor at the University of Applied Science of Fribourg in the Information and Communication technologies department where he is leading the GRID & Ubiquitous Computing Group.
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Jens P. Linge is a scientific officer at the Joint Research Centre of the European Commission focusing on open-source media monitoring in the area of public health. Before joining the European Commission, he has worked in the structural bioinformatics unit at the Pasteur Institute in Paris and for a renowned patent law firm in Munich. From 1997 to 2000, he has been a Ph.D. student at the European Molecular Biology Laboratory (EMBL) in Heidelberg. Jens holds a master’s degree in physics and a master’s degree in biochemistry, both obtained at the Ruhr-University Bochum in Germany.

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Danielle Mirliss an Associate Director at Seton Hall University’s Teaching, Learning and Technology Center. She is responsible for overseeing the Instructional Design and Training team in a variety of faculty and student support initiatives. She has been part of the Instructional Design team at Seton Hall for six years and has a broad range of experience in mobile computing, pen-based computing, course redesign, online learning, virtual worlds and assessment. Before coming to Seton Hall, she was an Instructional Designer at The Distance Learning Project, an online division of Columbia University. Mirliss is a candidate for the Ed.D in Instructional Technology and Media from Teachers College, Columbia University. She also received her Ed.M from the same program and her M.A. in Industrial and Organizational Psychology from New York University.
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About the Contributors

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Helena Zemp is currently a PhD. candidate and research assistant at the Institute of Mass Communication and Media Research (IPMZ) at the University of Zürich in Switzerland. Her research interests and current studies focus on media coverage of natural disasters and risk communication. The research is interdisciplinary, combining media content analysis with audience research and the historical context; thus, providing an under-examined perspective on natural hazard communications. The research addresses the implications of effective communication with regard to natural hazards in a fast changing media environment and new ICTs for risk awareness and crisis management. In this capacity Ms. Zemp has contributed to a number of interdisciplinary forums focussed on both studying disaster communications and developing frameworks for crisis management. The research project is co-funded by the Federal Office for the Environment (FOEN), the University of Zürich and a private environmental foundation.