



Press Release - October 2007

## **WEB-BASED MAPPING SERVICE HIGHLIGHTS NATURAL HAZARDS TO AUSTRALIAN PROPERTIES**

MapData Sciences Pty Ltd has launched two online services which summarise natural hazard threats to individual Australian addresses.

The Natural Hazard Risk Profile application and the Natural Hazard Risk web service provide “threat by peril” risk ratings for bushfire, earthquake, hailstorm, tropical cyclone, and, where available, riverine flood.

The risk rating profile report and database were developed by Risk Frontiers, a world leader in quantitative natural hazards risk assessment.

The services are available to individuals and corporate clients.

Risk Frontiers director Professor John McAneney said there is an increasing demand for this type of information from various consumers and organisations.

“It is now part of the due diligence process to obtain engineering reports on the structure prior to purchasing a property. Similarly, purchases should be transacted with some understanding of natural hazard threats to the property.

“While no substitute for a property inspection, we expect these products to become a standard part of the due diligence in property transactions, assist mortgage providers and insurers make risk-informed decisions and help emergency managers more efficiently allocate and manage resources.”

Profiles provide scientific information relevant to the various threats and a ranking of the relative threat by peril along with elevation above mean sea level, aspect and distance from the shoreline.

Professor McAneney said Risk Frontiers selected MapData Sciences to provide the services because of its demonstrated strengths in developing and providing online services related to spatial information.

MDS managing director, Laurie Edwards said institutional users can access the natural Hazards Risk Rating database as a subscription service through the MDS Risk Frontiers Natural Hazards Risk Web Service, a programmable web service hosted by MDS. It is used by enterprises and independent software developers to integrate individual street address risk rating data into software applications and business processes.

“By integrating the Natural Hazards Risk Data Web Service, a corporate system can determine the risk rating of a property in real-time to determine the premium for house and contents insurance, for example. This enables organisations to speedily handle phone or web based inquiries from prospective customers, or to assess the risk of existing customer’s properties,” Mr. Edwards said.

Mr Edwards said the MDS Web Service enables cost-effective access to the Risk Frontiers Natural Hazards Risk Data and is very cost-effective because it removes the IT management burden. The service can be easily used by developers with any modern development environment and service levels are in excess of 99.0 percent uptime.

For \$50 excluding GST, individuals can access MDS’ Risk Frontiers Natural Hazard Risk Profile Application Reports at [www.mapds.com.au/solutions\\_risk\\_frontiers.aspx](http://www.mapds.com.au/solutions_risk_frontiers.aspx) and pay by



credit card, enabling a registered user to determine the risk rating for a property at a chosen street address.

The street address is validated in the Risk Frontiers Natural Hazards Risk Rating database to determine the property's risk of bushfire, flood, earthquake, hailstorm and cyclone. The application issues a PDF report which contains a table of risk ratings and a series of maps identifying the location of the property.

The Risk Frontiers research team is responsible for maintaining and upgrading the database supporting these new products. It plans ongoing improvements to the coverage and information content of these products.

Risk Frontiers is a world leader in quantitative natural hazards risk assessment which has been studying natural hazard risks to life and property for more than a decade. Natural hazards studied include bushfires, floods, hail, earthquakes, tropical cyclones, volcanoes and tsunami.

Through research into the likelihood and costs of natural disasters, Risk Frontiers aims to build safer communities, aid in the responsible management of natural hazard risks and assist the insurance industry in pricing catastrophe risks.

Risk Frontiers is a non-profit organization sponsored by insurance industry partners: Swiss Re, Australian Reinsurance Pool Corporation, IAG Insurance, QBE, Suncorp-GIO, Promina, Aon Re, Benfield Australia and Guy Carpenter. For more information visit [www.riskfrontiers.com](http://www.riskfrontiers.com)