

# Media Release

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## Innovative Queensland Crisis Response Recognised in Top IT Awards

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**Melbourne:** A sophisticated mapping website that guided Brisbane through the January 2011 Flood has been recognised for its significant contribution to the community, after winning a Merit at the National iAwards in Melbourne last night.

Esri Australia's Brisbane City Council (BCC) Flood Map, which was developed using Geographic Information System (GIS) technology, received the accolade in the prestigious iAwards' 'e-Government' category.

Esri Australia has now been invited to take their innovation to Thailand, to compete in the Asia Pacific ICT Alliance Awards later this year.

Esri Australia Managing Director Brett Bundock said the Merit Award was a wonderful acknowledgement of his company's hard work during the Queensland natural disasters.

"Esri Australia's head office is in Brisbane and during the floods we had family, friends and clients affected by the crisis, so it became very personal for us.

"We knew what our technology was capable of and how useful the Flood Map could be to the response efforts – and felt compelled to act.

"The iAwards celebrate the very best in Australian innovation and we are honoured and humbled to receive this endorsement."

Flood Map compiled flood data from across disaster-struck Brisbane – such as flood peaks, road closures and evacuation centres – onto a map to provide a comprehensive, real-time picture of the flood.

It was a key information source for emergency response teams and the Brisbane City Council, guiding recovery operations and supporting critical decisions; and received more than three million hits from members of the public who accessed the map at the height of the crisis.

The ongoing development of the solution during Queensland's Tropical Cyclone Yasi saw the integration of social media updates – the technology crowd sourced tweets, Flickr photos and YouTube videos and linked them to their relevant location on the map.

"This was a monumental innovation because it provided every Australian with a direct connection to how communities were responding to the crises," said Mr Bundock.

“It was the first time during a disaster situation in this country that such an enormous collection of community-generated material and official information had been combined on the one interface.”

The iAwards, now in their 17<sup>th</sup> year, honours both companies at the cutting edge of technology innovation, and the contribution this innovation provides to the community.

Esri Australia is the country’s leading location intelligence and GIS specialist.

The importance of the BCC Flood Map was also acknowledged last month when the project was selected from an international pool of 100,000 nominees to receive a 2011 Special Achievement in GIS Award, presented annually by Esri Inc. to recognise excellence in the application of their GIS technology.

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**About Esri Australia**

Esri Australia has a 33 year history of providing location intelligence and data mapping solutions that help organisations make smart business decisions. The combination of local expertise and world-leading Esri GIS technology has helped thousands of government departments and commercial organisations to turn their data, information and knowledge into collective insight to reveal opportunity.

**About GIS**

Geographic Information Systems are a key piece of technology used in thousands of organisations Australia-wide from the military and government, to the insurance and mining sector. Australia’s GIS industry currently stands at over \$2.1 billion and more than 300,000 organisations across the world use Esri GIS.