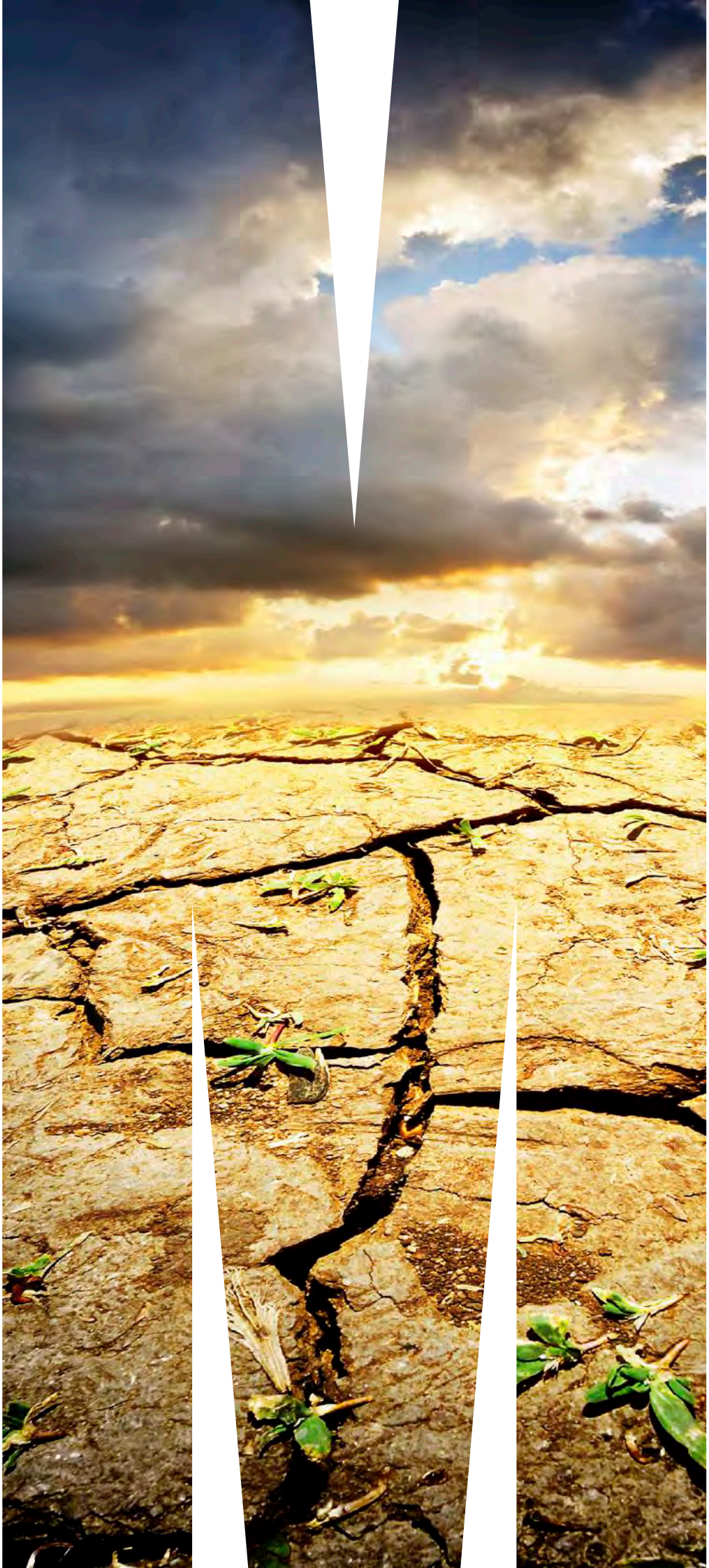
MONASH University

DISASTER RESILIENCE INITIATIVE AND EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT VICTORIA

COMPENDIUM OF VICTORIAN COMMUNITY-BASED RESILIENCE BUILDING CASE STUDIES



monash.edu/compendium

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Foreword

MUDRI / EMV Compendium of Victorian Community-based Resilience Building Case Studies

In an Australian first this Compendium enables Victorians to showcase their resilience building activities through shared learnings, insights and challenges.

Driven by the Monash University Disaster Resilience Initiative (MUDRI) and supported by Emergency Management Victoria, the Compendium supports communities, government, agencies and business to strengthen resilience within communities.

Our shared vision to improve the capacity of Victorians to withstand, plan for, respond, recover and adapt to emergency incidents and disruptive events set the foundation for the development of *The MUDRI / EMV Compendium of Victorian Community-based Resilience Building Case Studies.*

Through Victorians sharing their ideas, explaining how they have overcome challenges, discovered new directions or realised unexpected findings, we have been able to develop a collection of learnings that will continue to evolve over time.

Our goal in developing the Compendium was to connect people across Victorian communities, reduce program duplication, save valuable resources and provide access to the Compendium as a way to share community-based resilience building activities.

The Compendium hence represents a resource that promotes resilience building activities to community members wanting to strengthen their own community's resilience through being able to draw on the examples and expertise embedded within the case studies.

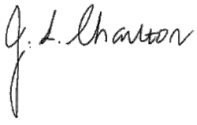
MUDRI is proud to deliver this resource collection which has been developed, improved and progressed over a number of years. The initial idea for the Compendium was borne out of a series of Annual Forums that were developed to explore the national and political mandate to adopt a coordinated, resilience based approach to emergency and disaster management. As a result about 56 case studies were showcased as part of the community resilience building forum across five years. The need to recognise and capture these learnings in a single repository ignited the development of the Compendium.

A natural partnership was formed with EMV as its mandate to maximise the ability of the emergency management sector to work as one to build safer and more resilient communities matched the Compendium's objectives.

The Compendium complements a number of resilience initiatives being developed across Victoria and it has subsequently been incorporated into the Resilient Melbourne Strategy. Driven by the City of Melbourne, the strategy brings together people from across sectors, council boundaries and community groups to deliver a series of distinct, yet connected actions that will help to make Melbourne an even more viable, sustainable, liveable and prosperous city, today and long into the future.

MUDRI and EMV invite you to contribute your community-based resilience building activity to the Compendium, so together we can use shared experiences and learnings to strengthen community resilience across Victoria.

Associate Professor Jude Charlton
Acting Director
Monash University Accident Research Centre



Emergency Management Commissioner
Craig Lapsley
Emergency Management Victoria

Monash Vision

Monash will strive to achieve excellence in research and education, built through a deep and extensive engagement with the world, to serve the good of our communities and environment. Underpinned by deep and enduring relationships with partners in industry, government, non-governmental organisations and other universities, our research will solve grand Challenges and set global agendas. Our education will be infused with internationalism and enterprise. It will seek out and embrace the talented, without regard to their social or economic circumstances. Our staff and students will reflect the world we are working towards: diverse, inclusive, innovative and sustainable

Monash Strategic Plan 2015-2020

Emergency Management Victoria Vision

Safer and more Resilient Communities

Victorian Emergency Management Strategic Action Plan 2015-2018

We acknowledge the Traditional Owners, and Elders past and present, of all the lands on which the Monash University operates.

Introduction

MUDRI / EMV Compendium of Victorian Community-based Resilience Building Case Studies

The Monash University Disaster Resilience Initiative (MUDRI) and Emergency Management Victoria (EMV) share a strong interest in assisting Victorian communities develop and strengthen their resilience, particularly in the setting of emergency management, natural disasters and disruptive events.

This shared interest set the foundation for the development of The MUDRI / EMV Compendium of Victorian Community-based Resilience Building Activities, which is the first of its kind in Australia to feature resilience case studies, shared learnings, insights and challenges.

The Compendium enables people to showcase their resilience building activities to other Victorians, with the creators of each case study able to share ideas, explain how they overcame challenges and discovered unexpected findings. It also represents a comprehensive resource that promotes resilience building activities to others and supports them to strengthen resilience in their own communities by providing examples and expertise.

MUDRI Goals

Connect people across Victorian communities

Reduce program duplication

Save valuable resources

Access to Compendium to share Community-based Resilience Building Activities

MUDRI Role

Established in 2012, the Monash University Disaster Resilience Initiative (MUDRI) builds on a 10 year history of contributions in this domain which were initially developed from a base within the Faculty of Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences. MUDRI is now an academic unit within the Monash University Accident Research Centre (MUARC) and contributes to the Centre's world leading research and training to reduce the incidence and impact of injury. Its research is interdisciplinary, applying a systems-based framework across transport, workplace, home and community sectors. Key to the Centre's success is stakeholder engagement and delivery of relevant research with real-world solutions.

Emergency Management Victoria Role

Emergency Management Victoria is tasked with the mandate to lead the emergency management sector by working with communities, government, agencies and business to strengthen their capacity to withstand, plan for, respond to and recover from emergencies.

Together, the sector works as one to achieve a shared vision of safer and more resilient communities by creating a sustainable and efficient emergency management system that reduces the likelihood, effect and consequences of emergencies.

Compendium history

The idea for the development of the Compendium was borne out of the Monash University Disaster Resilience Forums. The focus of the Forums reflected the national and political mandate to adopt a coordinated, resilience based approach to emergency and disaster management. As research-driven and interactive knowledge transfers, the Forums brought together a cross-section of academics, emergency management practitioners and community members to discuss, debate and explore contemporary issues. The Forum themes included: New Innovations; Community-based Resilience Building Activities, Risk, Reform, Resilience; and Research Symposium.

An outcome of the Community-based Resilience Building Activities Forum was that 56 resilience building case studies were captured across five years. Recognising the need to record these case studies in a single repository, led to the idea to produce a Compendium.

As the mandate of EMV is to maximise the ability of the emergency management sector to work as one to build safer and more resilient communities, a natural partnership was formed. EMV supported the development of the Compendium and provided the funding to publish this important piece of work.

In an Australian first, we are very proud to have created the *MUDRI / EMV Compendium of Victorian Community-based Resilience Building Case Studies* to assist communities build and strengthen their resilience.

Guidelines and Template for Compendium

For people or community groups wanting to submit a Resilience Building Activity case study for consideration in the MUDRI / EMV Compendium please use the online link for the guidelines and the template.

For further information on enquiries, contact Dr Caroline Spencer: (03) 9905 4397 caroline.spencer@monash.edu

The MUDRI / EMV Compendium Steering Group

MUDRI

Emeritus Professor Frank Archer

Ms Suzanne Cross

Mr Dudley McArdle

Dr Caroline Spencer

EMV

Mr Joe Buffone (to November 2015)

Mr John Schauble (from March 2017)

Mr Steve Cameron

Dr Holly Foster

Acknowledgements

Many people who actively strengthen the resilience of their communities made significant contributions in making this MUDRI / EMV Compendium a reality. To all of you, the MUDRI team thanks you for your commitment, your energy, and your creativity. Most importantly your patience in what became a protracted delivery!

Emergency Management Victoria staff worked with the MUDRI team to create an Australian first to showcase the resilience building activities from communities across Victoria to enable shared learnings, insights and challenges. A particular thanks goes to Joe Buffone whose vision and funding of the Compendium meant it would become a tool for sharing and learning, and to the Media and Communication staff whose brutal tweaking resulted in a much improved product.

Monash and MUARC staff facilitated a range of expertise which included among just a few activities, negotiating with community leaders about how best to promote their resilience building activities in template format, designing templates and websites, and trawling for a suitable platform from which to present the MUDRI / EMV Compendium. To all of you, the MUDRI team thanks you for your willingness to support us in our endeavour, and too often, at a minutes notice!

Your combined efforts have resulted in this Australian first.

It is not the strongest of the species that survive, nor the most intelligent, but the one most responsive to change.

Charles Darwin

Alpine Shire Council Community Resilience Committee Case Study

Project summary

The 2009 Bushfires Royal Commission Implementation Monitor identified the Alpine Shire Council Community Resilience Committee (ASCCRC) as an example of good practice. The National Disaster Resilience Grants Scheme funded the development of a case study to provide information about the ASCCRC success factors and support the development of local government and community structures to increase disaster resilience.

Background and situation context

History of the Alpine Shire Council's Community Resilience Committee (ASC CRC)

This committee was borne out of the 2006 Alpine bushfires and its role was to act as a recovery committee in response to 2 recent fires in the Alpine Shire in 2003 and 2006/2007.

Both of these fires had a significant economic impact in the Alpine Shire. This committee consisted of government and non-government agencies looking at ways to rejuvenate the economic viability of the area. The composition of the committee today is virtually unchanged apart from including some community members.

Today the ASC CRC is working to inform people of the need to be aware of the risks they face where they live and to better prepare and plan for an emergency in order to allow them to enjoy living in Alpine Shire.

In the event of an emergency, this committee will automatically revert to a 'Recovery Committee' to assist our affected residents to get their lives back on track.

The vision of the ASC CRC is:

'The people of the Alpine Shire will be empowered to choose, influence and respond to change.'

The ASCCRC understands that 'one size does not fit all' in addressing disaster resilience, and offers this case study in the spirit of sharing useful insights with interested communities, agencies and governments seeking to collaborate and share responsibility for community resilience.

The Alpine Shire is situated in the north east of Victoria approximately 300km from Melbourne. In recent times the shire has experienced a prolonged drought, major bushfires (4) and flood events (3) and the loss of agricultural industries.

The Community Resilience Committee is central to the Alpine Shire Council's long-term commitment to working together to build individual and community resilience, thus enabling all residents and visitors to look to the future with hope. For further details about Alpine Shire's resilience planning please see the Resilience Plan 2012-2015 at www.alpineshire.vic.gov.au Emergency – Being Prepared – Community Resilience.

Activities and results

Bushfires – including Black Saturday and the Harrietville fire, Bogong power station development, flooding and storms, loss of tobacco industry, changing agricultural conditions, chestnut blight, drought, climate change, and black spot communications.

Relief and Recovery activities: Black Saturday bushfire relief centre & coordination of recovery services to fire affected people - accommodation, food, counselling, financial assistance, volunteer support, fencing, grants, potable water, feed stations, information & newsletters, 'No Bull' workshops, Men's Health nights, Pamper Days, Mental Health First Aid courses, advocacy letters.

Projects looking beyond the immediate: Coordinating Victorian bushfire recovery funding applications and projects, communication black spots lobbying, disaster anniversary events, recognising volunteers, Neighbourhood Safer Places vulnerable person's register, Victorian bushfire recovery funding applications and projects volunteer training, Victorian Bushfire Appeal Fund Into Our Hands development, safety DVD, information kits and fridge magnets.

Building resilience with communities: Resilience Workshop, Resilience Week, CFA community planning, National Broadband Network planning, Disaster Recovery.

Toolkit workshop, Business Continuity workshops, 'It's Up To You for 72' project, Resilience Month, Farming Seminar – Succession.

Planning & suicide/trauma, Teens and Alcohol Forum, Resilience Emergency Action Prepare (REAP) school sessions, Myrtleford.

Show – Emergency Management Display, Family Violence workshops, Harrietville Community Plan, Community Foundation workshops, Resilience Champions Project, Emergency Information Kits, Health Promotion, Food Security.

Research, planning and policy: Bushfire research, Murray Darling Basin plan submission, ASC Community Resilience Plan, Through Women's Eyes project, heatwave planning, input to Department of Justice Bushfire planning report, Monash University Disaster Resilience Initiative presentations, ASC Liveability Plan, 'Just Ask' conference, Victorian state gender & disaster taskforce, heatwave planning, ASC CRC case study.

Next steps

We're talking about resilience in community, and one of the roles the ASCCRC could look at is how it gets other communities involved and encourage people at the grassroots that have got a project and are going to motivate within the community.

Reflection

Critical factors for success

The relationship building between community/agencies + agencies/agencies that happens at the ASCCRC was clearly identified as being at the heart of all the success factors because it improves networking, communication, avoids duplication and 'adds value', adds new knowledge and enables the agencies and communities to build on existing community resilience and use resilience activities to enhance response and recovery capacity.

Participants are from emergency management agencies, local government, state and federal government departments, local community groups, primary industries, volunteer emergency service organisations, employer groups, environmental organisations, community service agencies, infrastructure providers, academic researchers and local community representatives

Sustainability and potential for replication in other settings

ASC CRC operational success and sustainability factors:

- Bringing a broad range of agencies, community representatives and sectors to the table
- Providing paid facilitator role and local government support
- Creating a safe and trusted meeting place
- Nurturing and valuing members
- Supporting local knowledge
- Nothing is off limits

- Very professional, very timely, very routine
- Taking on change
- Amazing cooperation
- Staying focussed on resilience and involving community
- Building relationships and partnerships
- Being responsive to new members
- Bringing community development approach into a traditional emergency response culture
- Aligning with and contributing to state and federal resilience strategies and emerging research

Sustainability = 8 years of successful action since 2007 following the 2006/7 bushfires

Meetings = 51 bimonthly meetings during the case study period (January 2007 - December 2014)

Attendance = 840 attendees at CRC meetings came from 55 different agencies/groups, average of 19 participants at each meeting, with the minimum number of people at any one meeting being 9 and the maximum being 26.

Additional project details

Lead organisation/s	Alpine Shire Council
Partner/s	Membership consists of: Alpine Shire Council, VicPol, DHHS, DELWP, ParksVic, DHS (Federal), Department of Justice, CFA, SES, VCC EM, Red Cross, Alpine Health, Integrated Primary Mental Health, Landcare Groups, Into Our Hands Community Foundation, Victoria University, University of Melbourne, local Neighbourhood Centres In all 55 different agencies/organisations have been represented over 49 meetings.
Funding source	National Disaster Resilience Grants Scheme
Funding amount	Not specified
Contact name	Jan Mock, Community Development Officer, Alpine Shire Council Steve Tucker, Emergency Management Co-Ord, Alpine Shire Council
Contact email	janm@alpineshire.vic.gov.au
Contact telephone	(03) 5755 0555
Hurdles submitting details of project	Nil
Project URL	This Case Study is best viewed in its original format as per the link below. http://www.alpineshire.vic.gov.au/files/Being_prepard/Alpine_Shire_Council_Community_Resilience_Committee_Case_Study.pdf

Cultivate Resilience

Brené Brown

Be Ready Warrandyte – Living with Bushfire Risk (2012-2015)

Project Summary

'Be Ready Warrandyte' began with the aim of getting most households in 'Greater Warrandyte' to have an effective fire plan. We adopted the tagline 'Living with Bushfire Risk' to emphasise that this was not a scare campaign but another rational insurance decision for people who choose to live in a bushfire prone area. Just as we have house, car and medical insurance, we should have a fire plan.

Background and situation context

'Greater Warrandyte' includes Warrandyte, North Warrandyte and Warrandyte South and was later extended to include Park Orchards. We also engaged with surrounding Townships – Warburton, St Andrews, Dandenong Ranges and others.

In 2011, the WCA was approached by three Community Fireguard Group (CFG) leaders and a CFA Captain to apply for a Victorian Government 'Fire Ready Communities Grant'. WCA had held three very well attended public fire meetings since the 2009 'Black Saturday' fires and made a comprehensive submission to the Victorian Bushfires Royal Commission. As Warrandyte had escaped the 2009 fires the emphasis was on 'Preparedness' rather than 'Response' or 'Recovery'. In the view of the CFG Leaders, only 5% of residents had a properly prepared fire-plan and this should be the focus of the grant application. Their view was also that the program should be over three years to be effective, although the State Grant was for only one year. Consequently, the 'Be Ready Warrandyte' (BRW) project was conceived.

The aim of the campaign from 2012-2015 was to ensure that every household in the 'Greater Warrandyte' area has an *effective* bushfire plan. Approximately 9,000 residents of Greater Warrandyte will benefit from this project.

Activities

We developed a programme to encourage residents to prepare an effective fire plan. We conducted a baseline survey then developed a 'toolkit' of products events and activities that included: a website; 'fire-watch app'; sample fire plans; several community forums; fire bunker tours; local and state media campaign; 'Heatwave' effects survey and pilot study; and others listed on our website www.warrandyte.org.au

Resources included

Part time project management was by the North Warrandyte based 'Good Work Group' who specialise in event and project management. The Warrandyte Community Church made public meeting, conference and workshop facilities available free of charge. The local community is intensely creative and community minded. Three local brigades and two local Councils also provided resources when needed.

Project progress and achievements

Quantitative survey data, website statistics, feedback forms, meeting attendance etc. suggest that the number of residents with a prepared bushfire plan at least doubled in the time period surveyed. How much was directly due to the BRW campaign can only be surmised as other factors were relevant but we certainly claim to have made a significant contribution to raising awareness.

The campaign won three Fire Awareness Awards in 2013: Community Preparedness Award; Media and Communications Award; and the Royal Automobile Club of Victoria (RACV) Insurance Award for Excellence.

This project is completed. The campaign ran between 2012 and 2015 but WCA is maintaining an active website to enable action if needed.

Results

Outputs produced

WCA reports (see warrandyte.org.au/fire)

1. Bushfire Survey 2012 Key Findings Report (2013)
2. Final Report 2012-2015 (2015)
3. Heatwave Report 2015 (online & hard copy)
4. Be Ready Warrandyte Snapfish Pictorial Report

RMIT University (Bushfire & Natural Hazards CRC) papers, lead author Blythe McLennan

1. Community-Led Bushfire Preparedness in Action: The Case of Be Ready Warrandyte. A case study for the Out of Uniform: Building community resilience through non-traditional volunteering project. Blythe Mclennan, Joshua Whittaker and John Handmer. Bushfire and Natural Hazards Cooperative Research Centre, 2015.
2. Be Ready Warrandyte Living with Bushfire Risk (blog)
3. Community-Led Bushfire Preparedness in Action: The case of Be Ready Warrandyte. (Conference Poster)
4. Australian Journal of Emergency Management, Volume 31, No 1, January 2106.

POSITIVE impacts/changes/benefits for the target beneficiaries

- Overall, Be Ready Warrandyte was portrayed as an effective vehicle for sharing responsibility in bushfire preparedness that had community safety benefits reaching beyond its specific goal and beyond its local community. Participants felt it had struck a good balance between focusing on meeting community goals and needs while also respecting the established emergency management system, and between seeking to complement EMO community safety approaches while also challenging and influencing them.
- Evidence of impact on the community was that there had been a general increase in the level of bushfire planning amongst local residents over the term of the Be Ready project.
    - This included an increase in the percentage of people who left the area following the fire event in February 2014 compared to an earlier local fire in February 2013. This assessment was based on information gathered in two community surveys and through informal, on-the-spot surveys conducted by Be Ready Warrandyte at the Warrandyte Festival following each of the fires.

NEGATIVE impacts/changes for the target beneficiaries

- The BRW campaign recognised sustainability challenges associated with community-led projects over the three years but was able to sustain activity and commitment.
- Two broad community safety risks for this type of project were identified:
    - giving out information that is incorrect or pursuing bad and untested ideas, and;
    - inadvertently creating community reliance that is beyond the capacity of a community group to meet (e.g. providing community warnings). However, these risks were largely alleviated in Be Ready's case by seeking EMO input, engaging with skilled volunteers as-needed, carefully developing communication materials, and through the committee's willingness to learn.
- In addition, the potential for personal liability of committee members was a project risk. It was reduced by ensuring information given was sound and well-supported by all committee members, having appropriate insurance, and issuing disclaimers.

Next steps

WCA is maintaining the website with a view to reviving the campaign or something similar if needed.

Reflection

Factors that were unique/good practice

We claim to have introduced humour into EM messaging in Australia. Our video 'Do You Have a Fire Plan? Went viral and has been used as a training tool by CFA, RFS NSW, DFES WA and internationally. (It even got a hit in Afghanistan!)

Critical factors for success

- Ours is a *Creative Community* which complemented the Emergency Services more straightforward approach.
- The project developed *Clear Governance* protocols. Participants trusted the process with its clearly defined aims, articulated key roles, defined expectations and timely feedback.
- There was a clear *Common Purpose.* Agency personnel came along as *representatives of,* rather than *representing*, their organisation. This enabled frank and open discussion.
- It was *Community Led*, leveraging off WCA's strong existing organisation, local net-works and relationships.
- The campaign *Celebrated Successes* to generate pride in being involved in the 'Be Ready Warrandyte' project. Winning Awards recognizes the effort made by the whole team. Members and advisors who left the Committee were awarded a Certificate of Appreciation in recognition of their work.

Challenges faced and solutions

A major challenge, for the Chair, is to manage community members who have difficulty working in a collaborative committee environment. Unexpected was the change in personnel at State and Local Government level during the three year project. Of 15 EM Officers only two remained for the whole project. Changing leadership of local CFA brigades reflected very different attitudes towards community engagement.

Areas for improvement

- Pets: The community as a whole does not necessarily share one's concerns. Companion animals are clearly of more concern to residents than bushfire threat. Although material is available on WCA website, pets could be emphasised more in bushfire messaging.
- Concern exists about the focus on 'Community' Resilience is that the monkey has jumped from State Government to Local Government to Community level. Whilst this is a positive development it must be accompanied by adequate resourcing. BRW worked well because we had part time professional project management funded by grants. When these dry up so does the project. WCA as a community group has no office, storage space or other facilities and resources of its own.

Sustainability and potential for replication in other settings

Whilst other communities may gain ideas from our experience, each community is different. Attempts to replicate our activities have not always been successful.

Additional project details

Lead organisation/s	Warrandyte Community Association Inc. (WCA)
Partner/s	Country Fire Authority (CFA), Warrandyte, North Warrandyte, South Warrandyte, Regions 13 & 14, Manningham City Council, Nillumbik Shire Council
Funding source	State Government Victoria 'Fire Ready Communities' Grant, Manningham City Council, Nillumbik Shire Council, Warrandyte Community Bank Branch, Bendigo Bank, Warrandyte Community Market Committee, Warrandyte Community Association Inc (WCA)
Funding amount	$152,200 ($ exc. GST)

Organisation		2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
State Government		43,100	43,100	----
Manningham Council		7,000	15,000	10,000
Nillumbik Council		3,000	10,000	10,000
Bendigo Bank		3,000	----	----
Warrandyte Community Market	1,000	----		2,000
WCA		----	----	5,000
Totals		57,100	68,100	27,000

Contact name	Dick Davies, President Warrandyte Community Association Inc. Chair, Be Ready Warrandyte
Contact email	dickdockdavies@gmail.com
Contact telephone	0413 753 622
Hurdles Submitting details of this project	The original online template in 2015 was difficult to use as the text detailing the guidelines disappeared when you began to enter information. The guidelines needed to be printed or viewed separately to be accessible. The online template did not have the ability to save the document during creation.
Project URL Link	www.warrandyte.org.au/fire

Disaster Management Is a Preparation of Mind – Accidents an Absence Of Mind

freshquotes.com

Centre of Resilience (CoR)

Project Summary

The Centre of Resilience (CoR) is a community development model piloted at the Emerald Community House (ECH) and was created to underpin the ECH strategic plan which guides decisions in a high risk environment. The CoR is committed to resilience building ideas and community development initiatives which stimulate collective community strength and durability to develop a 'community continuity strategy' similar to a business continuity model.

Background and situation context

The Emerald Community House manages the project in Emerald, Victoria as a pilot program to increase self-reliance and encourage other organisations to adopt a community continuity strategy.

The project was inspired after a meeting in 2008 between local and state government community strengthening representatives and the ECH executive committee. ECH sought planning funds to develop a community development strategy that connected businesses, community groups, local education, events and the arts by exercising our relationships in a practical way and developing local management capacity. The government representatives told us to 'Say No to the community, scale back and stick to your core business'. We rejected this advice and set about acting on our vision.

'Community continuity' encompasses a variety of planning, preparatory and related activities which are intended to ensure that community functions will either continue to operate despite serious incidents or disasters that might otherwise have interrupted them, or will be recovered to an operational state within a reasonably short period.

The goal of CoR is to contribute to community continuity by encouraging the efficient and effective use of existing social, natural, economic and built community-based assets in a progressive and sustainable way.

Organisations within a community that set-out to have a continuity strategy could contribute directly to:

- sustainable economic, environmental and social benefits
- enhancement of community governance and leadership skills through proactive processes
- an increase in community participation in education, volunteering, the arts, living and employment skills, and;
- safe, happier and connected communities.

Potential benefits could include but are not limited to:

- better local connection
- improved local economy (including sustained growth in house prices)
- heritage protection
- infrastructure renewal
- arts and event management
- local education
- volunteer development
- portals for emergency services promotion, and;
- expanded abilities and trust between groups.

Activities

- We undertook a proactive approach to develop and practice diverse relationships before potential disaster events. The ECH established a CoR steering group from a diverse and talent pool of people including environment, business, community development, and social science consultancy and sustainability

practice. The steering group developed the initial strategy, designed a logo that reflected diversity and networks and trademarked the product.

- The idea of a 'community continuity strategy,' is like a 'business continuity strategy'. The CoR Strategy details a range of activities:
  - adopts a strategy that contributes to 'community continuity' using social, economic, natural and built environments
  - embeds resilience building into our goals and objectives, programs, policies and strategic plans
  - commits to long term local community development approaches by empowering people to get involved and be the change they seek
  - explores what people value, where they want to be, identifies what they can do to get there and assists them to achieve it
  - identifies lateral networking opportunities and increase local interoperability through activities and partnerships
  - develops partnerships locally, nationally and internationally to create collaborative networks with other organisations to spread our collective resilience to support each other, and;
  - sources support through creative means - individual, government, philanthropic and organisational and draw interest from business and other organisation partnerships.
- Activities included speaking about CoR at Monash University, conferences and Emergency Management Victoria events, developed a Facebook page to promote the ECH CoR.
- Ensuring that the ECH has sustainable power, important community facilities like toilets, showers, free access to computers/internet/Wi-Fi, stored water supply, food, community kitchen, childcare and connections to business, local government and community groups to ensure community continuity.
- Invested in infrastructure and local economy by creating the Emerald Business Group, contributed toward and sourced state funds to refurbish Council's century old Hall and ECH buildings, sourced heritage funds to restore heritage bakery as a community enterprise and developed the largest monthly community market in the Dandenongs.
- Embedded fire safety messages into the ECH programs and arts festival (PAVE).
- Provided opportunities for local emergency services groups to engage more effectively with the community for example: the presentation of fire safety at the Burlesque night and during PAVE festival (smoke house for kids, free stall at PAVE arts festival), provision of free monthly market stalls at Emerald, CFA bush fire planning workshops at ECH where childcare parents are required to attend.
- ECH's vision embraces many activities that reflect the central themes that have motivated similar communities, for example: Whittlesea Community Emergency Plan; Cockatoo Ready2Go project for vulnerable people inspired by The Go List; Dig In Community Cafe inspired Cockatoo 's community dining project; the Victorian Neighbourhood House sector began to nominate projects for the Fire Awareness Awards after 2010 (previously the sector had not nominated for these awards); Neighbourhood Houses Victoria consulted with ECH to define their Bushfire Community Toolbox, promoted ECH ideas and activities on their Resilience website page; Emergency Services/EMV began to endorse Community Houses since 2009 due to ECH's related projects ; MAV (MEMEG) representative began to recommend that Council childcare programs adopt a policy similar to ECH program, recognised in international studies and publications 'to focus on building community strengths through establishing and strengthening trust and mutual benefit in each area of everyday local activities (Emerald Community House, 2014).'
- ECH used resources from the MUDRI / EMV Compendium Guidelines, literature on community recovery committees, post disaster recovery and post traumatic growth. ECH staff worked with groups in Kinglake and Marysville to increase our awareness about the challenges facing recovering communities.

This project was in-progress at the time of publication.

Results

This project is in-progress at the time of submission, however the following portray the initial results of CoR.

- ECH developed a strategy to guide CoR.
- The COR project featured in the book *Strategies for Supporting Community Resilience, Multinational Experiences, Multinational Resilience Policy Group* as an Australian exemplar. Mark Duckworth quotes '...For instance, the Emerald Community House (ECH) has established its own Centre of Resilience within

a community of almost six thousand people located at the foothills of the Dandenong Ranges near Melbourne. The centre's vision is 'To be a place where connections are made and opportunities realised,' and people are empowered to confront the risks they face, especially the bushfires. The pursuit of community resilience involves efforts to integrate safety messages across several risks, build local capacities with local resources, and provide training embedded throughout numerous community programs, activities and services.'

- ECH / CoR won 5 Five Fire Awareness Awards in 5 years (2010-2014) based on CoR strategy which reflects its commitment and creativity to building resilience and empowering others.
- ECH promoted the resilience agenda to community house peak bodies. After 5 years the Neighbourhood Houses Victoria Board is now in the process of establishing a Community Resilience Task Group and asked that ECH / CoR provide advice.

CoR activities have been recognised in other international publications in the ASEAN region, for example:

- Strategies for Supporting Community Resilience, Multinational Experiences, Multinational Resilience Policy Group, Editor: Robert Bach
- ASEAN Literary Festival
- The Jakarta Globe news media and The Jakarta Post news media
- Indonesia Development of Education and Permaculture (IDEP)
- Three International PhD studies
- We believe people have been empowered by the CoR strategy. The local community has been advantaged socially, economically and environmentally, and we are collecting the evidence. Some examples include DRREA's Ranges Energy with EmFSuS and the solar power collaboration, Eastern Dandenong Ranges Association development. The Local Voice newspaper, Cockatoo's saving and restoration of the old McBride Street Kindergarten as the first heritage site in Victorian history with a bushfire theme and its associated funding based on our grant application.
- Other groups such as the Dandenong Ranges Renewable Energy Association have supported ECH solar power project to achieve sustainable power as a backup power resource, thus achieving elements of CoR
- Other ECH community development projects besides the Emerald Going Solar project that now come under the banner of CoR include :
  - Dig In Community Cafe (self-funded, feeds people, develops skills, food safety, business partnerships)
  - Emerald Monthly Market (self-funded, raises funds for ECH, contributes to local economy and connections)
  - PAVE and FunFest Festivals (mostly self-funded, some external funding, develops local community capacity through the arts), and;
  - Emerging community enterprises (i.e., century old hall renovation, old bakery restoration, Heritage Walk).

Next Step

Encourage more groups and organisations to adopt Centre of Resilience community continuity strategies.

Reflection

Centres of Resilience are doable, achievable, innovative and empowering. Establishing a vision that results in a strategy that other communities can adopt to collectively raise and strengthen their resilience has the potential to increase self-reliance within Australian communities.

The success of CoR is focused on our own success and not measured by whether anyone else takes up the strategy. When we look at the Victorian Neighbourhood House Coordination Program Agreement, the goals and objectives certainly parallel the philosophy behind CoR from a community development perspective. But the addition of sustainability and 'transition town' values completes the CoR strategy to be more complete, more local, more relevant and more focused.

Looking at our work as a business, even though a not for profit, we still need to continue to be financially viable within the community especially during times of adversity by having a cash operational reserve. The more profit we can generate, the more local people we can employ, the more services we can support and the more independent we become. It is worth noting the ECH is the largest contributor to our own bottom line, rather than government

sources which is important in maintaining a balanced view of influence. We have learned that true resilience is enhanced when an organisation feels free to comment critically about government actions, free from worry about financial penalties being leveraged. We have certainly run the gauntlet there.

There is room for centres that operate effectively with this heightened CoR strategy to be formally identified as Centres of Resilience and become eligible for 35 management hours a week funding through DHHS, especially if operating in high risk areas working with EMV's 2021 strategy and Resilient Melbourne (metro and peri-urban areas). There could be a set amount of centres that would be required to apply and maintain the work for the duration of the award. Neighbourhood houses could *aspire* to operate as a Centre of Resilience.

Critical factors for success

- local partnerships and local governments' facilitation, and;
- training of emergency services personnel in community development practices to assist communities in developing resilience to adverse events.

Challenges faced and solutions

- There have been incidences where some traditional emergency management/services volunteers have dismissed CoR activities as being 'silly or irrelevant' and 'outside the Emergency Management Act.' While that attitude has actually contributed to our own resilience, independence and success, it illustrates how confronting it is for of community groups to take a leadership role and determine their own local processes and partners.

Sustainability and potential for replication in other settings

Any community group can adopt CoR values, modify them to suit their objectives and increase community networks and connections. Imagine if we all did this for the next five years. How much better off we would be....

Additional project details

Lead organisation/s	Emerald Community House (ECH)
Partner/s	
Funding source	Emerald Community House (ECH)
Funding amount	Not specified.
Contact name	Mary Farrow
Contact email	emhouse@iinet.net.au
Contact telephone	03 59683881
Hurdles submitting details of this project	Nil
Project URL Link	http://www.emeraldcommunityhouse.org.au/centre-of-resilience-cor/

By failing to prepare you are preparing to fail.

Benjamin Franklin

CONNECT Warrnambool

Project Summary

CONNECT is an integrated online hub that's the first of its kind in Australia. Open 24/7 it is accessible to all … And while it has an address, it's a meeting place without walls or doors.

A connected community is a resilient community. CONNECT utilises the power of online communications to provide a new way to meet, communicate and connect – both in good times and when challenges arise.

CONNECT is designed to make it easy for residents and groups to share information, ideas, events, opportunities and get to know each other better.

The website includes a custom built community directory with hundreds of local groups, clubs and organisations; and Facebook provides them with a huge platform to share and distribute information to the wider community.

Background and situation context

CONNECT began as Great South Coast Recovers, which was envisaged as 'a website and network that enables councils to capture and develop volunteer resources, donations, list club and service resources and act as an information point for local communities in the time of a disaster' (Resilient Community Program Grant Application).

The initial plan to achieve this was to purchase an existing website product, Recovers, which registers people and groups in order to enlist them in emergency recovery efforts. This procurement was to be followed by a community and organisational engagement and awareness program.

Research in the early stages of the project however, indicated that:

- creating something that is only used in an emergency context means it could potentially be un-used for years;
- this limited use would present difficulties such as lack of ongoing awareness of the site, how to use it and forgotten login details; and
- engaging people in emergency information in isolation from something they're already doing or interested in is very challenging.

Research also indicated that connected communities with capacity to support each other bounce back more strongly after an emergency and so from this initial setback, a concept emerged to build an online meeting place to allow people and groups to connect everyday - not just when things go wrong.

Activities

A resilient community is a CONNECTED community.

CONNECT has been custom designed to be flexible and innovative and can be altered to respond to local events as they happen. It engages the whole community, including groups and individuals not usually involved with emergency management, and continuous use will build familiarity and embed CONNECT as the 'go to' point during recovery. It can also be harnessed for sustained resilience and well-being, rather than being left to taper away outside recovery and renewal processes.

Building the Product

As the CONNECT concept took shape, the components that would work together as a cohesive and powerful 'whole' were identified:

- A vastly improved community directory that not only provides information about group and club activities, but also captures their skills, interests, resources and volunteering opportunities;
- A volunteer resource hub;
- An emergency information hub;
- What's on' links to calendars of events;
- A Facebook platform as a virtual community noticeboard to find out about local activities and events, get involved in community projects, or ask questions and share ideas.

It delivers:

- A substantially improved and more searchable database of clubs, groups and organisations for use by the community.
- An online updating function for community organisations to maintain and update their own profiles.
- A database for emergency agencies (including Councils) to locate community assets, equipment, skills and other resources during emergency recovery (e.g. marquees, temporary furniture, equipment, registered kitchens, first aiders, volunteers etc.).
- New searchable fields including skills and interests; and membership and volunteering opportunities.
- A single, credible source of local emergency alerts and preparedness information via direct links to ABC Emergency as well as agency websites including CFA, SES, VICPOL, DELWP.
- Capacity to highlight current and local messages.

A social media platform where:

- clubs and organisations can communicate with each other and with residents in a public forum;
- ideas are shared, questions can be asked and responses sought from other members of the CONNECT community;
- opportunities to get involved in local events, activities and volunteering are encouraged & promoted;
- new residents can find out about what's happening/available;
- good news/positive stories about living in the local area are sourced and shared;
- a 'can do' attitude is supported;
- helping & supporting each other is encouraged.

Future evaluation will provide further data (qualitative and quantitative) as the project progresses to enable continuous improvement and sustainability of CONNECT.

Results

CONNECT Warrnambool Website hosting the new Warrnambool Community Directory - with 190+ clubs, groups and organisations on a self-managed, automated database, capturing for the first time resources and capacity these groups would offer the community in times of emergency.

CONNECT Warrnambool Facebook Page - a new communications channel designed to let community groups and individuals 'get to know each other better'

CONNECT Warrnambool recognisable brand/logo and promotional campaign, and;

CONNECT Communications Plan which includes promotion of CONNECT's capacity, events/activities/good news to encourage traffic to and awareness of CONNECT, and seasonal emergency preparedness messages.

Reflection

CONNECT is a unique platform which took significant resources to create, but is a model for others to consider and potentially implement. It is a proactive tool which will build community connection in the 'good times' so that the strength can be relied on when challenges arise. It aims to ensure the community are informed, aware and connected.

CONNECT launched in mid-September 2015, and the platform has received strong support from groups and organisations, and also a very positive response from individual users.

In the first 6 months of operation, the Connect Warrnambool Facebook page grew to have more than 3000 likes (15% of the target local audience on Facebook). Engagement and reach of the Facebook platform has now exceeded 15,000 individuals.

Additional project details

Lead organisation/s	Warrnambool City Council
Partner/s	Emergency and Community Agencies, organisations, clubs and groups Connect platform is also being piloted by Glenelg Shire Council
Funding source	Regional Development Victoria
Funding amount	$100,000
Contact name	Lisa McLeod
Contact email	lmcleod@warrnambool.vic.gov.au
Contact telephone	0400 921 078
Hurdles submitting details of this project	Nil
Project URL Link	http://www.connectwarrnambool.com.au/

The oak fought the wind and was broken, the willow bent when it must and survived.

Robert Jordan

The past year's natural disasters have highlighted the invaluable contributions of volunteers in our communities. … They have volunteered their time, energy and skills to save lives and to rebuild communities. … In this they joined countless people around the world who volunteer every day in response to 'silent crises'. These often unsung heroes understand all too well that poverty, disease and famine are just as deadly and destructive as earthquakes, hurricanes and tsunamis.

Kofi Annan, 2005

Dig In Community Cafe

Project Summary

Emerald Community House team of volunteers creates meals from food donated by local businesses and community through a food collection/donation partnership on a regular monthly basis. The Dig In Community Cafe brings together experiences and people with an opportunity to practice feeding the community in a spontaneous environment participating in a shared responsibility exercise.

Background and situation context

The Dig In Community Cafe is held on the last Friday of the month at Emerald Community House Hall in Emerald, Victoria between 6-8 pm.

Emerald Community House collected stories and data on:

- emergency food relief
- provision of food in emergency situations
- recovery of a community after disaster, and;
- community dining models
- Journal entries from diners

The Dig In Community Cafe was developed to provide volunteers an opportunity to participate and train in spontaneous community dining. It also increased the working relationships with other organisations and businesses such as Woolworths, local bakeries, local community groups and green grocers to participate in a shared responsibility model. The hall is managed by ECH and owned by the local council. By partnering with diverse groups, collecting ingredients, donating services, cooking and serving food for the monthly meals, this project is a great mirror of the National Strategy for Disaster Resilience statement which identifies local government, business, organisations, families and individuals as key shared responsibility stakeholders.

Emerald Community House, through a small fund donated to us, also provides formal training for food handlers to attain food safety skills by paying for half of the cost of this training and the council pays for the other half. That training not only puts more food safety education into the community (important when power goes out and food spoils), it also gives them a marketable skill and experience to get a job in hospitality or care services - this is employment resilience.

The people who come to dine (anywhere from 50-100+ diners a night) can be isolated, marginalised, just want to commune and chat about local subjects or try out their skills in the kitchen in a spontaneous environment. They all mix it up with local community leaders, followers, volunteers, CFA members, politicians, tradies, retired people, artists, musicians, tourists, visitors, children and family members. Monetary donations are appreciated but not required and usually cover the cost of anything extra that needs to be purchased for the meal.

Activities

We set our goals:

1. Proactively increase and practice capacity building in community to be resilient in good times or hardship
2. Promote well-being through social inclusion

3. Increase safe food handling skills throughout the community
4. Receive donations for equipment and resources that connect suppliers who support the program
5. Provide training opportunities for public dining and hospitality skills for youth
6. Promote healthy eating, use seasonal produce where possible, sourced locally, and cater for special dietary needs (vegetarian, vegan and gluten free at a minimum), and;
7. Encourage self-reliance with smart food storage and pantry supplies at ECH and at home.

We publicized the date, and used outdoor signage, a Facebook page with website promotion. We then developed the model guidelines document for roles and responsibilities based on our experiences as we went along.

So far we have successfully run the program sustainably for 3 years with donations and interest now increasing. We have served to over 1500 people in that time. Others have come to train in our program and go to their communities to create something similar. Our volunteer base has grown and food sources have stabilized in regularity. Uniting Care modelled their community dining model after our program acknowledging ECH as the creator of the project.

Volunteers attain food safety skills and ECH pays for half of the cost of Food Safety courses and council pays for the other half. That training not only puts more food safety knowledge into the community (important when power goes out and food spoils), it also gives them a marketable skill and experience to get a job in hospitality or care services - more employment resilience.

The Dig In Community Café continues to be a donation based self-funded training program, gaining no funding from government other than council's partial coverage of half the fee for food safety. This contribution is offered to all community groups in the shire, not specifically for the Dig In program. We use this training to embed further benefit within the community.

This project is still in progress. We continue to run this program not only because it is beneficial and yielding results, it's just plain fun!

Results

- The Dig In Community Cafe Guidelines Manual
- Over 200 people have attended our Food safety training.
- We have increased our number of volunteers who have been enticed by a program that involves ‘mystery box’ cooking and food interests.
- We have increased our working relationships with local businesses and other community groups and churches.
- We have provided training for youth in food service and they have gone on to get employment because of that experience.
- Some people who initially came because they were lonely, isolated, looking for connection or just curious about what was going have now become volunteers, feel increased connection and valued in their community. They have gone on to attend courses and functions or even joined our committee of management. In fact, one of our diners joined the committee and is now our Chairman.

Next steps

We are looking now for other community partners to share the program and spread out the responsibility of running it. In this way we reduce a single point of failure and increase our flexibility and relationships. In fact, the future goal is to find a different organisation to run the dinner each month to spread the experience, service, resources and connections.

Reflection

Factors that were unique/good practice

The Dig In Community Cafe is self-funded and run completely on donations. We just started the program, developed the model based on experience and have run continuously for 3 years. It is important to remain flexible to take advantage of opportunities as they arise and empower people to make decisions with sufficient knowledge to solve any problems.

Critical factors for success

- Ensure that business partners understand what you are doing and their role in that process.
- Get a freezer or use others that exist in the community already.
- Make sure everyone understands safe food handling.
- Cater for vegans, vegetarians and gluten free diets, cultural diets
- Have fun!
- Don't overburden volunteers with paperwork and rules when they show up to help.
- Welcome them and let them work at their pace, partnering them up with a regular volunteer, gradually allowing them to gain more responsibility.
- Make sure that every volunteer signs in on the Volunteer Register.
- Don't try to do labour intensive meals. Good food, healthy ingredients and enough food to go around is good enough.
- We serve all of our meals using china dinnerware and glassware. No disposables.
- Keep the washing up to a minimum.
- Get a good commercial stove that can handle the demand and commercial dishwasher that can turn the dishes around fast.
- Make sure you have a Dig In Coordinator to set the menu and manage every session.

Challenges faced and solutions

- Occasionally, holiday periods are hard to get volunteers yet the food donations will overflow. Always accept the food and find a place for it. Availability of cold storage has provided challenges but we have had a freezer donated to us recently. We have run Dig In for the last two Christmas holidays.
- Occasional availability of volunteers early for food prep is a challenge. The program has been designed to run with one person at a minimum to start all of the cooking. Can be done by one person if organised well. Others usually come a few hours before the event. Even diners will roll up their sleeves if they see that you are struggling. We have run Dig In for the last two Christmas holidays but gave everyone a holiday in 2015.

Future recommendations

- Would be good if we could write a recipe book - big demand for our recipes.
- Would like other organisations to now pick a Friday in a month and run the Dig In to spread the experience and capacity building.
- Need a commercial stove and commercial dishwasher - one day....

Additional project details

Lead organisation/s	Emerald Community House (ECH)
Partner/s	Woolworths Emerald Bakery Bakers Delight Other volunteers from local groups Random donations
Funding source	ECH and community at large, food from partners listed above.
Funding amount	We receive between about $150-$250 in donations during each meal. ECH provided the first seed money originally. We were given access to $2,000 from Country Women's Association (CWA) through Monash Health from their disbanded kitchen program. This money is to be used in the community to train people in food safety skills.
Contact name	Mary Farrow
Contact email	emhouse@iinet.net.au
Contact telephone	03 5968 3881 0403765314
Hurdles submitting details of this project	Nil
Project URL Link	http://www.emeraldcommunityhouse.org.au/events/digin-cafe/ https://www.facebook.com/DigInCafe

Risk assessment is the bridge that will take us from the post-disaster improvisation of the past to the pre-disaster preparedness of the future

Jeff Arnold

Fire Ready Carers Kit

Project Summary

Certain factors and situations can result in higher levels of vulnerability to the threat of fire. For some people including children, those who are frail, injured, elderly, socially isolated, or have some level of cognitive and/or physical impairment; their survival can depend on the people who care for them. The Fire Ready Kit supports some care providers in helping their clients with fire preparedness and planning and includes training and resources to equip carers with skills and knowledge to assist people in these situations to understand their risk, and plan for leaving early in the event of high fire danger.

Background and situation context

Home and Community Care providers are often required to work and travel in high bushfire risk areas, to visit clients and patients in need of care. These employees require fire safety knowledge to ensure they remain safe during the fire season. However, patients and clients living in high risk bushfire locations are also at risk. If patients/clients have restricted mobility or are vulnerable given their health status it is important that those providing services to them can prompt and assist them to have a realistic and achievable leave-early plan. People who are housebound and/or have health problems may not attend local FRV Community Meetings or take part in other fire safety events and initiatives. An effective way to reach more vulnerable people is through the outreach service.

Activities

The Fire Ready for Carers program is an ongoing program, and consists of four separate presentation modules. These modules can be delivered in the one session or separately depending on the need of the employer and their staff. The four modules are:

Module 1- Bushfire safety for workers in bushfire prone areas
Module 2 – Bushfire survival training awareness
Module 3 (Specialist module): Assisting vulnerable clients and patients to develop a plan
Module 4 - Home fire safety awareness

Resources available

- Training outline for the Community Care Provider to learn about the program
- PowerPoint presentation for use by the presenter of the session; one for each session
- Fire Ready Carers Kit, a resource for those participating in the session
- A Carers Guide to Home Fire Safety, a flipchart resource for those participating in the training module 4

Results

The program aims to achieve the following objectives:

- To inform Community Care staff (and volunteers) working and travelling in high risk areas of the bushfire risk, and the measures they can take to reduce the risk and act safely.
- To provide Community Care staff with the knowledge and understanding of how they can assist their clients and patients to better prepare, plan and respond to the bushfire risk.

POSITIVE impacts/changes/benefits for the target beneficiaries

The program has a range of short term, medium term and long term benefits it aims to achieve.

These include:

- Increased understanding of the risks associated with travelling and working in high risk areas
- Development of skills and resources for HACC workers to assist their clients to develop a leave-early plan
- Vulnerable clients have a bushfire survival plan that they can implement on high risk days

Next steps

It is expected that at a local level (District or Regional) a stakeholder analysis is undertaken of all local Community Care Providers. Local council/s, through the community/social services area, can assist with this analysis and are a key stakeholder in this program. Once relationships are established locally the program can be offered to all Community Care providers and be prioritised to those who provide outreach services to vulnerable clients and patients living in high risk areas. It is expected that program delivery could include the following groups of care providers:

- Home and Community Care (HACC) Workers, which is usually through local councils
- District Nurses
- Maternal Health Nurses
- Community Correctional Staff
- Occupational Therapists
- Children and Family Services Staff
- Community Mental Health Workers
- Indigenous Health Provider Staff
- Community Wellbeing Volunteers such as *Meals on Wheels*

Reflection

The program is in early stages of delivery; however an evaluation is planned for late 2016.

Additional project details

Lead organisation/s	CFA
Partner/s	Department of Health & Human Services, Local Government Various local Care Networks/partners
Funding source	CFA (training, support to carers, materials) DHHS (availability of carers)
Funding amount	Negligible – funded regionally dependant on local need. Involves time and effort from CFA staff, materials and training time. Costs difficult to estimate given they are largely absorbed within regional service delivery budgets as part of broader program delivery & training.
Contact name	Stefanie Russell, CFA Diversity & Inclusion Program Coordinator Angela Cook, CFA Diversity & Inclusion Program Coordinator
Contact email	s.russell@cfa.vic.gov.au and angela.cook@cfa.vic.gov.au
Contact telephone	03 9262 8444
Hurdles submitting details of project	Nil
Project URL Link	http://www.cfa.vic.gov.au/fm_files/attachments/plan_and_prepare/frk/Carers_Guide_Booklet_Web_Single_pages.pdf

Gembrook Emergency and Resilience

GEaR members developing 'knowledge map' of district, for community and agency use in preparing for, surviving and recovering from a Bushfire emergency. Bushfire Risk was highest risk category in all hazards risk assessment workshop.

Project summary

The Gembrook Emergency and Resilience (GEaR) initiative is an informal group of local community group representatives and residents, working to build community resilience and emergency preparedness in the Gembrook district of the Eastern Dandenong Ranges, in Victoria.

Background & situation context

The GEaR initiative covers the Gembrook Township, surrounding farmland/rural living areas, plus two significant State Parks in the Eastern Dandenong Ranges. The Landscape is a combination of rural township, surrounded by open cropping/pasture land and heavily forested country in roughly equal proportions. Topography is a mixture of ridges and valleys, on the watershed between the Yarra Valley to the North and West Gippsland to the South.

June 2012 the Gembrook Township Committee (GTC) formed a sub-committee to organise a meeting with the Fire Service Commissioner and personnel from that office. The GTC itself formed in 2001 and has a resilience brief - to build community capacity through community group collaboration, information sharing, community projects and representation to all levels of government regarding local issues. GTC had been trying to grapple with multiple local issues and decided to reach out:

1. Poor mobile phone coverage for large percentage of local population and no support from Telstra to improve, despite engagement and escalation.
2. No support from Cardinia Shire Council to strengthen the local community centre for emergency management and recovery preparedness.
3. Advice that our local football ground (used for refuge during 1983 Ash Wednesday fires) had been appropriated for use by emergency management agency and was not available as a Neighbourhood Safer Place (NSP), despite most in community intending to go there.

The July meeting was successful and an immediate result was inclusion of Eastern Dandenong Ranges into State Government, Dandenong Ranges Bushfire Landscape Project (previously not in scope).

August 2012 following the July forum, GTC then organised an Eastern Dandenong Ranges 'Community Advisory Group' meeting for the Eastern Dandenong Ranges communities of Clematis, Emerald, Avonsleigh, Macclesfield, Cockatoo and Gembrook. Fire Service Commissioner, local community associations/committees, local CFA Brigades, plus Emergency Management (EM) agencies and Monash University Disaster Resilience Initiative (MUDRI) representatives were invited and attended.

In 2013 two significant setbacks to community led EM planning occurred:

1. The GTC organised an application for funding from the State Government Resilient Community Program, in collaboration with the preschool, primary school and with the support of the Gembrook Country Fire Authority (CFA). It was a classic community resilience initiative to benefit the town's children and parents and engage them with bushfire awareness, preparation and planning, but the application was not successful. We realised that despite our understanding that the application was eminently sensible to the community, we were not in synch with the State and they were not in tune with our understanding of what would be an effective project 'on the ground'.
2. Parallel to this, Cardinia Shire Council closed a significant rural road in an area adjacent to a State Park, creating a dead-end cul-de-sac and directly impacting many residents' fire plans regarding community access/egress from a bushfire prone area. Council ignored sustained community requests to reverse the decision, including requests from most residents of the road, simultaneously dismissing emergency management concerns and undermining community resilience.

After the initial successes of the forums, these setbacks made us realise we needed a compelling emergency and resilience narrative that could better align agencies and government departments with what is important, practical and realistic to our community. Talk is cheap - real action was proving much harder.

The desired vision was to create a shared narrative of the emergency risk profile for Gembrook District and initiate and support community capacity and resilience building. Gembrook district residents, visitors, businesses, local government, state and federal government agencies and departments could all benefit from this project.

Activities

2012	GTC reached out to Fire Services Commissioner organised forums and formed sub-committee.
2013 - Present	GTC started regular meetings as a group – multiple community groups have come together and evolved into GEaR.

Core activities of the project included

- Completing applications for funding support resilience initiatives.
- Making submissions on behalf of community regarding concerns over local road management and negative safety implications.
- Continued advocacy regarding community centre preparation for emergencies.
- Phoenix bushfire modelling was completed for Gembrook district to better understand fire threat.
- Commenced discussions regarding traffic management modelling for district 'evacuation/escape' routes.
- Decided to develop formal fire risk assessment for Gembrook district.
- Attending other local forums around bushfire planning.

Resources include

- Dandenong Ranges Bushfire Landscape Project co-ordinator (EMV initiative), who has multiple contacts across agencies.
- From March 2014, Cardinia Shire Council provided staff resources to provide administrative support for the project and facilitate a community risk assessment forum.

Project progress and achievements

2012	Eastern Dandenong Ranges communities added to scope of Dandenong Ranges Bushfire Landscape Project.
2013	Phoenix bushfire simulation modelling completed (but not shared with community for improved personal awareness).
2013	Multiple groups in Gembrook commence discussion of emergency management and resilience together.
2014	Risk assessment broadened to 'all hazards' and completed with Cardinia Shire Council facilitation.
	The creation of a shortlist comprising the top five emergency risks in the district.
2015	More detailed bushfire Risk (before/during/after) knowledge mapping exercise using district maps.
	Large animals and pets forum.

Results

- Eastern Dandenong Ranges communities added to scope of Dandenong Ranges and Yarra Valley Landscape Bushfire project.
- Phoenix bushfire simulations for Gembrook (not released to public).
- All Hazards Risk Assessment (available from Cardinia Shire Council).
- Bushfire assets/hazards map based assessment.
- Over time, meeting minutes accumulate knowledge around emergency management and resilience.

POSITIVE impacts/changes/benefits for the target beneficiaries

- Eastern Dandenong Ranges communities added to scope of Dandenong Ranges Bushfire Landscape project. Better access to shared knowledge and resources across similar communities.
- Since 2012, not clear – outputs still not widely distributed through/or available to community. Future of and status of initiative is uncertain at time of writing.

NEGATIVE impacts/changes for the target beneficiaries

- Becoming clear that massive effort by large number of community volunteers will be needed to establish community led, rather than agency dictated emergency and resilience planning. This takes them away from other current volunteer demands in a small rural community that are needed equally as much.
- Clear that agencies still not collaborating closely with the community
- Duplication of effort/multiple contacts/multiple meetings are required from community volunteers to achieve consistency, consensus and a clear narrative for a local community.
- When local issues are raised by engaged people with the potential for a quick win, but these are not part of agencies' agenda the project is looking at years of effort to achieve anything 'on the ground'.
- Clear that volunteers with full-time day jobs and only a few hours spare per week cannot make much impact in this space.

Next steps

- Determine future of the initiative and if sufficient volunteer energy remains to continue to try and engage. Need to attract more membership 'doers' and gain authority to enact/drive change.
- Publish Gembrook's emergency/resilience 'community story' to drive more informed community discussion and align behaviour/support/initiatives from agencies more closely to community reality.

Reflection

Factors that were unique/good practice

Quick win regarding broadening the scope of a State Government project to include our communities. Decisive decision taken by Fire Services Commissioner on the spot to address the initial oversight, in response to community reaching out.

Critical factors for success

Decisive decision making by people empowered to make things happen. That initial success has since worn off. Adequate community resources – people, time and money.

Challenges faced and solutions

Community already had list of projects and with limited volunteer time available. The community has tried to start 'doing' these as soon as possible. Challenge is that community narrative regarding what needs to be done re emergency planning is not formally in place and understood by agencies/government layers, so apart from token acts of support the community projects have stalled.

Areas for improvement

More community members to be engaged and actively giving time to GEaR initiatives (without reducing existing volunteer activities needed elsewhere in town, somehow). More 'quick wins identified and implemented – to build momentum.

Sustainability and potential for replication in other settings

Future of the initiative is under consideration by participants at time of writing.

Additional project details

Lead organisation/s	Gembrook Community
Partner/s	Gembrook Township Committee (GTC) - founder group Gembrook Country Fire Authority (CFA) Emergency Management Victoria (EMV) Cardinia Shire Council
Funding source	Gembrook Township Committee Cardinia Shire Council Personal out-of-pocket
Funding amount	$250 for forum attendance / Cardinia Shire Council staff salaries (%FTE)
Contact name	David Nickell
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Contact telephone	0400 578 306
Hurdles submitting details of project	Nil
Project URL Link	N/A

The need for a new life means not 'bounce back' but 'leap forward'.

Robert Gordon

Gender and Disaster Pod (GAD Pod)

Project Summary

The GAD Pod brings a gender focus to disaster policy and practice. Its website synthesises resources developed since the first research in Australia on violence against women after disaster. Other 'firsts' include research with men after disaster and establishment of the Victorian 'Gender and Disaster Taskforce'.

Background and situation context

The GAD Pod was formally established in 2015 to promote understanding of the role played by gender in survivor responses to disaster, and to embed these insights into emergency management practice.

In 2009, research about the implications of gender to disaster experience in developed countries was rare. In 2012, the first Australian research directly with women on this subject - *The Way He Tells* It - was released at Australia's first conference on disasters and family violence; *Identifying the Hidden Disaster*.

The *Hidden Disaster* conference galvanised interest in gender issues in disaster, and led to a successful submission to the National Disaster Resilience Grants Scheme. The researchers then considered men's experiences of health and wellbeing during and after Black Saturday. The findings are captured in *Men on Black Saturday: Risks and opportunities for change.* The *'Just Ask'* conference on men's experiences of disaster followed.

Since undertaking these foundational research projects, the Pod partners have led diverse initiatives—with input from emergency management, community members, masculinity experts and government representatives —to inform responses to women and men in future disasters. In January 2014, Australia's first Gender and Disaster Taskforce was established, auspiced by the Victorian Emergency Management Commissioner.

Activities

The GAD Pod has built on community engagement - via qualitative research and consultation - with 30 women, 32 men, and 47 workers affected by the Black Saturday bushfires. The initiative has been led and driven by the two women's health services whose board members and managerial staff comprises of all women, from different backgrounds and communities. The men's research was guided by a high level Men's Advisory Group, Chaired by The Fire Services Commissioner and, after establishment of the GAD Taskforce, by Emeritus Professor Frank Archer. Activities have included the hosting of national conferences with international keynote speakers, and collaborative curating with Steve O'Malley from the Metropolitan Fire Brigade of the gender stream of Victoria's Emergency Management Conference. The GAD Pod's executive support for the GAD Taskforce has involved a key role in developing the foundational documents for this group, along with its workplan and ongoing evaluation. Conference presentation and journal articles, together with training developed and offered to the emergency management sector, have been key ways to disseminate the research findings and achieve positive change for those involved in and affected by disaster. A gender and disaster website and unique 'Roadmaps' section (funded by DHHS) allows easy access to a wealth of resources.

This initiative is now complete.

Results

Gendered research was first covered in two reports entitled '*The Way He Tells It: Relationships after Black Saturday*'[1] and '*Men on Black Saturday - Risks and opportunities for change*'[2]. Recommendations for improving disaster planning, training and ESO practice have been informed by the stories, experiences and advice offered by community members, community and ESO workers, and academics working in the fields of masculinity, gender and disaster.

Filmed proceedings of the two national conferences, featuring presentations by academics, community members and on-the-ground workers are available online. Both conferences were privileged to host Dr Elaine Enarson as keynote speaker, along with leading Australians experts such as Professor Bob Pease and Dr Christine Eriksen.

These conferences were the catalyst for the Victorian Gender and Disaster Taskforce – the first in Australia, and as far as we know, the first in the world.[3] Established January 2014, the taskforce meets six times per year. Foundational documents and a workplan have been collaboratively developed and guest speakers inform the senior emergency service organisational leaders, community members, non-government representatives and academics present.

The research has been presented at national and international conferences (Japan and Copenhagen) and forums, and MUDRI Forums and at the 6th Annual Professor Frederick 'Skip' Burkle Jnr Keynote Lecture.

Journal articles and book chapters have been published.

The initiative has been awarded twice – by VicHealth and by the Attorney-General's Department.

POSITIVE impacts/changes/benefits for the target beneficiaries

- Funded projects have seen the development, piloting and ongoing delivery of training on Family Violence and Natural Disaster, and Men and Disaster. A further two training modules have been piloted on Gender Equity and Disaster, and Living LGBTI in Disaster. A series of six short films were made as key resources and are available online. Training is aimed at middle managers in the emergency sector, local government and community members.
- A new collaboration with 1800 RESPECT has resulted in inclusion of the gender and disaster information in the web-based information at 1800 RESPECT, a community service announcement to be played through ABC rural radio stations during fire season, and a video.
- The current initiative is the collaborative development of national gender and emergency management guidelines, funded in three parts by the Victorian Department of Health and Human Services, the Attorney-General's Department and Emergency Management Victoria. It will culminate in a 2-day summit in late 2016.

NEGATIVE impacts/changes for the target beneficiaries

- None

Next steps

- Progressing training so that it is taken up systematically, particularly by the emergency management sector.
- Consulting with all Australian states and territories about the gender and emergency management guidelines.
- Publishing journal articles particularly on the increase of violence against women after disaster in Australia.

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[1] "*The Way He Tells It: Relationships after Black Saturday*" is a WHGNE research report that captures the experience and knowledge of **women** who survived Black Saturday. It was published in 2011.

[2] *"Men on Black Saturday – Risks and opportunities for change"* is a 2013 report on research into **men**'s Black Saturday experience in Victoria. The research was conducted under the auspices of WHGNE and Monash University's Injury Research Institute (MIRI).

[3] Article about the Taskforce: https://ajem.infoservices.com.au/items/AJEM-30-04-08

Reflection

Factors that were unique/good practice

- The establishment and successful operation of the first Australian 'Gender and Disaster Taskforce' to reduce the compounding effects of gender on disaster impacts, (as detailed in the URL link).
- This initiative is good practice in that it has:
  - catalysed partnerships and collaboration among multiple stakeholders from diverse horizons
  - institutionalized and sustained such partnerships and collaboration over the long term, in a key structure - the Taskforce;
  - galvanised interest in a previously un-researched field; (4) it has made proper use of available technology;
  - resulted in a number of Australian 'firsts'; and
  - utilized women's skills and leadership for risk reduction and resilience building.

Critical factors for success

The impacts, results and achievements mentioned above have all been the results of the leadership and work of WHGNE and WHIN whose board members and managerial staff are all women from different backgrounds and communities. The women's efforts have made the project a success in the Gender & Disaster area in particular, and in the disaster/climate risk reduction and resilience building areas in general. The collaboration with Monash Injury Research Institute since 2012 has assisted immeasurably in gaining recognition for the work and extending its reach.

Challenges faced and solutions

Major challenges have included the need to include gender into the disaster context, when people feel there is no time to consider this. Dr Elaine Enarson writes about this challenge. 'Each summer,' she says, 'the bushfire season again diverts attention on to 'urgent' matters and attention to gender issues is relegated to the unimportant. Yet its importance lives on as both men and women suffer from the gendered expectations of ESOs, their communities and society as a whole.'

Areas for improvement

- Training would ideally be adapted for different audiences.
- Sex-disaggregated data could be gathered by all disaster agencies.
- Family violence data should be collected and monitored by a nominated agency.
- Prioritization of family violence awareness before a disaster occurs.
- More documentation through journal articles should be completed.

Sustainability and potential for replication in other settings

Project funding has been achieved to late 2016. Further funding is as yet unknown.

Additional project details

Lead organisation/s	Women's Health Goulburn North East (WHGNE) Women's Health In the North (WHIN)
Partner/s	Monash Injury Research Institute, Monash University (MIRI)
Funding source	WHGNE WHIN National Disaster Resilience Grants Scheme (NDRGS) National Emergency Management Projects Attorney General's Department Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) Emergency Management Victoria (EMV) 1800 RESPECT Department of Environment, Lands, Water and Planning (DELWP)
Funding amount	From external sources: $550,000 since 2012
Contact name	Debra Parkinson
Contact email	space@netc.net.au
Contact telephone	0423 646 930
Hurdles submitting details of this project	Nil
Project URL Link	www.genderanddisaster.com.au

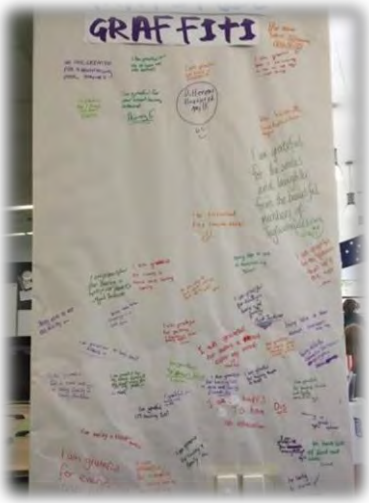
October 13th every year celebrates

The International Day for Disaster Reduction (IDDR)

to observe and to take part in building more disaster resilient communities and nations.

UNISDR

Healthy And Resilient Together (HART) Project



Project Summary

The HART project is a community-wide approach to building resilience in the towns of Beechworth, Wooragee and surrounding areas. The project brings together 3 primary schools and 2 early childhood services to address an identified need to enhance and build resilience in children within the community. It also provides and plans for bushfire and fire safety education for children and young people.

Background and situation context

The HART project is being conducted in Beechworth, Wooragee and the surrounding areas of North East Victoria. This region is situated in the bushfire arear of the Indigo Shire. It has a population of approximately 4,000 people, and has experienced 3 large bushfires over the last 12 years.

The project partners include local government, local CFA, health and education settings working collaboratively to develop an innovative approach to building resilience and providing fire safety education to children, staff and families in the local community.

Groups participating include Beechworth Primary School, St Joseph's Primary School, Wooragee Primary School, Beechworth Kindergarten, Beechworth Community Child Care Centre, Indigo Shire Council, local CFA and Beechworth Health Service. There is commitment from the partners to work together and combine efforts to support funding and future activities.

The need for building resilience in children in our community was identified by consultation with parents, staff and students from primary schools and early childhood services in the area that are all participating in the Healthy Together Achievement Program (AP). It is also supported by the recommendations from the Bushfire Royal Commission and the Bushfire Cooperative Research Centre to support resilience education and disaster risk education in children and young people. HART supports and enhances the current work and framework of the AP to support the groups to become health promoting schools and services to address health and well-being in each.

Activities

There are 4 components to the HART project:

1. To provide resilience education and strategies for children aged 5-12 years, attending primary schools and brought together Prep/1/2, year 3/4 and year 5/6 to attend a session as a group of combined schools.
2. To provide resilience education and strategies to parents/carers and staff from primary schools (PS) and early childhood education services (ECS).
3. Delivery of bushfire and fire safety education prior to summer and the up and coming bushfire season.
4. Development of action plans to utilise the strategies and skills learnt to implement ongoing actions for building resilience in children.

The project design was developed by the partners and the Health and Well Being Teams (HWBT) in the settings with the commitment to try something different and together. Funding was received from the Foundation for Rural and Regional Renewal (FRRR) to conduct the project with additional financial support gained from Berry St.

The HART project is still in progress. The resilience education sessions are complete and the fire safety sessions are also complete. The groups are all currently developing and reviewing their actions plans to define further activities and actions for the ongoing commitment to enhancing resilience in children and the community.

Results

The HART project has provided resilience education to:

- 340 primary school students from Foundation to year 6
- Education to approximately 40+ primary school and early childhood education staff
- 120 + parents/carers in the community
- 136 evaluations gathered from staff/parents/carers
- 89.71% rating of 9 &10/10 for satisfaction

By the middle of December 2015, over 400 children received fire safety education provided by the local CFA to the participating primary schools and early childhood groups in Beechworth and surrounding areas. The fire safety education is vital to children and young people living in the bushfire prone area of Beechworth, Wooragee, Stanley and the surrounding areas.

The HART project has generated positive discussions in the community with actions already implemented such as a gratitude wall at Beechworth Primary School, and a staff gratitude wall at the child care centre.

Other results include:

- Ongoing commitment from the partners with action plans to address resilience in the groups are being developed and reviewed
- Common language and strategies being discussed in primary schools and early childhood services
- Discussions and ideas gathered to support strategies to share the learning such as gratitude to wider community and celebrate the positive things
- Identified need for follow up session and further education for those who were unable to attend
- Implementation of 2 community discussion groups, *Putting Resilience Into Action* to reflect on results from education sessions and identify community led actions
- Establishment of *Putting Resilience Into Action* network of 115 members with regular communication

Gratitude, Empathy and Mindfulness (GEM) were taught to the children, parents/carers and staff which are essential elements in developing resilience in children and young people.

The feedback received through evaluation forms and informal conversations has been extremely positive. The gratitude from all involved in the sessions (including children, staff, parents/carers and onlookers) was overwhelming.

The action plans will provide setting-specific frameworks to continue to support and implement the strategies. The action plans also support the continuation of the collaboration for the development of further initiatives and the promotion of activities to support the ongoing development of resilience in children.

The community-wide approach has created considerable conversations within and between the community, schools and early childhood services.

Evaluation has identified actions from participants and these have been presented to the HWBT and *Putting Resilience Into Action* groups.

Next steps

Replicating this community-wide approach would be beneficial in other communities and discussions have commenced.

Reflection

HART is providing the children and families in our community with skills and strategies to support the development of resilience in children and the underlying foundations necessary to manage disaster or challenges that are presented to them.

Factors that were unique/good practice

- Engagement of education services working in partnership with health, Local Government and local CFA
- Employment of a groups approach to support and promote health and well-being, and in particular resilience
- AP framework and HWBT that include membership from Local Government and health as well as parents and education staff, provides ongoing framework for action in area resilience and bushfire education to support the community.

Critical factors for success

- Commitment from partners to work together as all committed to building resilience in children and to support a community wide approach
- Listening to the needs of the community and developing action to address the need

Challenges faced and solutions

The only challenge for the HART project lay primarily with ensuring that parents/carers attend the resilience education and to have more than 100 attend as our target. The parent/carer education sessions were therefore offered in the morning and the evening to provide accessibility and to allow more child care centre staff to attend a session if they were unable to attend the professional development session due to the centre opening hours.

Areas for improvement

The recommendation would be to provide this opportunity to other bushfire communities such as Yackandandah, Kiewa and surrounding areas to lead their own community wide resilience project. HART assists in laying the foundations in supporting children, families and groups to build resilience and engage a wider community. The settings-based approach with community, health, education, local government and emergency services is based on evidence to promote health and well-being. It contributes to the multi-pronged approach to support communities to build resilience and can support individuals and community to return to near normal functioning post disaster.

Sustainability and potential for replication in other groups

The strategies and skills provided are simple and can be easily introduced to families and children in the groups. These can also be easily translated into other groups and communities to further enhance resilience and building capacity for children and communities to respond and manage before during and after disaster.

The presence of the HWBT, the local partnerships and action plans provide a foundation for building further initiatives and community action to support building resilience within the community and for community led actions. Whilst the funding is no longer present, the structures that support the initiatives are sound and ongoing so that the groups can work together to enhance resilience in children that is vital for planning for reducing disaster risk.

Additional project details

Lead organisation/s	Beechworth Health Service
Partner/s	Beechworth Primary School Beechworth Community Child Care Centre Beechworth Kindergarten Wooragee Primary School Indigo Shire Council St Joseph's Primary School Beechworth CFA
Funding source	Foundation for Rural and Regional Renewal (FRRR)
Funding amount	$12,260
Contact name	Gabriella Tange
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Contact telephone	03 5728 0200
Hurdles submitting details of this project	Nil
Project URL Link	

We cannot stop natural disasters but we can arm ourselves with knowledge: so many lives wouldn't have to be lost if there was enough disaster preparedness.

Petra Nemcova

In an emergency, what's your plan?

Project Summary

The City of Greater Bendigo joined with Victoria Police, Victoria SES, Country Fire Authority, Department Health and Human services and Australian Red Cross to work collaboratively with our community to increase resilience and preparedness when faced with a disaster/hazard. The 'In an emergency, what's your plan?' project aims to simplify and personalise preparedness, therefore increasing capacity for resilience throughout the community.

Background and situation context

- Emergency management is evolving and has shifted away from, 'what are agencies doing for the community' to a 'sector-wide approach to achieve joined-up outcomes that are community-focused.' (Emergency Management Victoria)
- The City of Greater Bendigo (CoGB), community resilience pilot project supports both a regional city setting and surrounding rural areas, with a particular focus on vulnerable communities/people.
- The initiative was established due to an identified need to increase community resilience, preparedness and awareness, throughout the community.
- Emergency agencies worked collaboratively, focusing on a multi-hazard approach to information sharing and preparedness.
    - Initial objectives:
        - Increase overall community resilience, by delivering a risk communication strategy tailored to suit target audience
        - Coordinate a tailored public education program delivered in partnership with VicSES, CFA and the Australian Red Cross
        - Reduce inefficiency of current and future public education programs, by achieving cost efficiency in communication

The project supports the entire CoGB community, however significant focus has been placed on members and groups within the community that are often identified as vulnerable, e.g. deaf community, refugee groups, socially and geographically isolated people, the elderly, children and teenagers, people with disabilities, low literacy levels etc. Often traditional messaging and information has not been accessible or understood by these groups, therefore they are more vulnerable in the event of an emergency.

The focus of the project is to develop tools, strategies and easy to access information for these groups which assists them to develop emergency plans and to support themselves, family and community. This was done by utilising known information sources and broadening how information was delivered to these groups – with the ultimate goal of increasing resilience of these community members and developing local leaders to further support the community.

Activities

The project, 'In case of Emergency, what's your plan?' was launched in November 2015, with a TV commercial, radio and social media campaign and a flip chart delivered to every household in the City of Greater Bendigo. This was also supported with media promotion and community education sessions with various organisations and services.

Additionally, in collaboration with Scope, an Easy English version of 'In an Emergency, what's your plan?' was developed to support people with low literacy, intellectual disability, from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds (CALD) etc. This has been a valuable inclusion to the project and has been widely utilised and valued by the community.

The roll out of community education to build preparedness is ongoing. This involves continually engaging with local communities to ensure the message is reaching the right audiences and to make sure that the message has been understood.

The project consisted of various phases:

Forum: 'Building Stronger Communities in the face of disaster'

- Focus: Improve how individuals and the community prepare, respond and cope with natural disaster and emergencies
- Multi-agency and community event, held on June 21st 2014
- Featuring: Craig Lapsley, John Richardson, Mark Squirrell and Dr. Yoko Akama – presenting 'Playful Triggers' activity

Engaging with academic institutions, researching aspects of community resilience and engagement

- Household Pets and Community Disaster Resilience, Josh Trigg, Appleton Institute, GQ University
- Community Resilience and Preparedness Survey, Douglas Paton and Katelyn Russiter

Multi-agency working group established, including;

- VicSES (State Emergency Services)
- VicPolice
- Red Cross
- Country Fire Authority (CFA)
- Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS)
- City of Greater Bendigo (CoGB)

'In an Emergency, what's your plan?' community education tool(s)

- Five key themes developed from working group;
  - Knowledge
  - Have a Plan
  - Connectedness
  - Safety & Wellbeing
  - Information
- Products:
  - Flip chart distributed to all CoGB households (via 'GB' magazine)
  - TV commercial- Auslan & text included (animation & human component- local Emergency service personnel)
  - Media release & launch by CoGB Mayor & agencies
  - Radio broadcasts (message)
  - Social media
  - Website- linked to the COGB website with all agency information, if community requires specific information
  - Business forum – supporting businesses with preparedness & business continuity planning

Partnerships within community, supporting community

- Neighbourhood & Community houses- training volunteers to work with people to develop plans, support with identify risks etc.
- Schools- education & peer mentoring
- Aged & HACC services
- Bendigo Deaf community & interpreters
- Emergency Service agencies (community information)
- Linking with refugee communities & interpreters

Results

The outputs listed below were developed in collaboration with all emergency service agencies. Each agency identified five key messages that were important to their organisation. As a working group, five themes were developed – encompassing all the agencies' key messages (many which were the same). The challenge was to create something that had not been done before, to be innovative and follow the principles of shared responsibility. Consultation with community members and potentially vulnerable people was also undertaken. Information on how people like to receive, are able to best comprehend and engage with information was gathered via email, face to face, phone conversations, in groups and one-on-one.

From this information we developed a concept brief for our products: bright, modern, interactive, engaging (wide audience), pictorial, simple language, able to be personalised.

The inclusion of Auslan has been a positive addition into the project. Information and knowledge that has been learnt and shared over the journey has been invaluable. This process has highlighted the importance of engaging and working within communities to ensure that resources are reflective of true community needs.

Working collaboratively was very positive and an efficient use of resources for all agencies and organisations involved. Challenges were overcome by going back to objectives, looking at the 'big picture' and ongoing communication.

A continuing challenge within this space will be, challenging traditional thinking and being agile in our thinking.

Outputs

- Flip chart to all CoGB households (via Bendigo Weekly paper)- simple information and simple planning structure included;
- TV commercial- Auslan & text included (animation and human component)
- Media release & launch by CoGB Mayor & agencies
- Radio broadcasts (message)
- Social media
- Website- linked to the COGB website with all agency information, if community requires specific information
- Business forum – supporting businesses with preparedness and continuity planning
- Building Stronger Communities' in the face of disaster, forum

Evaluation of the project will occur informally throughout the roll out of the project and the working group will come back to reflect on successes, improvements, changes, community feedback etc. As a pilot project the initial plan was a trial within City of Greater Bendigo, however it has the potential to roll out to the broader Loddon Mallee Region in the future.

Reflection

The Community Resilience Pilot Project was developed using the theme 'all agencies and all hazards', stepping away from the traditional single agency and single incident planning and response. The project focused on empowering community to take responsibility for preparedness and building individual and community resilience. The initial stage of this project has been rolled out, however monitoring and evaluation of its effectiveness is still in progress.

Additional project details

Lead organisation/s	City of Greater Bendigo
Partner/s	Victoria Police, Victoria SES. Red Cross. Department Health & Human services (DHHS)
Funding source	Rural Development Victoria (RDV)
Funding amount	$68,400
Contact name	Ann-Marie Roberts
Contact email	a.roberts@bendigo.vic.gov.au
Contact telephone	(03) 4408 6518
Project URL Link	City of Greater Bendigo In case of an emergency, what is your plan? Provided Courtesy of the City of Greater Bendigo

A good half of the art of living is resilience.

Alain de Botton

Keep Cool in Yarra – heatwave safety campaign

Project Summary

The aim was to reduce heatwave vulnerability among culturally and linguistically diverse groups living in social and public housing. The campaign brought 25 agencies together to provide information and resources via face-to-face, social media, radio and other creative, innovative ways.

Background and situation context

Yarra City Council developed and led a campaign to support the City's Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) communities living in social and public housing, to build their resilience and reduce their vulnerability to the undesirable consequences of heatwave. The Council partnered with 25 different agencies and community groups to deliver the campaign over 2015-16.

Activities

Council recognised early that community resilience cannot be built through a 'one size fits all' approach. This is because communities are not static, homogenous groups. Council therefore committed to building resilience in the City of Yarra, by engaging with one identified vulnerable community group at a time, on the topic of one single hazard at a time. The resilience-building initiative involved: - engaging directly with vulnerable community members through activities frequented by the targeted vulnerable groups (e.g. English language classes, Migrant Centres, Cultural Community festivals, Housing estates, etc.); - using service providers trusted by CALD groups to deliver heatwave risk information and resilience-building products (e.g. Pharmacists, Red Cross, Yarra Community Housing, VicDeaf, Victorian Aboriginal Health Service etc.); - developing and distributing appropriate physical resources to assist resilience-building; - distributing CALD-tailored heat safety information in creative, accessible formats; - modifying Council's Home and Community Care client assessments to also consider client heatwave vulnerability; - creatively exploiting traditional and social media channels used by CALD community members (e.g. ethnic radio, branding heat safety information on community buses in languages other than English).

Results

The campaign's success was assessed through quantitative and qualitative methods. Campaign products developed had an estimated reach of 40,000 people. Media advertisements had an estimated reach of 450,000 people. Feedback/surveys from the target audience showed that the Campaign:

- Increased heatwave risk awareness among Yarra's CALD residents of Public and Social Housing;
- Encouraged and facilitated heatwave safety behaviour;
- Provided useful resources for vulnerability reduction to occur;
- Forged new connections between Council and vulnerable groups
- Strengthened relationships between government agencies and local social service providers.

Resilient Australia Award 2016 - Victorian Winner. The campaign: - Increased risk awareness among Yarra's CALD Public and Social Housing residents; promoted heat safety behaviour within CALD groups; and, provided appropriate information and resources to vulnerable persons.

Reflection

The campaign is special because it's simple, relatively cheap and can have enormous reach. The campaign can be used and modified by local governments nationally, to target any identified vulnerable group and support resilience-building for any specific emergency risk.

The campaign is original in its creative approach: using face-painting, music, visual images on buses, language classes and lollies etc. to engage with CALD groups. The project is innovative because the deaf community was included as a linguistically diverse group within the campaign, rather than being identified a group with disability. In terms of heatwaves, deaf people are vulnerable because of their inability to access information in their language, not because they cannot hear. This has helped to change perceptions around deaf people in our community and it aligns with how VicDeaf sees the deaf community too.

The project was innovative because the thermometer-magnets developed as part of the campaign allowed Council to embed heat safety information directly into homes in a way that would raise risk awareness and assist resilience-building in a practical and meaningful way. People access their fridge multiple times per day, so having a technical gauge for how hot it is in the home raises awareness constantly and also allows people to make decisions about when and how they can best manage their safety in the heat.

Partnering with 25 different groups (and also directly with community members) has allowed the Council to have a massive reach into the targeted vulnerable communities. When developing the campaign, the Council consulted heavily with CALD residents (via networks and meetings at CoHealth centres) to work out what was wanted and needed by vulnerable groups, and the best way to deliver heatwave resilience support to them. The Council worked with businesses (pharmacies) located next to housing estates where there were high numbers of CALD residents. Pharmacies were stocked with Council heat safety products and information in Chinese, Vietnamese, Hakka and Greek. Pharmacists were able to target CALD residents who were doubly vulnerable to heatwaves because of the medication they were taking. When residents picked up medication, they were given heat safety resources in their language. The Council devolved responsibility for running a number of community information sessions to Victoria Police, Red Cross and also community members themselves. This meant that ownership was being taken over directly by those who needed to manage heatwave risks.

Interestingly, some community members who attended heat safety sessions became so engaged with the campaign, that they started to support the Council's campaign by running their own heat safety projects and information stands at events, using products provided by the Council. One community member involved their local craft group to make cooling neck ties, to distribute these to vulnerable people within their area. Council provided the material to do this. Other rooming house tenants decided to distribute Council's heat safety information and products at a massive social housing festival. Even though the campaign ended after summer, the police continue to provide safety-focused English classes for new migrants, as this activity proved so useful in creating trust and providing important information between police and new migrants.

The project created new relationships and forged stronger social connectivity:

- within the broader Yarra community;
- between the community and government agencies; and,
- between government agencies and social service providers. This has led to an increase in emergency management activities between the Council and its campaign partners and has resulted in new resilience-building activities between CALD groups and campaign stakeholders.

Additional project details

Lead organisation/s	Yarra City Council
Partner/s	Richmond Housing Estate, Yarra Community Housing, Carringbush Adult Education, Victoria Police, Australian Red Cross, Victorian Aboriginal Health Service, Belgium Avenue Neighbourhood House, CoHealth, Save The Children, Finbar Neighbourhood House, + more
Funding source	Yarra City Council
Funding amount	16500
Contact name	Lucy Saaroni, Senior Advisor Emergency & Risk Management
Contact email	lucy.saaroni@yarracity.vic.gov.au
Contact telephone	
Hurdles submitting details of project	Nil

Unity is strength... when there is teamwork and collaboration, wonderful things can be achieved.

Mattie Stepanek

The future depends on what we do in the present.

Mahatma Gandhi

Managers of Spontaneous Emergency Volunteers Pilot Program - G21 Region

Project Summary

The Managers of Spontaneous Emergency Volunteers (MSEV) Pilot Program - G21 Region (City of Greater Geelong, Borough of Queenscliff, Colac Otway Shire, Golden Plains Shire and Surf Coast Shire) harnesses the power of Spontaneous Volunteers in an Emergency. It initiated the establishment of a trained and engaged voluntary workforce of experienced volunteer managers who can be effectively deployed to assist in managing spontaneous emergency volunteers during relief and recovery activities.

The initiative has increased the G21 regional capability to provide relief to volunteer managers in emergency situations without compromising recovery efforts within communities.

Background and situation context

Emergencies can strike anywhere and at any time. Whether planned or not, spontaneous volunteers will come forward with offers of assistance. While these volunteers can be an invaluable workforce to help with relief and recovery efforts, emergencies including the 2009 Victorian Bushfires, highlight that most communities are not able to cope with a mass influx of spontaneous offers of assistance, and in some instances, these volunteers can put themselves and others at risk.

The challenges posed for emergency managers by spontaneous volunteers was acknowledged in the 2012 Victorian Emergency Management White Paper, which recommended the development of 'strategies to manage spontaneous volunteers during relief and recovery efforts.'

The Managers of Spontaneous Emergency Volunteers (MSEV) G21 Pilot project has been designed to help build community resilience by recruiting, training, supporting, deploying and debriefing a workforce of skilled MSEVs to assist during emergency relief and recovery activities.

The Geelong pilot project focused on building capability of organisations providing relief and recovery services to manage spontaneous volunteers in the G21 region, in the event of an emergency. The G21 region comprises the City of Greater Geelong, Borough of Queenscliff, Colac Otway Shire, Golden Plains Shire and Surf Coast Shire.

Activities

The Pilot Initiative was funded by Regional Development Victoria as part of the Resilient Communities Program. Volunteering Victoria appointed a Project Manager and Coordinator who were supported by a Reference group.

Project activities included the following:

- Development of best practice training and professional development to upskill and support a workforce of MSEVs.
- Establishment of a central register, managed by Volunteering Victoria, of experienced and trained MSEVs willing to be called on in times of emergency.

- Development of an online Resource Centre to house a suite of resources to support volunteer MSEVs in managing spontaneous volunteers in a variety of settings and disaster events.
- Establishment of a communications program to recruit and retain MSEVs and keep them engaged with the project through the central register.
- Through Volunteering Victoria's local, state and national networks, share learnings from the pilot development and specific emergency events.
- Ongoing research and evaluation tracking the development and capability, management and effective deployment of volunteers in emergencies, and best methods of collaboration between volunteer program managers and agencies.

Volunteering Victoria has subsequently received 3-year funding (based on yearly results) for a state-wide rollout of the MSEV program.

Results

Outputs

- Recruitment and selection materials including position description, email invite, website content, registration portal, application form, interview guide, referee checklist and program acceptance form.
- Full day training program including Participants Handbook, video case studies and train the trainer materials.
- Thirty-four volunteer managers participated in the full day training session. Of these 21 applied and have subsequently been approved as MSEVs on the central database.
- Central register
    - Database platform to record details of trained MSEVs including deployment history.
    - Templates for communications to MSEVs before, during and after a deployment.
    - Online Resource Centre for MSEVs.
- MSEV introduction pack including:
    - Welcome letter.
    - Outline of deployment process.
    - MSEV tabard – for use when deployed for identification of spontaneous volunteer managers.
    - Volunteering Victoria name badge and lanyard – for use when deployed for practical identification/validation.
- Engagement activities with stakeholders to build understanding of potential utilisation of MSEVs.
- MSEV Peer support network to provide an opportunity to share knowledge and learnings.

Impact/Change/Benefits

The project has developed a systematic and organised approach to coordinating volunteer manager resources and experience across the G21 Region during relief and recovery activities.

Impacts, changes and benefits include:

- A workforce of 21 trained volunteer managers who can be deployed to help coordinate and more effectively manage spontaneous volunteers who want to assist in times of emergency.
- A community-demand driven MSEV deployment model, ensuring the affected community is assisted and remains in charge.
- A more sustainable, resilient volunteer manager community, brought together to learn from each other, assist each other, and thus create more resilient and supported communities.
- Improved knowledge of emergency management structures, planning process and practices at Volunteering Victoria and Volunteering Geelong.
- Enhanced emergency preparedness, capability and resilience within G21 Region.
- Volunteering Geelong included on Barwon South West Regional Emergency Relief and Recovery Committee network.
- Tested recruitment model and processes that can be integrated into a Municipal Emergency Management Plan (MEMP).

Stakeholder engagement and collaboration at local, state and national levels has spurred conversation and collaboration to share learnings, processes and resources across sectors.

Next steps

Volunteering Victoria has now received funding under the Natural Disaster Resilience Grants Scheme (NDRGS) to commence rolling-out the model across Victoria.

Reflection

Factors that were unique/good practice

While there are a number of programs in Australian jurisdictions that aim to pre-register potential spontaneous volunteers, a significant capability gap still exists in terms of how both pre-registered and spontaneous volunteers would be managed. The G21 MSEV Pilot responded to this gap in systems and services and has developed a model that can be replicated throughout the State and beyond.

Critical factors for success

Initially, engagement by Councils varied, depended on existing emergency management resources and experience. LGAs have different focus, funding, challenges, capabilities and capacity in relation to emergency risk, planning for emergencies, volunteer management and spontaneous volunteering. Many LGAs are challenged by the complexity and expectations of drafting and implementing a MEMP so it was important to 'add value' to existing arrangements by streamlining the management of spontaneous volunteers.

Challenges faced and where possible addressed, included:

- Concerns over risk and liability of groups involved. Legal advice was sought to gain an understanding about risk implications and a 'portable' insurance cover for MSEVs was obtained by Volunteering Victoria.
- Reluctance by LGAs to 'get involved' with spontaneous volunteers required ongoing engagement and discussions as to how the Pilot could minimise risk and improve outcomes for all parties.
- The potential for psychological trauma as part of their volunteer work meant that Psychological First Aid training was built into the MSEV training package along with access to follow up training in this area (ie. Rob Gordon's PFA 1-day workshop)
- Lack of provision for reimbursement of expenses could deter MSEV participation in deployment activities
- Project scope creep – given the lack of existing resources to support spontaneous volunteers, it became imperative to define the program structure by developing a set of 'Guiding Principles'
- Training participants came from a wide range of backgrounds and experience, which resulted in the initial training program being modified in response to participant feedback, to ensure it met the needs of all participants.

Sustainability

The most resource-intensive phase of the MSEV project is during its establishment, the recruitment of volunteer managers, and the development of partnerships with LGAs. Once these elements are in place, the key resourcing issues are to support the retention and engagement of MSEVs and to manage the deployment process, which is overseen by Volunteering Victoria whilst funding is available.

Additional project details

Lead organisation/s	Volunteering Victoria, Volunteering Geelong
Partner/s	City of Greater Geelong & Red Cross
Funding source	Regional Development Victoria
Funding amount	Not specified.
Contact name	Alison Duff
Contact email	a.duff@volunteeringvictoria.org.au
Contact telephone	03 8327 8500
Hurdles submitting details of project	Nil specified.
Project URL Link	http://www.volunteeringvictoria.org.au

The World is changed is changed by your example, mot by your opinion.

Paulo Coelho

Mansfield Community Resilience Leadership Program

Project Summary

The Mansfield Community Resilience Leadership Program aimed to build the skills and awareness of behind-the-scenes community leaders to enable them to be better able to support a community in crisis and assist them to recover quickly.

Background and situation context

Situated 180kms north east of Melbourne, Mansfield Shire covers 3,843 square kilometres and includes vast tracts of 'High Country'. The most recent ABS data sets the Shire's population at 8,067. The major urban centre of the Shire is Mansfield and there are numerous outlying and isolated communities throughout the Shire, which can swell considerably during holiday periods with visitors and part-time residents.

Since 2010, Mansfield Shire Council has been conducting a community development program that has seen 12 of our small communities develop their own community plans. Many much-needed community initiatives have been achieved through these community plans which include a newly renovated hall in Merton and the popular Merrijig community newsletter.

Mansfield Shire's local communities are inherently resilient and, through the community planning processes, have built on this resilience. Through projects such as renovating a local hall, networks have been created, new skills learnt, information shared and community ownership developed.

To keep the community planning program fresh, relevant, inspiring and valuable, we are now working with communities to identify the characteristics of successful projects, which build resilience in the community. One such characteristic is strong community leadership.

The Mansfield Community Resilience Leadership Program was developed to build behind-the-scenes community leaders who will be able to support a community in crisis and assist them to recover quickly.

Activities

The Mansfield Community Resilience Leadership Program (CRLP) was promoted via networks already established through community planning and the local newspaper. There was an initial information session about the program after which 22 community members were selected through an expression of interest process. The participants represented eight communities in the Mansfield Shire, including Woods Point, one of the most isolated communities in Victoria.

The program covered a broad range of topics that included:

- Disaster planning, response and recovery cycle
- Individual and collective strengths
- Leadership styles and temperaments
- Project planning
- Communities in crisis
- Roles of emergency services and agencies
- Review and evaluation

An expert facilitator, with experience in delivering regional and national leadership programs as well as community development initiatives post black Saturday, was engaged to deliver the program which spanned 30 contact hours and included workshops, peer to peer learning, guest speakers and an emergency services panel session.

A working group made up of Council staff, emergency services and a community member with participatory experience in a highly regarded leadership program oversaw the planning, delivery and evaluation of the program.

The program culminated in a one-day Community Conference in which the participants took a part in the planning and delivery and shared what they had learned with the broader community. Over 70 community members and local emergency service personal attended the conference.

Results

Mansfield Shire Council evaluated the CRLP using the Most Significant Change technique. Twenty interviews with CRLP participants and Steering Committee were conducted. Interviewees answered a series of questions around program outcomes, issues, lessons learned and future ideas. This participatory type evaluation method was chosen specifically to continue building the skills of the participants and to demonstrate an evaluation method they could use.

The following most significant outcomes were identified:

- An increase in participant understanding of the importance of wider community consultation and engagement in the risk management process. This includes understanding that the community has skills and knowledge that can be utilised; that understanding the community's needs are critical along with ownership of needs and solutions.
- Participants identified that the CRLP increased their understanding and skills in preparing and planning for emergencies including how to prepare for and recover from emergencies, mapping of community assets and understanding community responses in crises.
- A number of CRLP participants identified networking and connecting with others as a key outcome. This includes understanding what other communities are doing, sharing ideas, bonding, opening up pathways and networks, and engaging with relevant agencies.
- Participants recognised leadership skills within themselves including an increased understanding of their own abilities and self-discovery. The CRLP built confidence and recognition of own value. Participants learnt how to listen to and accept others' points of view.
- The participants co-delivered the 2015 Community Conference with its emergency management and resilience focus. They graduated from the program with projects and ideas for their communities aimed at building the characteristics of resilience.
- A new network consisting of community, Council and emergency services has now formed and will be the basis of a strong collaborative approach in times of both peace and crisis.

Reflection

The CRLP brought together emerging community leaders, Council and emergency services and resulted in an enhanced understanding of each other's roles in times of emergency, the risks facing small communities and the part that well-prepared community leaders can play in building community resilience and in emergency response and recovery.

A turning point for many of the participants was community asset mapping and a disaster scenario exercise. This activity raised the importance of understanding each other's roles, the plans already in place, the community's involvement in emergency management planning, preparation, response and recovery and the formation of solid partnerships, particularly that of community/Council.

Post this exercise, a forum was held that featured an emergency services panel and guest speakers from other communities who provided examples of community initiatives in both the preparation and recovery phases.

The participants invited some of these speakers to share their story with the broader community at the Community Conference. The community asset mapping and simulated disaster exercise was repeated at the Conference with the Emergency Services taking a listening role only to hear first-hand the types of questions raised by the community.

The participant's eyes were opened to the extent of planning and behind-the-scenes preparation that happens in the emergency management sector and also to the need for preparation and readiness at the community level. The Emergency Services learnt of the local knowledge, skills and willingness of the community to partner in building stronger, more capable and resilient communities.

One of the great aspects of the CRLP is that the participants are committed, established residents of their communities. The CRLP is self-sustaining in that each of the community leaders will continue to take a role in driving the future of their communities and applying the skills they have learnt in developing their community's resilience and future risk readiness

All of the participants are community group members and will share their learnings with their groups and ultimately, the broader community. Many concluded the program with the purpose of instigating projects in their community that will result in increased communications, stronger networks and a greater understanding of emergency management planning, response and the recovery pathway.

Additional project details

Lead organisation/s	Mansfield Shire Council
Partner/s	Mansfield Shire Council The Regional Development Company
Funding source	Resilient Community Program – Regional Development Victoria Mansfield Shire Council
Funding amount	$49,500
Contact name	Kirsten Lingard
Contact email	Kirsten.lingard@mansfield.vic.gov.au
Contact telephone	(03) 5775 8534
Hurdles to submitting details of this project	Nil
Project URL Link	www.mansfield.vic.gov.au/councilservices/communityservices/communitydevelopment/community-resilience-development.aspx

Working together continually as a community can help reduce the impact of disasters.

Rivers and Ranges Community Leadership Program

Project Summary

Rivers and Ranges Community Leadership Program (RRCLP) Annual Program aims to develop leadership to build resilient, connected and thriving communities across the municipalities of Mitchell, Murrindindi, Nillumbik, Yarra Ranges and City of Whittlesea.

Background and situation context

In 2011 a feasibility study concluded that a community leadership program (CLP) in the region would contribute to building a strong foundation of regional leaders to build resilience in the face of adversity such as the 2009 Victorian Bushfires**.**

Observation by community leaders since 2009 has indicated that leaders emerging from this disaster were becoming increasingly fatigued, had little network support, shared few resources and learnings across the region, and would benefit from leadership skill development to ensure rebuild process could be sustained and that these leaders were not a lost resource to the community. There were many examples where the understanding of governance skills, emotional wellbeing training, strategic planning and succession planning would have contributed to greater community resilience.

The program:

- Builds leadership skills, confidence and self-awareness.
- Increases understanding of regional issues including resilience to disaster.
- Provides access to experienced leaders.
- Increases participant's ability to deal with complex community issues.
- Builds lifelong leadership support to face adversity in the region.

It places emphasis on building understanding of:

- Emergency management processes and structures.
- The capacity communities have to plan for emergencies and subsequent recovery.
- Community driven risk assessment, planning, response, and recovery.
- Lessons learnt from disaster for communities in the future.

Activities

The program commenced in 2014 and eleven participants from diverse backgrounds spent ten months working on their leadership goals, skill development, and building their regional networks. This was achieved by the implementing activities guided by local, regional, state and federal leaders including:

- Program days
- Field trips
- Study tours
- Retreats

Emergency Management Program activities included:

- Community capacity building resilience, and asset based community planning.
- Emergency Management Study tour incorporating health and wellbeing and arts.
- Tour of State Control Centre.
- Understanding the role of the Defence in emergency response.
- Peri-urban issues around planning for grass fires.

The RRCLP Interim Board and Program Manager provided support to individuals. Local Government, business, community organisations, and industry, education and health sector representatives provided in-kind support.

The project was in-progress at the time of publication.

RRCLP will take a number of years to reach all of its objectives as the organisation tracks the pathways of graduates and their work within their communities around emergency management and resilience building.

Progress towards achieving short-term outcomes has been measured in early evaluations. These include increased:

- Participant Community leadership skill development and confidence.
- Development of regional sportive networks.
- Participant ability to work collaboratively around shared community outcomes.
- Understanding of emergency management.

Results

Outputs of the program have included:

- Year Book outlining the program and graduate learnings.
- Mid-Year evaluation report.
- Final evaluation is in progress which will include outcomes from participants, speakers, and stakeholders.

Beneficiaries of the program included:

- Graduates.
- Organisations who supported participants (community, not for profits and business).
- Organisations, business, and industry in the region including local government.
- Communities in the region.
- The region itself.
- Emergency Management sector.
- Victorian community.

Graduates reported a significant increase in:

- Leadership skills and confidence.
- Networks – quality and quantity.
- Usage of new networks to work on existing and new community projects.
- Collaboration across the region between community groups.
- Community leadership responsibility.
- Strategic approaches to community development work.
- New work opportunities.
- Community leadership opportunities – especially in the area of emergency management and Board roles.
- Invitation to speak – Emergency Management.
- Support by Alumni network.

Organisations report increased:

- Leadership capacity in graduates.
- Benefit from graduates' networks.
- Investment into organisational activities or development of new initiatives.
- Investment in community activities and new initiatives.
- Confidence in graduates' ability to drive change.

Communities experienced:

- New initiative and project development.
- Benefits of increased linkages and shared resources around emergency management planning in particular.
- Increased advocacy around importance of community leadership particularly in relation to Emergency Management.

Next steps

- Complete program review.
- Refine and improve for 2016 and subsequent programs.
- Track alumni and their work in building community resilience particularly in the area of emergency management.
- Build stronger collaboration with Emergency Management sector around community leadership and its role
- Target Emergency Management personnel to be part of the program.

Reflection

RRCLP Annual Program is unique because it:

- Is based on principles of community capacity and resilience building.
- Focuses on the development of local leadership using local examples.
- Creates long-term networks.
- Examines Emergency Management in the context of community including health and wellbeing, economic development, politics, and the arts.
- Supports each participant's personal development and community work.
- Is experiential.

Factors that were unique/good practice:

Good practice has been informed by:

- Victorian Regional Community Leadership Program Secretariat.
- Evaluation.
- Quality improvement and sustainability and on the development of long term evaluation measuring community resilience.

Challenges faced and solutions:

1. How to increase the influence of participants:
   Graduates who have used their increased networks and capitalised on their influence have had greater impacts on community resilience activities. Our challenge is to work with participants to increase their spheres of influence, and their confidence and aptitude in using them to drive change in their community.
2. How to promote level of capacity of graduates:
   Graduates from the program are highly effective leaders. Personal capacity building around increased emotional resilience, higher collaborative ability, the development of solid support bases, and leadership maturity were well evidenced. Our challenge is to further engage other sectors such as the Emergency Management sector to recognise and want to work with our graduates to a higher degree. Graduates are key community change makers, have the ability to increase community resilience through mobilisation and will play key leadership roles in regional adversity and disaster events.
3. How can we leverage the most from our alumni for the region?
4. RRCLP have been contemplating that as our alumni continue to grow each year, how we can leverage the most from this in terms of building resilience?
5. More targeted recruitment.
6. How can we hone our recruitment to target individuals with high levels of motivation to drive change in their communities?
7. Impact of evaluation poses a challenge.
   Models for evaluation will be researched and partnerships created to measure long-term effects of RRCLP on community resilience and ability to plan for respond to and recover from disaster.

Additional project details

Lead organisation/s	Rivers and Ranges Community Leadership Program (RRCLP)
Partner/s	In kind support provided through local government, business, and community organisations (This will vary for each annual program).
Funding source	Deutsche Bank Foundation for Rural and Regional Renewal (FRRR) Community Foundations (Mitchell Community Resource and Advocacy Group, Kinglake Ranges Foundation, and Hugh Williamson Foundation) AusNet Services Salvation Army City of Whittlesea
Funding amount	$54,000
Contact name	Lisa Linton, Program Manager
Contact email	pm@rrclp.org.au
Contact telephone	0409 287 577
Hurdles submitting details of project	Losing my work on previous electronic web based submission page.
Project URL Link	http://www.rrclp.org.au/wp-content/uploads/RRCLP-2014-2015-Year-Book.pdf

I am prepared for the worst, but hope for the best.

Benjamin Disraeli

Rural Fire Tales

Project Summary

The Rural Fire Tales project captured and amplified the positives which help bind communities together in times of disaster. It involved interviewing 42 people seriously impacted by fires in December 2014. This successful recovery activity resulted in a candid, educative documentary film showcasing grassroots community resilience in action. It is also proving an invaluable training resource for those in the emergency management sector.

Background and situation context

Rural Fire Tales was implemented within the context of another project managed by Benalla Rural City Council (North East Victoria) entitled Local People Making Local Solutions. This 18-month project, funded by Regional Development Victoria employed a 0.5EFT Co-ordinator to work with four rural communities within the Benalla Shire to build community resilience and better prepare for emergencies. Only 9 months into this project, disaster, in the form of two fast moving grassfires, did strike, severely impacting two of the communities. This cast a totally different light on the project. Circumstances had changed. The challenge now for the co-ordinator, was to capture the resilience that had come to the fore in a way that would enhance the recovery. The Rural Fire Tales documentary project was thus born. The vision was to provide a purposeful opportunity for individuals impacted by the fire to reflect on their experience with a particular focus on the positives. By filming it, these reflections would be 'captured' and could help others see such emergencies through the eyes of those directly affected. There would be two major target beneficiaries - community members impacted by the fires (in film) and those who would subsequently view the film.

Activities

The RFT film is the story of the fire & continuing recovery from the participants' points of view. It does not include discussion of the response to the fire by emergency services. Each interview focused on the unique individual experience - the impact, learnings and many positive stories of community support.

Key features of implementation

- The filming took place over 12 weeks, starting 4 weeks after the fires
- Forty-two people were interviewed aged from 2 to 78 years of age on their own properties in a time and space most comfortable for them.
- Retired farmer assisted with interviewing
- Participants were regularly consulted during editing process to ensure they were happy with footage included. Private preview screenings
- Song-writing workshops with children and young people
- Première of film at country hall which also featured the children singing own song, dinner supplied by CWA and bush dance • Final production of artwork and DVD.
- Community event to launch DVD. This involved:
  - Screening of film
  - Emergency Services Interactive Displays
  - Sit-down dinner, then live music and dancing

The Rural Fire Tales project and Local People Making Solutions program finished May 2016. Distribution and presentations to a variety of key stakeholder groups still ongoing.

Results

Rural Fire Tales produced outcomes on a number of levels. The evidence of impact comes from written evaluation surveys, informal interviews and unsolicited emailed responses. The project:

1. Assisted individuals, families and communities impacted by the Stewarton, Lake Rowan fires in the recovery process.

   > *'The production of the film gave people, including me, an opportunity to reflect on the event, reflect on how it was handled by myself, my family, the community and realise that despite how horrific it was, there were some amazing positives.' (Participant)*
   >
   > *'It really helped my kids to talk about their experience so that they could express how they felt in their own words and in watching some of the other stories – help them find a place for it.' (Participant)*

   The focus during interviewing and subsequent film, on the positives was an important part of the recovery. Rather than being stuck on the negatives, it enabled people to move forward.

   > *'I think it's hard to think about an event that is traumatic and often you focus on the bad parts of that event, the horror, the 'what ifs'. But this process made people think of the good as well, it empowered people and gave them the chance to look past the event and focus on their own strengths, their own skills and their ability to overcome such an adversity and to survive.' (Participant).*

2. Amplified the positives for the community. In particular, captured and reflected back their
   - practical and effective seasonal preparation for fire
   - quick thinking actions as fire approached to minimise losses
   - individual acts of selflessness and courage during the fires community concern for each other during and after the fires

3. Challenged stereotypical gender and age roles. Women interviewed were strong and capable with several successfully facing the fire on their own. Recalling the event and subsequent generosity of local people elicited overtly emotional responses in many of the men. Rather than being seen but not heard, many of the children and young people showed great competence, confidence and resilience during and after the disaster.

4. Developed a community education resource for:
   - those involved in the emergency management sector relief and recovery DEPUTY MUNICIPAL RECOVERY MANAGER *'Puts a human face on what otherwise might just be a process & checklist for those involved in recovery.'*
   - first responders (e.g. CFA, police, etc.) for their own understanding and also for community fire preparedness activities CFA BRIGADE SUPPORT: *'This is SO useful! Because it isn't just someone from an emergency service trying to 'tell them what to do', it is real life, real people saying what they did or what they should have done or will do in future. I recognised a lot of CFA messages in the narrative but they were not coming from a brochure, an advertisement or a Fire Ready presenter, they were coming from community members with first-hand experience.'*
   - peri-urban and rural communities. Provides a useful resource to assist community members to prepare, respond and recover from emergencies COMMUNITY MEMBER WHO HAD EXPERIENCED A MORE RECENT FIRE *'This documentary showed me the importance for us men to recognise and discuss our emotions. I had a similar experience of fire just five months ago, when apart from our farm-house, our farm was totally overrun by fire. This brought it all back but in a good way. Different fire but lots of similarities particularly in feelings. Made me realise how I had been bottling things up.'* Due to the cessation of all funding, unfortunately there is no follow up initiative planned at this point.

Knowledge or product outcomes

A 45 minute film rich with first-hand knowledge from a diverse range of rural community members aged 2 - 78 years who experienced devastating fires. They candidly reflect on emotional and physical impact, learnings and the importance of community in recovery. The short term project has been completed.

Reflection

A film about how communities experience a fire is not unique. However, there are a number of innovative elements about how RFT and addressed multiple challenges which underpin its success. Key factors included:

- The LPMLS project coordinator became the filmmaker building on existing relationships of trust and links within these communities and adapting an existing project to changed circumstances.
- Hundreds of hours were spent with people impacted by the fires on their own properties in their own comfort zones. The film making was secondary to the listening. An effort was made to include those who would NOT normally speak out – particularly stoic farmers.
- It shone the light on the 'ordinary.' This was not a catastrophic natural disaster like black Saturday where so many lives & homes were lost but that does not diminish the trauma. It is the ordinariness and everydayness of the people & their situations that makes it so compelling, so real & so useful and the reason why it is connecting to so many.
- Children were seen and heard – their reflections and actions valued and highlighted, in what is frequently an adult domain.
- Deliberate focus on positives to avoid being bogged down in negativity and blame. It was stressed that the filmed interviews would not include any discussion of operational matters. Anger and negativity are resilience BLOCKERS. Dwelling on the negatives stops people/communities 'bouncing back' and moving forward into a positive future.
- Ensured that any known community 'tensions' did not feature in the film and such a diversity of people and perspectives was included that there could be no sense of bias.
- Did not include interviews with people in 'paid positions' or from specific organisations. It remained the heart felt experiences of community members and was not the mouth piece for any particular group.

Additional project details

Lead organisation/s	Benalla Rural City Shire Victoria
Partner/s	The LPMLS Steering Committee at Benalla Rural City Council, had overall management responsibility of the Rural Fire Tales project. The project's management committee consisted of key stakeholders in the emergency management sector – CFA, SES, Victoria Police, DHHS, Red Cross, Regional Development Victoria, Benalla Rural City Council and community representatives from 4 rural communities.
Funding source	Key funding from Vic Department Health and Human Services | Emergency Management made it possible. DHHS & Benalla Council
Funding amount	Not specified.
Contact name	Jan Osmotherly who was the LPMLS & Rural Fire Tales Coordinator and filmmaker is the ongoing contact in an independent capacity. Jan Osmotherly – Director, Osfield Consultants
Contact email	osfield@optusnet.com.au
Contact telephone	0413 191 174
Hurdles submitting details of project	Nil specified.

You can't change the ocean or the weather, no matter how hard you try, so it's best to learn how to sail all conditions

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Rural People: Resilient Futures (RP:RF)

Project Summary

The Rural People: Resilient Futures (RP:RF) project investigated vulnerability in a rural shire and worked to increase capacity of health and community service agencies to enhance resilience.

Background and situation context

According to the Victorian Council of Social Services (VCOSS) (2007) the impacts of climate change will be felt most by those who are already subject to social or economic marginalisation. Climate change and environmental sustainability are emergent issues in the health and community services sector. Although inherent concern exists there has been little increase in capacity to create systemic change. This limited capacity poses a barrier to action. Similarly, the language of environmental sustainability and climate change could seem alien to agencies or even disengaging. Linking with Southern Grampians Glenelg Primary Care Partnership (SGGPCP) demystified the language and enabled creation of a shared conversation to highlight relevance and opportunities. SGGPCP is a partnership of 20 health and community services agencies who work together to improve the health and wellbeing of the community.

The project objectives were

- Understand the context and nature of social vulnerability in a rural Victorian Shire and compare this to the academic and policy definitions
- Understand how vulnerability is likely to change in this context under the impacts of climate change
- Increase the capacity of community service organisations under the SGGPCP platform to plan for the impacts of climate change on their operations, service delivery and clients
- Develop a model of engagement to promote throughout the community service sector, and increase the resilience or rural communities across Victoria and potentially Australia

Through building awareness and capacity of agencies who work with vulnerable people it was anticipated that both the agency and the community would benefit from RP:RF.

Activities

RP:RF was a collaboration between SGGPCP, RMIT and Southern Grampians Shire Council with support from the Victorian Department of Environment and Primary Industries (now the Department of Environment Land Water and Planning) as part of the Victorian Adaptation and Sustainability (VAS) Partnership conducted in 2013 - 2014.

RP:RF employed an action research approach that enabled the project team to engage with local community service providers through the platform of SGGPCP to determine the current context of social vulnerability. Agencies were asked who is doing it tough in their community and what would make like easier. Agencies then used relationships with community to enable further consultation with community groups.

Phase 2 of the project engaged with agencies to identify climate change impacts on their service delivery and client groups. A workbook was developed to support this phase and consultations were conducted with agencies to work through the major themes. The next phase involved planning for the future and integrating adaptation into operations, procedures and policy. The final phase of the project ensured information was disseminated to other

stakeholders including the research and policy sector. Outcomes and learnings were documented in reports, papers, case studies and a short film was produced.

Over 30 consultations with partner agencies and community were conducted in the Southern Grampians Shire to investigate vulnerability. Project partners identified low income families and farming families living in isolated areas as particularly vulnerable while socially isolated individuals and those living with cognitive difficulties were also mentioned often. The literature review highlighted that managing social vulnerability needs to be highly contextual requiring local community knowledge and engagement.

Five community agencies completed all the steps in an adaptation handbook developed through the project. Other stakeholders and partners learned about the project as observers and through workshop and media engagements. Agencies reflected that as a result of participation in the project they had increased networks and partnerships, reviewed policy and operational procedures, initiated education programs and advocated to leadership, government and peak bodies.

This project is completed.

Results

RP:RF produced a number of co-generated outputs including

- Literature review Click here
- Project Report Click here
- Short Film
- Agency Case studies
  - Balmoral Bush Nursing Centre
  - Hamilton Community House
  - Mental Illness Fellowship - ASPIRE
  - Mullerateronq
  - Southern Grampians Shire Council
  - Western District Health Service

POSITIVE impacts/changes/benefits for the target beneficiaries

Understanding social vulnerability has uncovered four top categories of those doing it tough including low income families, farming families living in isolated areas, socially isolated individuals and those with cognitive difficulties. It was important to further understand through the literature review and consultation that managing vulnerability needs to be highly contextual and requires local community engagement to better understand effective ways for individuals and communities to adapt to a changing climate and its socio-economic consequences. RP:RF also found that access to services (transport, community service organisations, health), community support and social engagement and access to consistent and accurate information made life easier.

Agencies and stakeholders reported that the most valuable aspect of the project were learning more about social vulnerability, learning about climate change , learning from researchers and from other agencies.

NEGATIVE impacts/changes for the target beneficiaries

No negative impacts were observed or described in feedback from agencies. When working with community during the consultation phase, PCP worked with community agencies who then introduced PCP to community making the most of trusted relationships.

Next steps

The next steps have already begun through *the Enhancing Networks For Resilience Project* (EN4R). This project will build more on understanding the relationships and networks that enhance resilience.

Reflection

Factors that were unique/good practice

- Utilising the PCP platform has capitalised on the already existing and trusted relationship the PCP has with partner agencies. This enabled consultation to be easily conducted with agencies and introductions to

community. This relationship was critical to the success of the project particularly given the limited capacity of agencies and likely low priority of climate change adaptation.
- Partnering with DELWP enabled a multi-sectoral approach increasing capacity for both SGGPCP and the state government.

Critical factors for success

- The leadership platform in the PCP and the relationship with agencies was a key critical success factor to enable engagement of agencies.
- The partnership with RMIT was critical to enable co-generation of the research bringing new knowledge and links to the partnership. It was key to note that when participants were asked what the most valuable aspects of eth project were the opportunity to learn from research experts was among the highest responses (under learning about vulnerability and climate change).

Challenges faced and solutions

Community Service agencies are generally unused to discussing climate change impacts and could easily have been disengaged from these conversations with a myriad of conflicting priorities coupled with limited capacity. On the other hand, community service agencies have strong connections with vulnerable community members, however possible limited capacity to build adaptation to enhance resilience into their practice. Linking with the PCP enabled agencies an opportunity to identify opportunities and integrate actions into everyday planning, policies and operations.

Areas for improvement

Typically there were only one or two representatives from each agency engaged and generally participants were working at a practitioner level. This meant that embedding adaptation to build resilience required leadership support in agencies. This tended to be easier to implement in smaller agencies than those with bigger more complex structures.

Recommendations for further projects

- Understand local connections and relationships
- Use language relevant to the agency and the consumer groups
- Consider communication options – we produced a short film which has assisted to tell the story of the project, but also engaged agencies and the community making the film
- Provide opportunities to share and learn from each other.

Sustainability and potential for replication in other settings

There are 29 PCPs across Victoria, however this model could be applied to other peak bodies and umbrella organisations across Australia.

Additional project details

Lead organisation/s	Southern Grampians and Glenelg Primary Care Partnership (SGGPCP)
Partner/s	Southern Grampians Shire Council (SGSC) RMIT University (RMIT)
Funding source	Department of Environment Land Water and Planning (DELWP) formerly Department of Environment and Primary Industries through a Victorian Adaptation and Sustainability (VAS) Partnership Grant
Funding amount	$67,760 from DEPI
Contact name	Jo Brown
Contact email	joanne.brown@wdhs.net
Contact telephone	03 55518563 or 0428310280
Hurdles to submitting details of this project	Nil
Project URL Link	http://sggpcp.com/?page_id=241

Only a crisis - actual or perceived - produces real change. When that crisis occurs, the actions that are taken depend on the ideas that are lying around. That, I believe, is our basic function: to develop alternatives to existing policies, to keep them alive and available until the politically impossible becomes the politically inevitable.

Milton Friedman

Supporting communities in the 3799 postcode

Project Summary

This project supports communities in the 3799 postcode area (Yarra Ranges Municipality; Millgrove, Warburton, East Warburton, Reefton, McMahons Creek, Big Pats Creek) to develop community led, emergency management plans which reflect local needs and priorities. Plans will enable communities to work through each of the stages of planning, preparedness, response and recovery, building self-reliance and capacity to respond to emergencies that directly or indirectly affect their local area.

Background and situation context

The connection between community and municipal planning has been identified by both state and local authorities as underdeveloped. The Yarra Ranges Municipal Recovery Evaluation from the 2009 Black Saturday Bushfires highlighted the need for better connection with local communities in preparation for emergencies, to assist in effective recovery occurring. The communities within 3799 not only feature the highest bushfire risk in the country and reside on natural water courses and in close proximity to man-made water catchments. They are also over-represented in the social disadvantage rating system (SIEFA).

The project works with communities in the 3799 postcode to develop unique emergency management plans tailored to their specific needs. In the process of developing the plans, communities are supported to consider local risks, demographics, geography and capacity to plan for, respond to and recover from emergencies. This allows communities to self-determine their own community safety and emergency management objectives and initiatives, greatly contributing to enhancing community connectedness and resilience. The project provides much needed connections between local communities and local agencies, therefore enhancing their chances of survival, and recovery from a significant event.

The process for this project was supported by Yarra Ranges Council, along with emergency service and relevant agencies. A diverse range of community participation and involvement has been fundamental to the process. This will enhance the planning process and ultimate success of the emergency management plans being adopted by communities.

Activities

Planning started with an introduction into emergency management, followed by a risk assessment based on the process of the *Community Emergency Risk Assessment* (CERA) tool for each of the local communities, working towards a transparent and mature conversation about the local needs and requirements for each community. Council utilised a broad range of corporate resources to support this initiative, including, but not limited to, the following departments: Social and Economic Development, Risk, Emergency and Community Safety, Environment, Planning, Local Laws, and Urban Design. This broad level of support, along with the agency specialist skills and knowledge aims to ensure that the aspirations for community led planning is bolstered by science, statistics and evidence.

The process allowed for the partnering up of the following: CFA, SES, DEPI, Victoria Police, Melbourne Water, Red Cross, Salvation Army, Upper Yarra Community House, Chambers of Commerce, Traders Groups, Service Groups, schools, other groups as identified, and the communities located in the postcode area of 3799.This project included the following factors within the Project

- 15 community events, including large scale open community consultation events
- focused workshops, and subject specific forums, and
- significant and high profile advocacy to rectify communication blackspots led by the community and supported widely by Yarra Ranges Council staff.

Project 3799 actively pursued five townships in the highest bushfire risk area of the Upper Yarra Region of the Yarra Ranges to embark on Community Emergency Management Planning journey. The townships had a varying degree

of engagement in emergency management thinking and planning, which provided a great opportunity to refresh local thinking.

The project team undertook the following activities

- engaged community leaders from each of the townships
- met and shared the new research with groups from each township
- supported the design of locally relevant plans to share the knowledge with the local communities, using a presence at community festivals, events and community markets. Five separate sessions were hosted throughout the region in the lead-up to the 2014/15 Fire Danger Period, and
- drawing on the level of interest from the local community, the increased connection between emergency service agencies and community leaders, continue to facilitate meetings that address the needs identified by the community in the pursuit of community disaster resilience building.

Results

The communities who participated were placed at the centre of the project. Using a community development approach to drive the project meant that the needs and priorities of the communities involved were self-identified and supported with evidence. This process lead to greater community empowerment and broad based community support. It also involved local champions in the project, ensuring that project outcomes and outputs were relevant to each community's context. The very real risk of bushfire and other risks to this part of the world also assisted with a call to action for the local community who face the imminent risk of property loss, isolation for protracted periods as a result of limited access and egress, as well as poor telecommunications infrastructure.

The project supported the following local successe

- **Millgrove** - increasing knowledge of fire behaviour and local community levels of preparedness which dovetailed nicely with the community engagement relating to the establishment of a community fire refuge in the centre of town, which already had in place a partnership with government and all agencies, along with key community leaders, church and school groups.
- **Warburton** – shifting of old thinking habits centred on a printed shelf document as a Plan, and onto a more dynamic system which involves the whole of the community. Including the development of a website, a community education video to played at local cinemas, the support and establishment of a Neighbourhood Safer Place in the Community, along with multiple community workshops in and around the community to gather data and share disaster related knowledge.
- **East Warburton** - enabled the momentum from the community consultation from the recently designated Community Fire Refuge in East Warburton to broaden and continue. This meant that the group could address the telecommunications blackspot, which is a significant problem for the area, and directly relates to the community level of resilience. The community group, along with council, state and federal government members were able to lobby for this particular blackspot to be addressed, leveraging on recently released federal funding. This was a significant win for the community and greatly contributes to their ability to make plans and timely decisions.

Reflection

The real value in Community Emergency Management Planning is in the process of planning. The outcomes and outputs are without doubt beneficial and ought to be strived for, however it is through the planning process that evidence is gathered, shared learning occurs, and crucial relationships and connections are built. It is with the knowledge, along with these elements that contribute to community disaster resilience.

Challenges faced and solutions

The key challenge for this project, in a rapidly evolving sector is the limited understanding of the subjective nature of disaster resilience. There are many communities undertaking community emergency planning across Victoria, and with varied success. The challenge with this project is that the project managers were learning as they worked, which is best described as an organic approach. This was important to attain the right mix of industry / government led (based on cutting edge research and knowledge) work, along with a deep determination for community owned programs and projects (based on the said research and practice).

Other challenges that will always face pilot based projects like these, are largely linked to the short term nature of the funding. As it takes quite some time to establish community rapport, build knowledge about the inherent risks and set about embarking on a journey of community led, community disaster resilience planning and activity, there was always a risk that the time frames would be too short to effectively embed sustained cultural change within a community that is based on a sound understanding of the risk. One of the key lessons from the pilot project revealed that this type of work requires a long term vision and a sustained effort, along with a clear understanding of the measures of success.

Sustainability and potential for replication in other settings

This project has provided a new level of clarity for Yarra Ranges and will inform future projects of this nature. This will also support other activities being undertaken by council which contribute to broader community resilience.

Additional project details

Lead organisation/s	Yarra Ranges Council
Partner/s	CFA SES DEPI Victoria Police Melbourne Water Red Cross Salvation Army Upper Yarra Community House Chambers of Commerce Traders Groups Service Groups Schools and other groups as identified, and the communities within the 3799 postcode area.
Funding source	Safer Community Grant (RDV)
Funding amount	$110,000 (Overall project costs including in-kind support $213,346
Contact name	Corrine Bowen
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Contact telephone	9294 6308
Hurdles submitting details of project	Nil
Project URL Link	N/A

Attitude is a little thing that makes a big difference.

Sir Winston Churchill

‘Survive and Thrive’ Program – Anglesea Fire Education Partnership

Project Summary

The Survive and Thrive Program is a partnership between the Anglesea Primary School (APS) and Anglesea Fire Brigade (AFB).

Utilising a student led approach students are taught bushfire behaviour and explore bushfire knowledge and understanding in relation to increasing their own and their communities’ resilience to bushfires in their environment.

To support the students learning, the partnership includes many informal relationships between local and state emergency management professionals.

The later stages of the program conclude with the students designing and delivering Bushfire workshops to their families, peers, community and schools of like bushfire risk.

Background and situation context

The Program is being conducted in Anglesea, an extreme bushfire risk area. Both the brigade and the primary school saw the need to support the students and the community to enable best access and means to learn about the local environment in regards to bushfire in order to be empowered, to understand, and make the best informed decisions possible.

- The CFA and APS developed the Survive and Thrive Program for the Anglesea community whereby the students of the school gain knowledge and understanding of the local environment and its link to bushfires.
- The Program is innovative with benefits to the Anglesea community and, in time, to other communities.
- The Program is an authentic learning experience for students.
- The Program provides an opportunity for students to be innovative and creative in formulating learning experiences around bushfire safety and awareness, that are engaging and worthwhile for others.
- Students demonstrate their capacity to take an active role in bushfire awareness and safety.
- Students understand the threat to them and their community, with regard to bushfires.
- Students teach and inform their peers, families and visitors about bushfire safety and awareness in Anglesea.
- Students then work with their families to develop an effective and realistic fire plan.
- A strong relationship has been developed between the CFA, AFB and APS.
- The relationship between the CFA, school and community is nurtured due to the work done within the Program.
- The Program will be used by the University of Melbourne to build evidence relating to children’s capacity to have an active role in bushfire safety.

-

Grade 4, 5 and 6 students from APS are the primary audience, the secondary audiences are their families, their peers, local school students, local community and schools of a like bushfire risk visiting Anglesea.

Activities

- At the end of Grade 4 the students begin their introduction to the Fire Brigade, Radio Communications and how to use field weather instruments.

- Grade 5 begins with a series of bushfire behaviour lessons about the principles of fire, weather, landscape, forest fire danger index calculations, fire danger ratings, overall fuel hazard calculations, map reading, hand plotting of predicted fire behaviour, fire investigation, local traditional aboriginal fire use (cultural and environmental fire) fuel reduction and local brigade fire history.
- During the second half of Grade 5, students practice what they have learnt and start to develop presentation skills. Their soft introduction has the students coordinating a tour of the station and a workshop with their family.
- During the last term of Grade 5, students create workshop/presentations that share a message with the audience as to how they can 'Survive and Thrive' in a bushfire. A student-led process, these workshops are conceptualised by the whole cohort. Individuals then select a workshop/group and in some cases are allocated. Each group then proceed to develop their workshop.
- At the end of the term the students present their workshops for the first time to their families and local fire agencies.
- In Grade 6 the students continually improve their workshops and present to a variety of audiences from their town, local towns and visiting school groups from like-bushfire risk areas.

The first cohort of students have now graduated the Survive and Thrive Program and two other groups are currently in progress.

In addition to Anglesea, Strathewen Primary School in partnership with Arthurs Creek-Strathewen Fire Brigade have created their own Fire Education Partnership and commenced the Survive and Thrive Program.

These two Community Based Fire Education Partnerships that deliver the Survive and Thrive program are now formally supported by a CFA facilitator and supported organisationally as a CFA pilot project.

Results

Outputs produced as a result of this Program

- 12 students have completed the program and 45 currently in the program.
- 8 x Bushfire workshops and 4 more bushfire workshops in progress – presented to over 300 people – families, community, fire experts and local schools from High to Extreme Bushfire Risk Areas.
- 2 x presentations – Station Tour and Bushfire Mapping 1 in progress.
- 1 x Photography exhibition, 1 more in progress.
- 1 x Book produced, 1 more in progress.
- 8 x interviews, 1 video of students interviewing people that have experienced bushfire with 6 more interviews in progress.
- 2 x videos of the program – 1 for the ABC news and 1 for the Living with Bushfire Conference
- A fire board game (in partnership with Surf Coast Shire).
- Clay animation about the Fire Danger Ratings in progress.
- Installation of Field Weather Sensors in partnership with RISER. The students have informed the improvements for the second installation. Term 4 2016 the Field Weather Sensors will be installed at Anglesea and Strathewen.

POSITIVE impacts/changes/benefits for the target beneficiaries

This is a list of the first cohort's reflections of the Leadership and Life skills – *experience, knowledge, skills and understanding* that the students have gained from being part of the Anglesea Fire Education Initiative

- Preparation before and after fire
- Fire plans
- Forest fire danger index calculations and fire danger ratings
- All the knowledge about fire
- Public speaking
- Being on the news
- Being the first to pilot the Program and use the field sensors
- Confidence
- Teamwork
- Persistence
- To be clear
- Be interesting
- Commitment
- First student to run a burn table

- Gathering details
- Fire language
- Taught other schools
- Learnt to use technology
- Evolved and developed using feed forward
- Feel safer
- Not as worried by the FDR, now know what it means
- Know how to understand weather and fire, know the variables that change fire behaviour
- Flow, ability to link, to explain topic clearer
- Increased knowledge

Next steps

The program has now been brought into CFA as a pilot project and see if it can be replicated in other communities and to continue the Anglesea Fire Education Partnership. It has now extended to Strathewen.

The next steps are to continue the Partnerships during the pilot and evaluate the program before assessment of long term continuation or growth to other communities.

Reflection

Factors that were unique/good practice

The Program is based on child centred disaster risk reduction principles. The approach has been a collaborative teaching and learning process. The program is led by the students, what they show interest in, how they show interest, how they learn, what they want to learn about and what they wish to teach. Relationships are developed with the students and create opportunities for them to develop relationships with other leaders in the community, in particular fire agencies.

Critical factors for success

- Commitment of the project partners to the program.
- It is a community led Program founded on good relationships, mutual trust and respect for all.
- The diversity of the people involved in the program – skills, knowledge and experience.
- Versatility/Adaptability – when opportunities come up that will benefit the students we can respond easily to take up good opportunities. We can adapt to suit the students learning needs.

Challenges faced and solutions

- The Program has been challenged by a lack of financial support, currently funded as a pilot. Uncertainty beyond the pilot will remain until the evaluation is completed to help inform a future plan for the Program.
- A facilitator to support the brigade to fulfil the student led vision of the program was required. South West Region supported the Program with a Brigade Sustainability Coordinator – Emma Taunt as a subject matter expert in creating community partnerships, designing experience based activities, student led programs and workshops. A business case was accepted by the CFA board and Emma Taunt is now employed to facilitate the program during the pilot.

Sustainability and potential for replication in other settings

- Evaluation yet to be completed. With ongoing staffed support the Program has the ability to be a demonstration site to trial different methods of teaching about bushfire and for visiting schools to learn from and observe to consider their interest to replicate a variation suitable for their school and network with the existing Program to share lessons learned.

Additional project details

Lead organisation/s	Anglesea Fire Brigade (AFB) and Anglesea Primary School (APS)
Partner/s	Country Fire Authority (CFA) Lisa Gibbs - Melbourne University Riser/ThinkSpatial Informally associated with the program is - DELWP, Parks Victoria, Wadawurrung, Surf Coast Shire, Victoria Police and EMV
Funding source	Contributions have been made by CFA Anglesea Community Anglesea Fire Brigade Department of Justice Rebecca Hosking Photography EMV Bendigo Bank Camp Wilkin YMCA Surf Coast Shire
Funding amount	Amount not available.
Contact name	Jamie Mackenzie and Emma Taunt
Contact email	j.mackenzie@cfa.vic.gov.au e.taunt@cfa.vic.gov.au
Contact telephone	Emma Taunt, Survive and Thrive Program Coordinator Community Based Fire Education Partnerships – Anglesea and Strathewen M: 0418 621 761
Hurdles submitting details of project	Nil
Project URL Link	N/A

Emergency Preparedness is a Team Sport

Eric Whitaker

Warramunda Village Builds Resilient Leadership

Project Summary

This three-year workplace improvement project introduced a series of initiatives and activities to realign our team to our mission, vision and values. It improved resilience and emotional agility among staff, and quality of care for residents.

Background and situation context

Warramunda Village is a not-for-profit, community-governed aged care complex, located on seven acres in the town of Kyabram in northern Victoria. It comprises 56 independent one- and two-bedroom living units, Warramunda apartments (consisting of nine bedsits and five flats) and a 61 bed residential facility with two respite rooms. The 105 members of the Warramunda team, backed and supported by more than 150 community volunteers, pride ourselves on person-centred care.

Initiating factor(s)/needs

After a period of unprecedented change, our workforce was not functioning as a cohesive team. Our organisational chart no longer reflected our needs, and our workplace culture did not support or encourage our team to be either creative or accountable. Furthermore, individual team members did not understand how their contribution related to our organisation's mission, vision or values.

We made the decision to engage with Kru Consulting, who provide coaching for individuals, teams and organisations wanting to improve wellbeing and performance in the workplace. In collaboration with Kru Consulting, we made a comprehensive plan for addressing the challenges facing our team, and achieving sustainable change in the culture and performance of our organisation.

Objectives

1. Build a resilient, engaged and high performing workforce.
2. Use 'The Four Rooms of Change'™ to develop a common language around managing change.
3. Adopt the Organisational Barometer© with our team, in order to:
    - Provide a safe space to share reflections, celebrate successes and diagnose challenges.
    - Normalise experiences of change as legitimate psychological experiences.
    - Gain a deeper understanding of staff concerns and barriers to resilience.
    - Appoint members of the leadership team to prioritise and enact a collective plan to resolve issues.
    - Engage staff in problem-solving about issues that were identified.
4. Define and clarify the roles and expectations of leaders, and equip them with the skills and mindsets to build resilience in their teams.
5. Develop 'critical friend' (peer coaching) relationships among senior leaders, supporting their capacity to and accountability in embodying the organisation's mission, vision and values.

6. Create a workplace environment where all members of the organisation - unrestricted by role or reporting relationships - engage in candid and respectful conversations and feedback to improve their working relationships and collective performance.
7. Promote the 'leader as coach' model to build and sustain resilience through
    - Reinforcing the importance of emotional intelligence and positive psychology.
    - Equipping leaders with confidence and competence to coach team members towards achieving personal and organisational goals.
    - Utilising tools such as GROW, RUUM™ and STAR/AR to build awareness of personal impact and potential.
    - Reviewing processes and systems (e.g. recruitment and performance management) to ensure they best support the development of optimal skills and mindsets.
    - Harvesting success stories to recognise and reinforce changes made.

Target beneficiaries

- On a personal level, staff are more engaged, feel respected, have a voice, and have a regular opportunity to give and receive feedback that is both positive and developmental. They also have a greater capacity to rebound after change.
- Our leadership team has greater knowledge of themselves on an emotional level since undergoing the MSCEIT self-assessment emotional intelligence process. They also have greater skills, and broader vocabulary, to engage with team members using quality questions (GROW) to solve problems.
- Leaders also have a broader knowledge of the role they and others play in the organisation, and understand the relationship between leadership behaviour, workplace culture, and collective performance.
- The organisation can expect more resilient staff and decreased turnover.
- Personal goals will be aligned to organisational goals, producing better outcomes.
- Residents can expect to receive high standards of care even in periods of change. Staff will understand management's expectations, which nurtures consistency.
- Families can expect continuity of care for their loved ones, with a more stable staff cohort.

Activities

By collaborating with Kru Consulting, we were able to introduce a number of staff development activities that now form part of Warramunda's ongoing professional development strategy. These include

- Using the Organisational Barometer© as a tool to engage our team in providing comprehensive information, instead of fragmented information through anonymous staff surveys. The information gathered is analysed for themes, allowing a deeper understanding of staff issues. Members of the leadership team are then appointed to address these issues through planning, action and reflective practice.
- Define the role of leaders, and equip them with the skills to build resilience in their teams (i.e. through the 'leader as coach' model).
- Acknowledge the importance of emotional intelligence and utilising tools such as GROW, RUUM™ and STAR/AR to create and sustain a coaching culture.
- Use 'The Four Rooms of Change'™ to develop a common language around managing change.

The leadership team work with Kru Consulting to undertake activities which

- Promote the leader as coach model within our organisation (i.e. each leader coaches their team to achieve personal and organisational goals).
- Encourage leaders to involve people in finding solutions to identified issues.
- Develop 'critical friend' relationships to support senior team members, while holding people accountable.
- Create a workplace environment where both positive and developmental feedback is expected and sought.

Progress & Achievements

The organisational chart has been restructured, and the staff professional development activities mentioned above are now utilised regularly. There has also been a cultural shift in philosophy to viewing leaders as coaches, and widespread support for ongoing collaboration with staff to resolve issues.

Results

Output

An oral presentation that is now used in a staff development session for our leadership team.

POSITIVE impacts/changes/benefits for the target beneficiaries

- We use the leader as coach model to promote staff wellbeing - supporting our goal of building a resilient workforce.
- We have developed a language around managing change, and to identify the emotions we experience during times of change. Having the capacity to name and normalise these emotions creates resilience.
- Using the Organisational Barometer©, we directly identify and involve all staff in highlighting opportunities to improve the workplace.

NEGATIVE impacts/changes for the target beneficiaries

- A significant commitment of time and resources was required to implement the changes. However, such commitment is required to shift often well-entrenched workplace culture.

Next steps

- We are striving to continue building on our leader as coach model with our team members. In addition, leaders will be working on their personal and team SMARTER goals. These goals seek to embed performance planning in our organisation, instilling accountability and fuelling development. Through greater accountability, our team will be more attuned to how they are performing, and be clearer about what their managers are seeking from them.
- We are seeking to actively develop our team to ensure that individuals continually improve their skills, while optimising preparations for succession planning, future recruitment and selection.

Reflection

Factors that were unique/good practice

Our core business focuses on care of the aged across several fronts, including community housing, independent living and residential care. For the first time, we have truly considered our team as being at the core of what we do. Deciding to apply our 'person-centred' approach to staff, required an organisational shift and change in workplace culture.

Critical factors for success

The full support of our Committee of Management and leadership team, and the stamina to stick to our convictions.
Challenges faced and solutions

For some team members, the process of self-reflection is too uncomfortable. We respected everyone's right to participate (or not). This, in itself, demonstrated their appetite for change and capacity for resilience.

Areas for improvement

We could have budgeted better, to best manage the investment in our human capital. More importantly, we learned that individuals will differ in terms of their capacity to hear the message and apply it in the workplace. Just as people learn differently, so does their capacity to adapt their practice and replicate their learning, especially when stressed. Being equipped to manage these challenges is a vital part of the process.

Sustainability and potential for replication in other settings

This project has great potential to be replicated in many organisations. It can build high-performing, resilient and dynamic workforces. We thoroughly recommend it to other organisations.

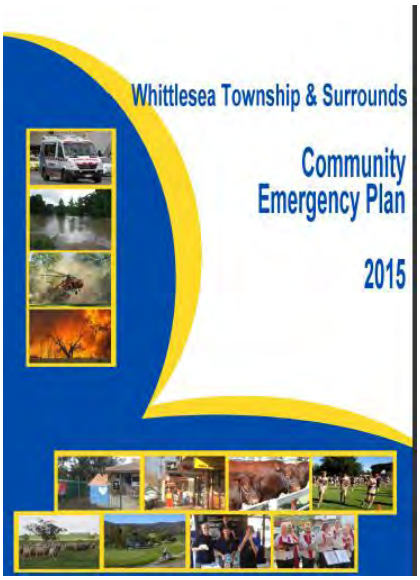
Additional project details

Lead organisation/s	Kru Consulting and Warramunda Village Inc
Partner/s	Nil
Funding source	No external funding was sought for the project
Funding amount	Not available
Contact name	Sandi Websdale, CEO, Warramunda Village Kerryn Velleman, Director, Kru Consulting
Contact email	sandi@warramunda.com.au and kerryn@kruconsulting.com.au
Contact telephone	0358522611 (Warramunda Village) or 0401716346 (Kru Consulting)
Hurdles submitting details of project	Nil
Project URL Link	https://www.monash.edu/__data/assets/pdf_file/0011/461648/10b.-Warramunda-Building-Resilient-Leadership-Slides-13-April-2016.pdf

Adopt as your fundamental creed that you will equip yourself for life, not solely for your own benefit but for the benefit of the whole community.

Sir John Monash

Whittlesea Township and Surrounds Community Emergency Plan



Project Summary

This project builds upon the success of existing work of the Whittlesea Community Resilience Committee (WCRC) to develop a Community Emergency Plan (CEP) as a locally owned and recognised approach for future emergencies. The Community Emergency Plan will be an invaluable community tool that will be used to help the community to prepare for emergencies that may affect them in the future.

Background and situation context

During the 2009 Black Saturday Bushfires Whittlesea Township was a main focal point for firefighting co-ordination, immediate relief of displaced persons and domestic animals. It was a central hub for recovery activities immediately and for several years after. This publication seeks to build on the knowledge gained over the recovery period.

The Whittlesea Township and Surrounds Community Emergency Plan stemmed from the Whittlesea Community Recovery Committee's (CRC) project 'Building Community Resilience' under the auspice of the Whittlesea Community House. With community champions driving the project, support and funding from the Foundation for Rural and Regional Renewal (FRRR), Emergency Management Victoria, the Whittlesea Community Resilience Committee and the City of Whittlesea it has enabled the development of a local Community Emergency Plan.

The Whittlesea Community Emergency Plan provides a local focus on emergencies and support for the community in being prepared for any event.

Activities

The project encompassed many activities including

- Intensive research of community emergency projects across the globe
- Community meetings and workshops to develop the plan content
- Regular working group meetings
- Consultation with local and regional emergency services
- Community displays at community markets and events
- Meetings and presentations to a range of local government departments, agencies, Monash University, local services groups, sports clubs.
- Community conversations

For the desired format of the publication we collaborated with a graphic designer and printer.

Each of these activities was designed to get a much broad community input, feedback and support for the plan.

All meetings and workshops were open and the entire community invited to participate.

Results

Consistent with the aims of the Community Emergency Plan, the community would like to secure funding support to pursue the future development of a Community Emergency Response Network (CERN) and will identify key community organisations, individuals and resources that will come together as a network to respond in times of Emergency or as needed by the community. The network is based on identified community sectors and will meet during the year to develop their collective response to community crisis, undertake planning and risk assessment and receive training.

The principle behind the CERN is for sector representatives to support Emergency Management teams by providing a local resource to support effective two way communication that reflects local knowledge and experience.

Additional project details

Lead organisation/s	Whittlesea Resilience Committee
Partner/s	City of Whittlesea Foundation for Rural and Regional Renewal (FRRR) Emergency Management Victoria State Emergency Service Red Cross Town Crier (Community newspaper) Whittlesea Agricultural Society Whittlesea CFA Whittlesea Community Resilience Committee Whittlesea Ministries Inc. Whittlesea Community House Whittlesea Secondary College,
Funding source	Whittlesea Uniting Church _ a member body of Whittlesea Ministries Inc.
Funding amount	$38,000 FRRR Emergency Management Victoria City of Whittlesea
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Contact telephones	Michelle Dunscombe: 0400 578 662 Ivan Peterson: 0418 598 364 Kerry Clarke: 0408 134 280
Hurdles submitting details of project	Nil
Project URL Link	http://wchi.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/Whole-Plan-Final-Edition-1-Feb-2015.pdf https://www.monash.edu/__data/assets/pdf_file/0009/461682/11.-MUARC-compendium-Whittlesea-13-April-2016.pdf

Build a culture of safety and resilience at all levels.

Hyogo Framework for Action

Useful links: Disaster Frameworks and Stratgegies

Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, 2015 - 2030

http://www.preventionweb.net/files/43291_sendaiframeworkfordrren.pdf

National Strategy for Disaster Resilience (NSDR) (COAG, 2011)

https://www.coag.gov.au/sites/default/files/national_strategy_disaster_resilience.pdf

Victorian Emergency Management Strategic Action Plan, 2015 - 2018

http://fire-com-live-wp.s3.amazonaws.com/wp-content/uploads/EMV_Strategic_Web1.pdf

Useful links: Compendium Exemplars

Compendium of Case Studies on Climate and Disaster Resilient Development in the Pacific 2015

http://www.pacificdisaster.net/dox/case_studies_pacific.pdf

UK Resilience Civil Protection and Resilience Case Studies

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/community-resilience-case-study-library

A Compendium of Case Studies on Gender Mainstreaming Initiatives in UN-Habitat

http://unhabitat.org/books/a-compendium-of-case-studies-on-gender-mainstreaming-initiatives-in-un-habitat/

FEMA: Mitigation Best Practices Portfolio

http://www.fema.gov/mitigation-best-practices-portfolio

Useful links: Guidelines for MUDRI / EMV Compendium

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Useful links: Template for submitting resilience building activities to the MUDRI / EMV Compendium

https://www.monash.edu/muarc/research/research-areas/disaster-resilience/compendium-template

I am prepared for the worst, but hope for the best

Benjamin Disraeli

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