Review of Recovery Arrangements

LEARNINGS FROM THE 2013 TASMANIAN BUSHFIRE RECOVERY

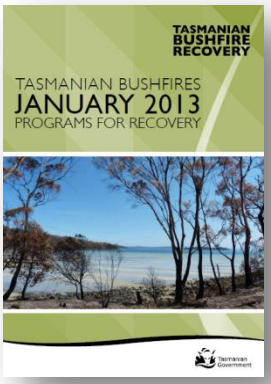
Bushfire Recovery Unit
Department of Premier and Cabinet

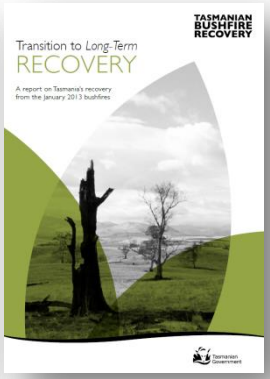
Tasmanian Government

The Tasmanian bushfires of January 2013, which spanned almost 40,000 hectares, resulted in widespread loss of homes, businesses, public infrastructure and flora and fauna. The disruption and trauma to affected communities was immense, as was the significant task of ensuring appropriate arrangements were in place to meet community recovery needs.

Following the fires, the Tasmanian Government established the Bushfire Recovery Taskforce (the Taskforce) to coordinate and oversee recovery efforts, and a temporary unit within Government was created to ensure recovery plans were effectively carried out.

Governance structures underpinning recovery activities enabled input at every level from an array of stakeholders including the community. This ensured that the changing needs of affected communities were consistently reflected in the planning and coordination of tasks. Many recovery programs were developed and implemented to support the personal recovery of individuals and families, the clean-up and reconstruction of infrastructure and property, and the revival of businesses and local economy.





The Taskforce's planning document *Tasmanian Bushfires January 2013: Programs for Recovery* was released in June 2013 and helped guide many of these programs. In order to capture the learnings gained throughout the year the Taskforce conducted a comprehensive review of the recovery process. It consulted widely with the community and recovery partners who were involved with the planning, coordination or delivery of recovery services. The Taskforce's final publication *Transition to Long-Term Recovery*, released in April 2014, provides an overview of recovery activities that took place throughout the year and includes a summary of key learnings from the review. These publications can be found at: www.bushfirerecovery.tas.gov.au/people_and_communities/local_communities/bushfire_recovery_taskforce

Community resilience, strong leadership and the collective effort of many recovery partners resulted in a relatively swift transition to long-term recovery – a testament to the community's spirit and the generosity and hard work of all involved. In order to facilitate what has been Tasmania's largest community-led recovery program in almost 50 years, the flexible approach exercised by State and local governments enabled genuine collaborative working arrangements. This enabled effective planning and coordination of the social, infrastructure, economic and environmental elements of recovery.

In acknowledgement of the depth of understanding gained throughout the 2013 recovery experience, the Bushfire Recovery Unit (the Unit) has developed this document as a supplement to the Taskforce's publications, *Programs for Recovery* and *Transition to Long-Term Recovery*. This report is intended for use by government agencies to aid future recovery efforts. It includes practical guidance and a range of planning materials, templates and checklists to assist with the set-up of effective governance and operational arrangements, should similar measures be required in the future.

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1. Preparing for recovery

1.1. Principles of recovery

Key points:

- *Recovery is a collective effort of all areas of government and its wide range of recovery partners*
- *A community-led approach to recovery helps build resilience and local ownership of social and personal, infrastructure, economy and environmental recovery*
- *A non-linear, flexible approach enables governments to respond appropriately to rapidly changing recovery needs of communities*

Recovery of communities following an emergency involves the collective effort of all areas of governments (Australian, State and Local) as well as a wide range of recovery partners.

Recovery is a complex undertaking with a multitude of short-, medium- and longer-term recovery needs. In the immediate aftermath of an emergency, early action is required to bring social and physical relief to those affected, along with prompt restoration of essential services. These priorities soon evolve into medium-term priorities, such as providing temporary accommodation for families and restoring other basic services. They then evolve into longer-term needs, such as ongoing psycho-social support, physical rebuilding and community development.

The National Principles of Disaster Recovery, found at Appendix 1, outlines the following key elements of successful recovery:

- understanding the context
- recognising complexity
- using community-led approaches
- ensuring coordination of all activities
- employing effective communication
- acknowledging and building capacity

Functional areas of recovery

The role of governments is to assist communities in their adaptation towards a 'new normal' and requires a high level of planning and coordination of services across four key functional areas:

- *Social and personal wellbeing* – the emotional, social, spiritual, financial and physical wellbeing of individuals and communities.
- *Infrastructure* – the reconstruction of the built environment, including homes, business and community infrastructure.
- *Economy* – the revival of local economic wellbeing, including employment, industry, small business and tourism.
- *Environment* – the rehabilitation of native ecosystems, public lands and marine environment.

Figure 1. Functional areas of recovery

Community-led recovery

The bushfire affected communities are central to recovery. It is well established that community-led approaches help build resilience and local ownership of recovery outcomes. Community resilience displayed by individuals and local groups enhances relief and recovery activities undertaken by coordinating bodies. By encouraging active participation of communities in all stages of recovery, governments can strengthen this resilience and help build community capacity to bring about faster and more cohesive recovery across the four functional areas. Active participation by the community also assures coordinating bodies that efforts are addressing the recovery priorities of the affected areas.

Facilitating a community-led recovery requires high levels of flexibility and commitment to keep affected communities central to all coordination, communication and collaborative activities. Appointing community members to key recovery positions fosters close community connections, providing valuable insight and solutions to local issues and pragmatic sources of feedback on recovery activities. Importantly, the appointment of locals brings a much needed level of familiarity to the process for the community and enables governments to access and quickly build trust with key networks.

Without eroding the importance of communities leading the recovery process, it is important for decision-makers to understand the limitations of local decision-making immediately following a disaster. Early action may be required (eg the clean-up) and there may be limited opportunities for extensive community consultation or local decision-making. The recovery leaders should consider carefully the relative merits of 'community-led' versus 'early action' and listen carefully for signals that suggest that the interests of the community are best served by 'just getting on with it'.

Similarly, there are decisions that will need to be made where a broad consensus is unlikely, either due to conflicting ideologies or the intensity of emotion that surrounds and issue. Careful consideration should be given to whether these decisions should be made by individuals and authorities external to the community to avoid ongoing fracturing of local relationships. The final decision on the distribution of financial assistance to individuals and families from public appeals may be one area that is best managed externally.

1.1.1. *Application in the Tasmanian context*

Recovery arrangements for Tasmania are outlined in Section 3.4 of the *Tasmanian Emergency Management Plan* (*TEMP*). The TEMP provides a high level overview of the principles, legal requirements, current arrangements and elements of recovery (refer Appendix 2).

Under these arrangements, responsibility for recovery largely rests with local governments. However, the capacity of local councils across Tasmania to manage immediate and long-term recovery processes will depend on the impact of the emergency and the resources available to those councils. Each emergency is unique and determination of scale and impact is needed to establish appropriate arrangements that match the context and complexity of recovery needs. State Government's role must be adapted accordingly.

The 2013 Tasmanian bushfires represented the largest scale emergency seen in almost 50 years and the model developed for the subsequent recovery showcases an effective response to an emergency of its size. The Tasmanian Government acknowledged the need to establish governance structures robust enough to assist councils to rapidly activate critical interventions; bring initial order to the diversity of recovery needs; and plan and coordinate longer-term, complex recovery efforts that would endure beyond a 12 to 18 month period.

A Bushfire Ministerial Committee, Bushfire Recovery Taskforce and a temporary Bushfire Recovery Unit were established and acted quickly to provide critical interventions such as the commencement of the clean-up. Affected Area Recovery Committees were also established to help design and coordinate longer-term recovery activities.

The Tasmanian context provides a somewhat unique environment where close proximity exists between political leaders, government agencies and relevant non-government recovery partners. Drawing on these connections with minimal obstruction, the government was able to quickly identify and appoint people with the necessary leadership qualities to key positions. Speedy staff secondments to the Unit demonstrated resilience and willingness within government to provide essential human resources to meet peak recovery demands during the early months.

1.1.2. *Recovery phases and lifecycle*

Community-led recovery activities are inherently subject to a rapid change in focus that is dependent on the level of impact, available resources, resilience of affected communities and the evolving vision for their future. The pace and order of recovery is unpredictable and while renewal and adaptation is the end focus, governments need to chart a non-linear route according to individual community needs.

During the 2013 Tasmanian bushfire recovery, programs developed for each phase of recovery were loosely mapped out for each community but required a great deal of flexibility to respond appropriately as communities self-identified their recovery needs throughout the phases. Without this flexibility, recovery coordinators can fall into the trap of delivering programs that do not address the community's most pressing priorities.

Whilst recoveries need to take an adaptive approach, the concepts of the stages, timings and relationships within the process are illustrated below.

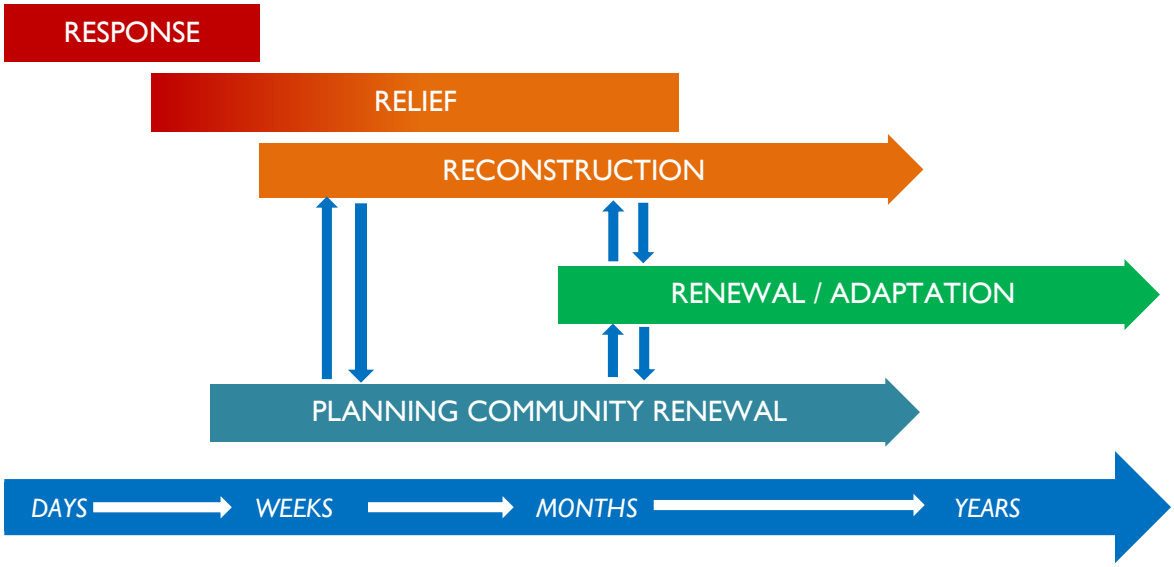

Figure 2. Phases of Recovery (source: adapted from Regional Australia Institute 2013 *From Disaster to Renewal*)

Recovery needs of affected communities

Pivotal to all recovery planning is the assessment of impact and needs as identified by affected communities. Each community is unique in makeup and each emergency will demand a different approach, so activities and timelines that prove successful in one situation may not be appropriate in another.

Following the 2013 bushfires, the level of impact from the Bicheno and Montumana fires was such that their respective councils sought minimal assistance. Conversely, the impact on the Central Highlands, Sorell and Tasman communities was far greater and required the intervention and support of State Government. Affected Area Recovery Committees (AARCs), chaired by the council Mayors, were established to help coordinate the longer-term recovery demands and ensure communities remained central to decision-making. The Unit, and relevant agencies, contributed to and provided significant support for the AARCs and their associated activities.

The Central Highlands AARC (CHAARC) was wound up during the third quarter of 2013, indicating that community renewal and adaptation was progressing well and the community no longer needed external intervention. For the Sorell and Tasman region, the high level of impact and devastating effects of the fires meant that recovery activities would continue at least into the second year. Accordingly, the function and membership of the Sorell Tasman AARC (STAARC) was constantly renewed to ensure it was able to continue to monitor and guide the community effectively through the long-term renewal process.

Appendix Two of *Transition to Long-Term Recovery* provides an overview of the major recovery activities undertaken during 2013, many of which were initiated by locals and coordinated by the Unit. The table does not contain the complete list of organised activities, but it does demonstrate the extensive range of needs addressed, in accordance with the priorities determined by the affected communities.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – National Principles for Disaster Recovery

- Appendix 2 – Section 3.4: Recovery, *Tasmanian Emergency Management Plan 7.1*, Department of Police and Emergency Management, 2013.

Additional resources

- Department of Police and Emergency Management, 2013 *Tasmanian Emergency Management Plan 7.1*

  www.ses.tas.gov.au/assets/files/Plans/State/Tasmanian%20Emergency%20Management%20Plan.pdf

- *Emergency Management Act 2006*
  www.thelaw.tas.gov.au/tocview/index.w3p;cond=;doc_id=12%2B%2B2006%2BAT%40EN%2B20140403000000;histon=;prompt=;rec=;term=

- Regional Australia Institute, 2013 *From Disaster to Renewal*

  www.regionalaustralia.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/From-Disaster-to-Renewal.pdf

1.2. Leadership

Key points:

- *Different styles of leadership are required*
- *Leadership traits in recovery include the ability to:*
  - *respond to trauma with sensitivity*
  - *communicate effectively to create trust*
  - *stimulate relationships with and between recovery stakeholders*
  - *remain flexible to keep community priorities central to decision-making*
- *Clear agreement of a common goal enables recovery partners to shape shared solutions*
- *The role of Mayors is critical for the effective rollout of recovery programs*

It is well established that a community-led approach delivers the best recovery results and strong leadership is needed at every level to facilitate such an approach. The greater the impact of the emergency, the wider and more complex the spheres of influence will be. It is important that collective leadership, which replaces a strictly hierarchical approach, utilises the need for different styles of leadership to influence those different spheres.

Stakeholders of the 2013 recovery effort acknowledged that the qualities, expertise and experience of key leaders was central to the success of the recovery. The leadership qualities required for those key roles are outlined below to aid with identification and appointment of future leaders.

Governance structures are detailed in Section 1.3.1.

1.2.1. *Leadership qualities for effective recovery*

Central leadership

Central leadership was provided by the Taskforce Chair and members, Bushfire Recovery Coordinator and Unit Director. Each required a different skill set, but common to each role was the ability to act quickly and decisively within a highly charged, dynamic environment designed to enable immediate response to urgent needs.

The 2013 experience highlighted that the guiding role of a taskforce is enhanced by the appointment of a well-respected, experienced and impartial chair with a strong commitment to regional well-being. Mixed membership to a taskforce provides a range of perspectives with high-level understanding of social, economic and environmental recovery needs and expectations. This serves to instil confidence in the approach and enables stable guidance for program development and monitoring of outcomes.

The role of a Bushfire Recovery Coordinator requires an ability to strategically navigate and balance political, government and non-government imperatives while ensuring community priorities are kept central to decision-making. This requires experience, strong interagency connections and a capacity to negotiate collaborative agreements between agencies and sectors.

A recovery unit has the complex task of planning, coordinating, activating and monitoring multiple undertakings to appropriately address recovery needs across the four functional recovery areas. A recovery unit requires a director with a strong capacity to anticipate needs and sift through the large volume of demands as they arise to assess priority, respond immediately to urgent matters, initiate strategic, longer-term recovery processes;, and employ enough flexibility to adapt policies, plans and services according to the continuous feedback of those affected. Importantly, because teams are often made up of newly acquainted staff from a variety of agencies and across a number of locations, a director must have the ability to create a cohesive and positive work environment. And, not least, motivation amongst all stakeholders needs to be maintained throughout difficult and sometimes drawn-out recovery phases. Community resilience must also be fostered through active participation, with the appropriate support mechanisms established and maintained.

Local leadership - formal and informal

Whether in formal or informal positions, local leaders are critical to the successful delivery of a recovery program, particularly in terms of building trust in relationships between service providers and the community. Local leaders understand communities and help to ensure that recovery resources are meeting the needs and expectations of those people impacted by the emergency.

Generally, local leaders are respected members of the community who have strong local networks, capacity to understand the nuances within their communities and an ability to respond with appropriate action to stimulate community cohesion. During recovery, additional qualities include the ability to listen to emerging concerns throughout the various phases of recovery and provide suitable advocacy and support for ongoing engagement.

The formal and visible role Mayors play in community-led recovery has multiple benefits. They not only provide important insight and understanding of local issues and opportunities from a council perspective, but are crucial to rolling out recovery programs within their communities. In addition, they help to broker the relationship between affected communities and state governments, enabling greater ease for community members to access government support.

The importance of council services in the recovery process should not be under-estimated. The role of the General Manager in fostering positive relationships and in supporting key local services (eg clean-up, environmental health) and processes (planning and building) are critical to maintaining community confidence in governments generally.

Community leaders are not always formally appointed and those individuals that have the confidence of the community should be identified, supported and empowered. Decision-making and coordination arrangements should be designed so that local leaders can influence, and be seen to be influencing decisions and programs. This builds trust within communities and ensures that program coordinators receive clear and authoritative advice on whether the recovery process is meeting the needs of the community.

In the 2013 recovery experience, formal selection of local representatives for the AARCs was initially reliant on the Mayors' identification of community leaders who could confidently represent and encourage community participation in planned recovery processes. In latter stages, membership of the

AARCs increased with the addition of community members who had appropriate governance skills and vision for community renewal. This served to support the committee's capacity for a smooth transition to long-term recovery as the government slowly withdrew its presence.

The effectiveness of local leaders (including the Mayors and General Managers of the councils, formal community representatives and informal advocates) was validated by high levels of community participation in activities that were planned and facilitated by coordinating bodies, such as the Community Assistance Grants program.

Community capacity building

In order to successfully progress a community-led recovery, the 2013 experience highlighted the fact that the greater the impact of the emergency, the more critical it is for governments to provide appropriate support to community leaders. The demands of initial relief and recovery drew heavily on the natural resilience of local leaders. Governments can support long-term recovery by investing appropriately in their development to reduce the risk of losing these valuable community leaders due to fatigue. Development needs will differ according to the individuals, but protecting and building an ongoing local leadership capacity will improve community resilience and will enhance the ability of affected communities to transition with greater ease through the longer-term phases of renewal.

1.2.2. *Collaborative leadership for collective impact*

The 2013 experience demonstrated some challenges and benefits of collaborative leadership in terms of navigating a clear path from emergency to long-term recovery for affected communities. Governance structures were designed to bring diverse recovery partners together across a range of forums. Given the scale of the recovery, there was a risk that conflict between stakeholders may hinder progress towards recovery. However, the ability of those in key leadership positions to foster cooperation and bring order and priority to the diverse demands was clearly evident.

Ensuring that there was clear agreement of the shared goal, to take affected communities "from emergency to recovery," allowed for genuine collaboration despite the potentially incompatible or competing agendas of stakeholder groups. Keeping the needs of the affected communities central to discussions allowed the recovery partners across sectors, agencies and communities to work together to shape shared solutions. The result was that timely, appropriate recovery outcomes were delivered by capitalising on the unique strengths of each recovery partner.

1.3. Establishing recovery capability

Key points:

- *Effective governance is essential for multi-agency and multi-sector cooperation and coordination*
- *Significant value is gained through co-location of necessary expertise in both central and regional hubs*
- *Affected Area Recovery Committees engage all levels of government, recovery partners and community representatives in collective decision-making*
- *Governance structures must enable community input at every level, with appropriate support provided for local staff and volunteers*
- *An active partners program can reduce service gaps and avoid duplication*
- *An effective Client Management System will help to streamline recovery activities*

The transition from emergency response to long-term recovery requires multi-agency and multi-sector cooperation to provide continuity of support to affected communities across the four functional recovery areas: social and personal; infrastructure; economy; and environment. Stakeholder groups need to understand the context of their contribution in order to help deliver outputs in a coordinated way.

1.3.1. *Governance*

Appropriate and effective governance arrangements were vital for delivering recovery programs and achieving community outcomes. The approach adopted for the bushfires was multi-faceted and included all levels of government.

In the early stages of the recovery, the decision was made to establish a taskforce to oversee, but not manage, the recovery process. This provided the opportunity to harness the expertise of some of Tasmania's leading figures, provide a strong sense of leadership and enable the public to connect with the Government's recovery effort. The formal governance structure is illustrated over the page.

The role of the Taskforce

The Taskforce was supported by the Unit (refer Section 1.3.2 below) and was specifically responsible for:

- developing an action plan for recovery from the bushfires;
- providing regular progress reports to the community;

- providing advice to the Government on the needs of the people, groups, businesses and other organisations affected by the bushfires; and
- working with the Bushfire Recovery Coordinator and AARCs to identify appropriate responses or resolve problems.

The Taskforce was chaired by Mr Damian Bugg QC and drew membership from a range of government and non-government stakeholders.

For the January 2013 bushfires, the role of the Taskforce was largely strategic, with the Unit or partners taking on most of the responsibility for the coordination and management of recovery programs. Members of the Taskforce were, however, active in the development of specific programs or work within their area of expertise. For example, Jan Davis from the Tasmanian Farmers & Graziers Association (TFGA) was actively engaged in the development of delivery of programs to assist primary producers. Steve Gunn, a corporate representative, was actively engaged in discussion with local business about economic development opportunities.

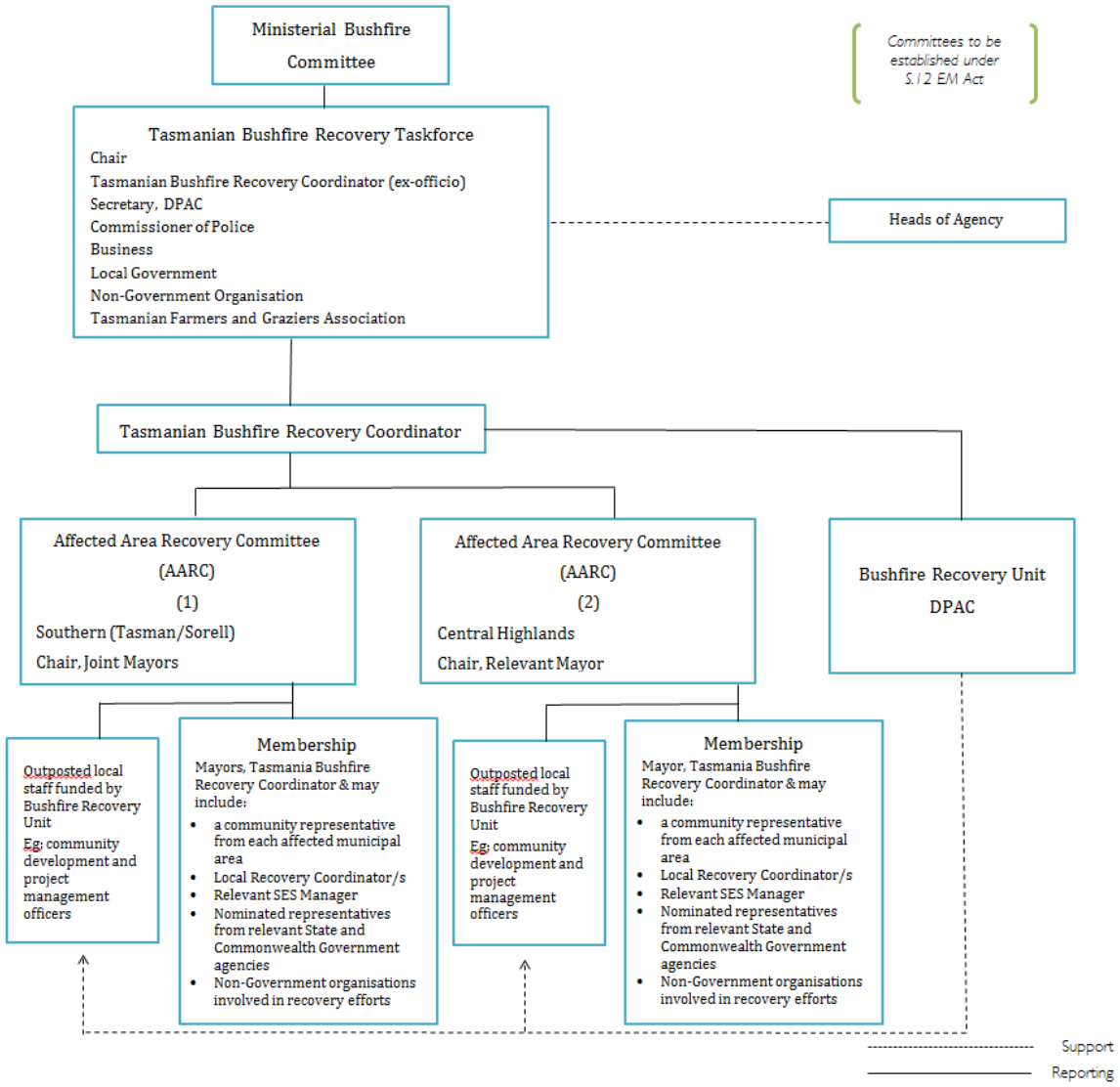

Figure 3. Tasmanian Bushfire Recovery Governance Structure

Affected Area Recovery Committees

Established through the functions and powers provided in the *Emergency Management Act 2006* (the Act), an AARC's role is to coordinate recovery activities through information sharing and collective decision-making. AARCs are typically chaired by the Mayors of affected councils and include representatives from both State and Australian Governments along with nominated community representatives who are drawn from each community within an impacted area.

Well targeted membership of AARCs is important in terms of both its ability to function and the confidence that a community will have in its decisions and guidance. For community representatives, care must be taken to select individuals who have the confidence of the community they represent. Careful consideration should also be given to both the number of community representatives and the number of non-community representatives to give the committee the right balance of representation. It is important that it is not so large that it becomes unmanageable as a coordination/decision-making body.

Following the 2013 bushfires, AARCs were established for the Sorell/Tasman and Central Highlands municipalities. The decision to establish an AARC for each area worked exceptionally well. It provided the opportunity for all levels of government and the community to be actively engaged in decisions that were critical to the recovery effort. It promoted a strong sense of community ownership of the recovery and helped deliver recovery outcomes that were consistent with community needs. It enabled community participation, effective use of resources and took into account the longer-term goals of government for the impacted communities – in particular the planning goals of the local councils (refer Appendix 3 for Sorell/Tasman AARC Terms of Reference).

A priority focus of AARCs is to identify processes and structures that fully engage the community during the recovery process. AARCs are responsible for arranging and monitoring communication and engagement programs for the duration of the recovery effort. The state government provides administrative and secretariat support, but AARC owns the process. The AARC's ownership of the engagement process is imperative for the success of the recovery, particularly during latter stages of recovery as service delivery returns to normal.

Multi Agency Recovery Committee

A Multi-Agency Recovery Committee (MARC), chaired by the Unit, was also established to support the Taskforce by ensuring a coordinated, whole-of-government approach to recovery activities for the January 2013 bushfires. The MARC was responsible for:

- coordinating whole-of-government input to the recovery plan developed by the Taskforce;
- identifying gaps in Tasmanian Government recovery activities;
- making recommendations to the Taskforce in relation to appropriate recovery policies and programs;
- supporting the implementation of the recovery plan;
- building relationships with non-government recovery service providers; and
- supporting the work of AARCs as appropriate.

While the MARC effectively fulfilled its responsibilities in relation to the Recovery Plan, the other key responsibilities were not necessarily performed as well as they could have been. Often, discussions at

MARC meetings were limited in terms of the depth and breadth of the discussion on emerging recovery priorities.

Future recovery would benefit from more clearly defining the role of the MARC and ensuring that its agendas made best use of the limited time available to members, particularly during the early stages of the recovery process.

Other governance structures

To support the recovery effort, an Active Partners Program was developed by the Unit to establish other governance structures that harnessed the capabilities of other 'active partners', including those that raised funds for the recovery effort. The program included organisations such as the Salvation Army, St Vincent de Paul Society, Uniting Care Tasmania, Australian Red Cross, Rotary, Lions Tasmania, The Housing Industry Association, Planning Institute of Australia and Master Builders Association.

The groups listed below were established to provide the following functions:

- *Bushfire Rebuilding Reference Group* (BRRG) – provided industry leader expertise and commercial independence to provide advice and help the recovery and reconstruction process. This group was successful in helping the Unit to develop the *Building Back Better* guide and host a rebuilding exposition in Dunalley.
- *Bushfire Social Recovery Reference Group* (BSRRG) – provided advice on the needs of individuals, families and communities affected by the bushfire. Its broad role led to the establishment of two sub-committees, the Bushfire Monetary Donations Sub-committee and the Bushfire Donated Goods Sub-committee. Their role was to ensure that a collaborative approach was used for the provision of financial assistance and donated goods to affected households. The collaboration between these two sub-committees and the Unit during the 2013 recovery negated the role of the BSRRG, however such a committee may have relevance in future recovery efforts.
- *Sorell Tasman Economic Recovery Group* (STERG) – helped to provide strategic economic recovery advice. STERG is covered in more detail in Section 2.3.7.

There were preliminary discussions about creating an Environmental Reference Group to assist with the 2013 recovery. However, it was determined that the independent work of Natural Resource Management (NRM) South and the Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and Environment (DPIPWE) was sufficiently addressing this recovery need.

Figures 4 and 5 below describe the relationship of the groups and committees within the governance structure.

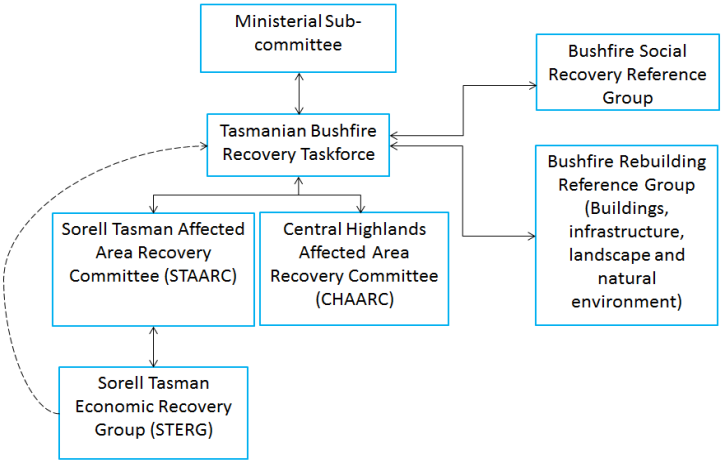

Figure 4. Relationship between the Taskforce and reference and recovery groups

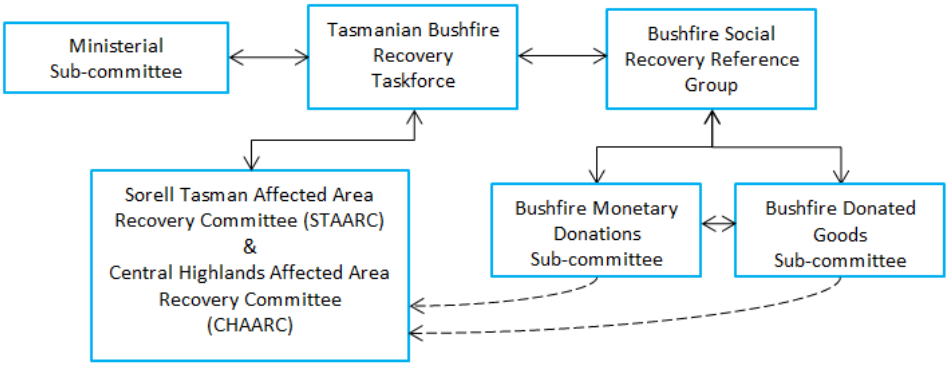

Figure 5. Initial relationship of sub-committees with the Social Recovery Reference Group and AARCs

Engaging the various organisations embodied in these groups provided the opportunity for economies of scale to be realised. It also gave scope for fire-affected individuals or groups needing assistance to be matched with a service best able to provide that help.

The main challenge was the privacy of individuals who were seeking support. In many cases, key registration or application forms included no declaration of the use of private information or approval that the information could be shared with recovery partners. This, at times, reduced the efficiency of recovery programs as multiple follow-ups with individuals had to be made.

Future recovery processes would benefit from the widespread use of an agreed declaration (and associated approval) for the use of private information for the purposes of supporting the recovery of individuals through programs across government (Australian, State and Local) and non-government partners.

1.3.2. *Bushfire Recovery Unit*

As lead agency, DPAC harnessed multi-agency cooperation and commitment when it established the temporary Unit to coordinate line agency contributions to the 2013 recovery effort. The benefit of co-locating the necessary expertise of agencies into a single location was recognised, and accommodation was sourced in Hobart for this purpose. This arrangement allowed each agency to gain an understanding of one another's roles, avoid duplication through shared planning and enable efficient delivery of recovery activities.

Brief daily meetings of the entire team cemented the relationships and ensured that the various activities and priorities were understood. Although not all government recovery services participated in the co-location arrangement, it was clear that communication and collaboration was enhanced where it did occur. It is suggested that a similar co-location should occur in future recovery efforts, even if only on a part-time basis for those agencies with a small role.

Multiple locations

As with any team operating in a number of locations, the Unit experienced difficulties with communication between the group operating in Dunalley, Murdunna and Sorell, and the group based in Hobart. Although several members of the team spent time in both locations, the different priorities and demands between staff working closely with the community and those working in the city sometimes led to frustration and tension. Simple ways of minimising the risk of such tensions include establishing a daily teleconference routine to foster open communication as well as making time for occasional progress reviews with the entire team. This will help reduce negative impacts on the

delivery of services and should be implemented as soon as practical once the recovery team is in place. Internal communication is considered in more detail in Section 1.5.4.

Consistency is an issue where there is communication across a range of locations. Any recovery team will have been assembled quickly, will have a range of strengths and skills and will have to get on with unfamiliar tasks under very demanding conditions without much direction. This creates a risk that service delivery may be inconsistent. Strategies to address this risk include communication and co-location, but must also feature tailored induction and mentoring. Induction should be an ongoing process and adequate time must be allocated to this important process.

Employing locals

The Unit was able to employ people from the affected area to carry out key roles in the community. This greatly assisted the broader team to quickly establish relationships within the community and understand the priorities, needs and reactions of the community and respond appropriately.

It should also be noted that the experience of working in disaster recovery will necessarily be different for people who have lived through the disaster. Particular recognition should be given to the fact that for these people, it is almost impossible to take a break from the ongoing impact of living in a post-disaster landscape and culture. Specific strategies must be put in place to accommodate team members in this situation. Thought should be given to the types of roles, the amount of time spent in a role, as well as support strategies that promote wellbeing, and these should be implemented at the outset of the recovery program.

Preparedness of staff

The 2013 experience highlighted some of the difficulties experienced by staff members who had little or no prior understanding of emergency or recovery environments. In particular, staff whose roles included direct contact with members of the community who had experienced significant trauma may have benefited from a more comprehensive induction process. This might have included information about some typical behaviours that they may face, such as extreme despair, frustration or anger, and tips on how to appropriately respond, or sensitively redirect clients to the appropriate sources of assistance.

Several forums with psychological recovery specialist, Dr Rob Gordon, were specifically designed for staff to cover this aspect of their roles. These were held at various times to coincide with the different phases of recovery. It would be useful to document and include summaries of such material in an induction package for staff to read in their own time. This would also ensure that staff members unable to attend the sessions had access to the resources. The DVD with Dr Gordon that was produced six months after the fires could also be utilised for this purpose.

In addition, due to the nature and the unique staffing needs of each recovery, position descriptions for recovery workers are difficult to devise prior to an emergency. Given the chaotic environment that is typical during early days of recovery, it is likely that some confusion may exist around roles and responsibilities. Some flexibility may need to be exercised by staff as position descriptions are developed. A number of statements of duties developed for the 2013 Recovery Unit positions are provided in the resource section to assist with this process for future recoveries.

An interoperability register has been implemented since the 2013 bushfires, allowing interested staff across government to pre-register for future recovery work with the approval of their management. Training for registrants is offered several times per year to help develop relevant capabilities in preparation for a future emergency. While the focus of the training is largely about the emergency and

relief response, comprehensive opt-in sessions could be developed for those registered for the longer-term recovery roles.

1.3.3. *Operational arrangements*

State Recovery Plan

The *State Recovery Plan* (the Plan) was prepared by DPAC during 2012. It is a State Special Plan under the *Emergency Management Act 2006* (the Act) and it describes the function of recovery in the Tasmanian context. This can be contrasted with the more operational plans that exist across government, which focus on the tactical resolution of an emergency event. Being a functional plan, it describes the high level strategic approach that Tasmania takes by defining governance structures and allocating responsibilities to state government agencies for specific recovery activities.

Under the Plan, local government has primary responsibility for immediate recovery. However, the Plan also provides an option for impacted local governments to request additional assistance from the Regional Emergency Management Controller in his/her capacity as the Chair of the Regional Emergency Management Committee, of which all councils hold membership.

The ability of a council to make use of resources provided regionally or by the State relies on pre-event planning. Feedback from councils and others suggests that further attention could be given to operational-level planning, exercising and awareness raising to ensure that recovery arrangements can be scaled from local, to regional, to State-level operations.

Local Recovery Plans

Councils are required to make resources available for managing emergencies in their municipal area, in accordance with their municipal plan. This includes the provision of resources and facilities.

There is no formal requirement at municipal level for a council to produce and maintain both an Emergency Plan and Recovery Plan. This is because recovery arrangements are typically included as an important element of the Emergency Plan. However, an understanding of recovery capabilities both within a council, non-government organisations (NGOs) and the local community requires a council to undertake an additional planning and exercising process. Doing so would help them gain a better understanding of available capabilities and also constraints.

If necessary, councils can establish a recovery committee to oversee recovery at the municipal level. This provides a useful guide to higher level structures and capability owners, such as NGOs, as to what the recovery needs are and the municipal capacity that is available to meet those needs. Following the 2013 bushfires, affected councils had agreed that an audit process to cover off on these elements would be a useful addition to their annual emergency management planning process. It would ensure specific recovery roles and responsibilities are agreed in advance of each fire season and relevant contact details are kept up to date.

Regional opportunity

An opportunity exists for regional coordination, for example through the Regional Emergency Management Committees, to streamline the above processes and bring greater cohesion to resource provision between councils within each region. This may help to reduce duplication and enable effective sharing of essential recovery resources with minimal obstruction during the chaotic days immediate following an emergency.

1.3.4. *Community input*

Central to successful recovery is the ability to respond appropriately to the rapidly evolving needs of affected communities. Governments can support the provision of input by the community into planning and decision-making in a number of ways. Formal, structured community representation on committees such as the AARCs represents only one way for this to occur.

Informal environments such as the local information and service hubs provide a less confronting setting for people to contribute. During the 2013 recovery experience, informal input collected at the hubs was used to provide feedback to decision-makers through 'front-of-house' staff and liaison officers in an ad hoc and largely unstructured way. Development of a simple to use, central database for logging issues would improve structure and aid planning by providing an evidence base that shows how community priorities change throughout the duration of the recovery. This is considered in more detail in Section 1.5.4.

Existing community groups can also provide access to active networks to help disseminate important information and collect useful input for planning purposes. Doing an early audit of such groups may enhance communication and engagement practices. Tapping into existing regional databases, such as the *Glamorgan Health and Wellbeing Directory*, is another useful way of identifying local groups and networks.

In some disaster or emergency situations, local meeting places used by such groups may have been destroyed and governments can play a role in providing a comfortable physical environment to enable meetings to continue. Given the right support, the capacity of these groups may be developed to enable them to take on greater responsibility for recovery activities.

In addition, some communities may form specific recovery related groups to play an important community advocacy role. This occurred in the 2013 experience and some of the 'Locals Group' initiatives were amongst the most successful community-led activities during the recovery. The demand on volunteers in such groups, however, can be significant. Governments can position themselves to provide appropriate support to build capacity and provide administrative, financial and/or promotional support for their recovery initiatives wherever possible.

1.3.5. *Working with non-government organisations*

The *Tasmanian Emergency Management Plan* allocates a range of specific disaster response and recovery roles to various NGOs and, in the event of a disaster, to activate their plans and provide an immediate safety net for the affected communities. These organisations have excellent abilities in identifying areas of need that align with their organisational mission, and then delivering appropriate services to assist the community with their recovery process. They also have capacity to provide human resources for particular functions.

Future recovery processes would benefit from further work with NGOs to identify ways that their resources can be used more formally in the recovery processes, particularly during the early stages. For example, in early days of recovery the need for additional staff in recovery centres may be met by tapping into either volunteer or paid workforces in NGOs. This provides a level of flexibility for staffing that can be difficult to achieve via government channels.

In the case of the Sorell/Tasman area, the Active Partners Program established a number of forums to ensure that all service providers were aware of one another's activities, to develop strategies for particular groups or demographics, and to identify and manage individual cases of hardship within the

community. Recognising that each organisation has specific missions and areas of expertise is an important part of brokering successful outcomes in this environment. Without coordination, duplication may occur, significant gaps may be left unattended, or opportunities for improved outcomes may be missed.

A key role for a recovery unit is to ensure that a level of coordination, cooperation and collaboration exists between these organisations and with government services, so that those negative outcomes can be avoided. This coordination role must be conducted on several levels, as NGOs have operational staff who will have immediate links into the community, as well as head office staff and managers who will be more connected with the organisation's opportunities and constraints.

1.3.6. *Client management system*

Following an emergency, many recovery partners work with those affected by the emergency and a comprehensive client management system that is able to handle client registration. Client record keeping and disaster recovery information sharing would not only make their task much easier, it would also relieve the post-disaster trauma for affected community members. It would aid in the potential for coordinated case management by enabling various stakeholders to access and update clients' details, record information about services provided to clients within and across organisations, and refer clients to other services.

Following the January 2013 bushfires, the Major Incident Support System (MISS) was developed and was intended for such use. Its two main aims were to:

- manage information about the financial assistance programs provided to disaster-affected individuals and families; and
- case-manage clients through the recovery process.

The MISS was populated with registration data received from the Australian Red Cross and information on property losses and damage in the affected area by Property Identification Number. Data about financial assistance provided to affected individuals through the Red Cross Appeal funding rounds was also entered into the system. However, there were a number of challenges associated with the roll-out of the system, which resulted in it being set aside for this recovery process. Because of this, there was a distinct lack of ability to manage client data in a coordinated manner. Significant work on the system is still required to ensure that MISS is both functional and able to be used by recovery staff if it is to be successfully utilised for future disasters.

Due to the nature of relief and recovery, any system designed for use in such environments must be prepared in advance and ready to deploy immediately. It must be simple and intuitive for use by recovery workers of varying technical ability. It must also be accessible across agencies and from remote locations so real time data can be accessed on site. If a basic understanding of the system's functions were introduced during interoperability training, potential staff would become familiar with its capabilities and uses in readiness for a future recovery.

1.3.7. *Volunteer opportunities*

Directly following an emergency, the public tend to offer practical assistance through volunteering. Organisations such as Volunteering Tasmania, BlazeAid and Landcare took on the challenging task of coordinating volunteer action in priority areas. Following the 2013 bushfires, people were encouraged to register with these organisations to ensure their personal risk was covered with relevant insurances and to minimise the risk of bogus volunteers offering unauthorised services on an unsuspecting community.

The collaborative partnership, which was formed with Tasmania Prison Service, provided supervised volunteer crews to help with the rebuilding of damaged fencing. This was an add-on activity to their normal services that enabled participants to build practical skills, enjoy the experience of participating in a work-like environment and build personal morale by giving them opportunity to positively contribute to the recovery effort. It also provided a positive shift in perception towards prisoners by the community who received their assistance.

Sustainable volunteer arrangements

The arrangement with Tasmania Prison Service was a highly successful partnership arrangement that addressed a particular need for the 2013 recovery. It is conceivable that a sustainable prison industry modelled around this arrangement would be useful for a number of applications. Coordinating bodies consistently have problems with maintaining volunteer engagement into longer-term recovery. Volunteer presence tends to drop off when focus and attention on the immediate needs of disaster affected communities has waned. If a sustainable arrangement such as this was permanently available, it would provide increased opportunity to build a skills base for prisoners while enabling long-term assistance in future recovery efforts.

Appendix

- Appendix 3 – Sorell Tasman Affected Area Recovery Committee Terms of Reference

Additional resources

- Bushfire Recovery Taskforce, 2013 *Programs for Recovery*
  - Appendix One – Terms of Reference (ToR) for Taskforce, MARC, STAARC* and CHAARC
  - Appendix Two – State Government's Response, including the Tasmania Fire Service (TFS) and the Departments of Police and Emergency Management (DPEM), Health and Human Services (DHHS), Education (DoE), Infrastructure, Energy and Resources (DIER), Primary Industries, Parks Water and Environment (DPIPWE), Premier and Cabinet (DPAC), Treasury, Economic Development Tourism and Arts (DEDTA), Justice (DoJ) and State Emergency Services (SES)
  - Appendix Three – Local Government Response
  - Appendix Four– Community Organisations' Response

  www.bushfirerecovery.tas.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0011/200117/Bushfire_Recovery_Plan.pdf

  *STAARC updated its ToR and membership in August 2013 to refocus its approach on longer-term recovery needs (refer Appendix 3).
- Bushfire Recovery Unit, 2013 *After the Fires, with Dr Rob Gordon*. Full video YouTube clip www.youtube.com/watch?v=vopyxLfg1_M
- *Emergency Management Act 2006* www.thelaw.tas.gov.au/tocview/index.w3p;cond=ALL;doc_id=12%2B%2B2006%2BAT%40EN%2B20140326160000;histon=;prompt=;rec=;term=emergency%20management%20act%202006
- *Local Government Act 1993* www.thelaw.tas.gov.au/tocview/index.w3p;cond=;doc_id=95%2B%2B1993%2BAT%40EN%2B20140326000000;histon=;prompt=;rec=;term=
- Local Government Association of Tasmania 2006 *Forging Links Workbook – Emergency Management & Local Government, An Information Kit.*

www.lgat.tas.gov.au/webdata/resources/files/Forging_Links_Workbook.pdf

1.4. Community engagement

Key points:

- *Continuous, two way community engagement helps shape effective recovery plans*
- *The spectrum of engagement includes informing, consulting, involving, collaborating and empowering communities towards recovery*
- *Engagement methods should be matched to activities within the various phases of recovery*
- *Community grants programs can enable locals to participate fully in the design, selection and delivery of projects for community renewal*
- *Good engagement practices help build capacity and improve community cohesion and resilience*

It is well established and may seem obvious that affected communities must remain central to recovery activities. However, it is important that governments are vigilant in ensuring that an adaptive, iterative approach is used for the planning and delivery of recovery activities. This relies on continual community feedback gained through sound engagement practices appropriate to overall recovery needs.

In order for governments to coordinate and contribute effectively, they must gain acceptance and approval of their activities by the affected communities. Successful recovery cannot be 'done to' communities. It occurs when the right amount of support and intervention is provided at first to assist, but then to empower communities to get back on their feet and regain independence. Through effective engagement, governments can create mechanisms to hear from the community and then follow through with a commitment to provide timely, appropriate responses to the issues that are raised. As trust and confidence in the process is gained, greater levels of community participation can be seen, and this contributes to a more rapid restoration of communities and improved quality of life for its members.

Trust and mutual respect between governments and non-government sectors, industry and the community is supported through strengthened relationships, transparency of process and a clear understanding by stakeholders about which decisions can be influenced, when, and to what degree.

Accountability versus flexibility

In order to maintain accountability, governments often engage communities through a consultation process, and then develop plans that lock in timelines and reporting measures. Much of the success of the 2013 bushfire recovery, however, stemmed from the capacity and willingness of key leaders to engage in flexible planning. This entailed listening closely and continuously to community concerns as they arose, using judgement to make appropriate amendments to planned activities and keeping

decision-making and activities transparent. Regular communication to governing bodies ensured appropriate levels of accountability were maintained.

1.4.1. *Spectrum of engagement*

, The level of engagement must be matched to activities within the various phases and programs of recovery. This is drawn from well recognised engagement practices that increase public impact.

For example, in the early days following an emergency, greater emphasis is placed on the provision of clear, timely and accurate information, as seen on the far left of the spectrum depicted below. In the later stages and with different programs, this focus will shift. The Community Assistance Grants program, for example, reached the far right of the spectrum, empowering communities to fully participate in the design, selection and delivery of community projects. This grants program is considered in more detail in sections 1.4.2 and 2.3.6.

	Inform	Consult	Involve	Collaborate	Empower
Goal	To provide balanced and objective information in a timely manner	To obtain feedback on recovery issues, priorities and decisions	To work with communities to ensure concerns and aspirations are considered and understood	To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision-making	To place final decision-making in the hands of the public
Promise	"We will keep you informed."	"We will listen and acknowledge your concerns."	"We will work with you to ensure your concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the decisions made."	"We will look to you for advice and innovation and incorporate this in decisions as much as possible."	"We will [help you] implement what you decide."
Tools used in the 2013 bushfire recovery	- Web site - Info Hubs - Newsletters - Fact Sheets - Q&As - 1800 number	- Surveys - Feedback forms - Face to face at Info Hubs - Focus Groups - Workshops	- AARCS and other committees - Community Grants process	- Community-led events and initiatives - Community project development	- Community project selection process via qualified feedback - Support for project implementation

INCREASING LEVELS OF PUBLIC IMPACT

Figure 6. Spectrum of engagement (based on IAP2 International Association of Public Participation)

As identified in earlier sections of this document, community-led approaches to recovery have governance structures that enable formal engagement with representatives from each affected community. These representatives contribute at forums such as the AARCs, and their early selection draws on the ability of the Mayors to identify locals with the capacity to act as advocates and information conduits for their communities.

Some criticism may exist within communities that those selected for these roles are not representative of all sections of the community. To mitigate such concerns, governments can facilitate a range of other formal and informal feedback mechanisms to enable the broader community to participate. This may include drop-in centres, 1800 telephone facilities, surveys, feedback forms and similar. Opportunities should also be identified that review membership of key committees regularly to ensure that the membership.

Reaching all parts of the community can be difficult but investing early in inclusive engagement practices shows the community that governments acknowledge their diverse needs and value their contributions. This will facilitate greater social acceptance and approval of planned recovery undertakings.

1.4.2. *Two way engagement for recovery*

The main community engagement functions for governments include providing timely, accurate information and encouraging communities to participate in suitable recovery areas.

Equally, communities have a responsibility to contribute to the engagement process if they wish to influence the planning, funding and delivery of recovery activities.

Community views help shape decisions

In order for governments and recovery partners to understand and respond appropriately to community priorities in the four functional areas of recovery, they must first understand what those priorities are and the community's preferences for addressing them.

A key message to repeatedly highlight to communities throughout each phase of recovery is the importance of voicing their views. Timely feedback loops should then be provided to let communities know how their participation has helped to shape decisions.

For example, a concern frequently raised by the community during the first half of 2013 was the need for monetary assistance toward the cost of removal of burnt vegetation on private land. This assistance was initially considered to be beyond the realms of funding provision. However, the community continued to vocalise their view on the importance of the issue. In direct response to this feedback, the Red Cross Appeal Distribution Committee reconsidered its approach and in its final stage of funding distribution it made provision for some assistance in this area. The feedback loop in this instance was completed by the welcomed announcement of a vegetation clearance grant for all who had fire-affected properties and qualified for hardship against a defined threshold.

Advocacy

While every effort may be made by governments to provide a variety of engagement mechanisms for different sections of the community, not all will engage or have the capacity to participate in the processes made available to them. This is exacerbated by the level trauma experienced by some and the personal priorities that require their foremost attention. Locals, whether in formal or informal roles, can serve as advocates for those members of the community. These locals should be encouraged and supported to bring balanced representation of community priorities, concerns and aspirations to the attention of recovery coordinators, particularly from those who are hard to reach via the regular communication channels (as detailed in Section 1.5.3).

Community assistance grant programs

Enabling communities to participate at the full engagement end of the spectrum is made possible through processes such as a community grants program. Together, communities can provide significant contribution through locally developed social, cultural, environmental and infrastructure projects.

Supported by councils and the Appeal Distribution Committee, the 2013 Community Assistance Grants program was designed on the premise that the public would participate across the entire process. Help was provided to enable the communities to identify recovery priorities through targeted workshops, surveys and information sessions. Assistance was also offered to help with the

development of appropriate project proposals; and selection for funding was based on community feedback.

Importantly, a variety of engagement tools were in place and a lot of effort was put into emphasising the importance of community input in helping to shape the outcomes of this program. Word of mouth featured as the greatest catalyst for engagement. This required a combination of high levels of trust, community leaders who understood the process, and provision of a range of ways for the community to contribute. As a result, high participation rates were recorded from locals across the various parts of the community and a diverse range of projects was funded across the region.

Practical support from government and local councils was then provided to enable community members to lead the implementation of the projects that were selected for funding.

The full process is covered in more detail in Section 2.3.6.

1.4.3. *Building capacity and resilience*

When engaging communities through the various stages of recovery, governments can play an important role in building the capacity and resilience of community leaders and local groups. Broad and inclusive two-way engagement processes also serve to build capacity of individuals and households. Their collective resilience generates the community spirit which buoys the whole recovery process through the longer-term phases.

Good engagement practices not only make the role of coordinating a recovery easier, they leave a legacy of strengthened relationships between government and community, improved community cohesion, and greater confidence and ability for communities to engage appropriately when pursuing future social, environmental and development opportunities.

Support can be given to those who step up to formal community leadership roles through proper induction and training, along with mechanisms to mitigate member fatigue, including rotations or partnered representation on committees.

For the broader community, dedicated staff in regional hubs can assist with locally-led engagement activities, such as helping to coordinate and promote community driven events, encouraging participation in centrally managed activities such as the community assistance grant process, and supporting informal feedback channels with impartial transmission of community concerns and aspirations.

Community events

Events, particularly those incorporating food and refreshments or services needed by the community, are highly effective mechanisms for bringing those who are otherwise difficult to engage into a space where open communication can be encouraged. In the 2013 recovery, many events were coordinated and amongst the most successful were those instigated by community with the support of government.

An element that was absent during the 2013 experience was the provision of open 'town hall' style forums to allow the community to gather together and voice their collective grievances. A more positive, personalised approach was encouraged. Food related events such as barbeques, soup nights and other gatherings were arranged, where individuals and small groups could engage with public officials and vent their concerns, discuss options and aspirations, and gain a better understanding of

recovery processes. However, some evidence suggests that town hall forums may help the recovery process.

Regardless of the type of community events that are coordinated, governments do well to value the opportunity to contribute in whichever way they can, to provide visible presence and help build relationships with and amongst community members. Many of the events included in Appendix Two of *Transition to Long-Term Recovery* were supported by the Unit and broadcast widely through the Government's communication channels.

Additional resources

- Community Engagement Framework, Department of Premier and Cabinet

  Whilst not specific to recovery, the Tasmanian Government's community engagement framework, released in January 2014, is a comprehensive resource to support government agencies in community engagement activities. This can be accessed at: www.dpac.tas.gov.au/divisions/cdd/grants_and_community_engagement/framework_for_community_engagement

1.5. Communication

Key points:

- *Provision of timely and accurate information reduces confusion and improves the speed of recovery*
- *Investing in communication enables governments to provide the authoritative advice that underpins important recovery functions*
- *Key messages should be repeated often and widely using a variety of communication tools*
- *Clear internal communication processes help to equip staff members and align central and regional recovery tasks*

Following an emergency, the confusion experienced by communities and recovery stakeholders can be somewhat alleviated by early establishment of trusted communication channels. Governments have a responsibility to enable easy access to clear, consistent and reliable recovery information and advice.

During and after an emergency, balancing the timeliness and accuracy of information is a difficult task, given the dynamic nature of recovery and the enormous amount of information circulated from different sources. Early recruitment of communication specialists with capacity to quickly gather, distil and prioritise key messages, then push this information out in a variety of ways for the greatest reach, is imperative in order to successfully fulfill this key role of a central recovery unit.

1.5.1. *Investing in communication*

Investment into good communications may be criticised by some as not providing tangible benefit to the affected communities (with views that money spent on web sites and publications would be better spent on community infrastructure and personal assistance). However, good communication is one of the most valuable resource a government can provide as it underpins all other activities by raising awareness of assistance and available services. It answers common queries, dispels fears and minimises the effects of misinformation. Good communication gives communities confidence that things are being done and when sources of reliable information are readily available, it reduces confusion and improves the speed of recovery.

The volume of information circulated by various sources is prone to include conflicting advice and governments can facilitate distribution of clear and accurate information by acting as a communication funnel for information.

In order for this to occur successfully, 'go to' communication contacts need to be easily accessible to recovery partners. These communication contacts should be equipped to give and receive initial advice about relief and in later stages for each of the functional recovery areas, with the right technology and tools in place.

Figure 7. Communication funnel

1.5.2. *Communicating through the recovery phases*

During the initial recovery stages, provision of information to evacuees about relief services and immediate assistance can often be hampered due to loss of telephone services and electricity (and therefore internet, email and fax). When physical access is also obstructed, as it was on the Tasman Peninsula following the 2013 bushfires, it can be difficult to get urgent information to those who need it.

Provision of dedicated communications assistance to councils, particularly during early recovery phases, is a relatively straightforward way for governments to enable consistent messages to reach the affected communities quickly. Such support will also provide much needed relief to councils who are likely to be stretched with their many other recovery responsibilities.

During latter stages of recovery, communication priorities will change in accordance with recovery phases, to include more detailed information about financial assistance and clean-up, physical and emotional wellbeing and practical advice about rebuilding.

1.5.3. *External communication*

Early in the 2013 experience, community members clearly voiced their need for a reliable source of information to help them know which messages they could trust and act upon. In order to reach as

many people as possible, the communications team needed to establish ways to distribute information in a timely and effective manner, including to those who were hard to reach. Below are some of the high-value mechanisms for communication that were supported by government.

- **Tasmanian Bushfire Recovery web site**

  A valuable foundation for authoritative advice, information, downloadable resources and all other aspects of the recovery, including ways to stay connected or leave feedback. Key statistics for the first 12 months of usage can be found in Appendix 4.
  www.bushfirerecovery.tas.gov.au

- **Branding, ID lanyards and G-plated cars**

  Particularly during early days of recovery, the use of the clearly identifiable Tasmanian Bushfire Recovery logo on ID lanyards and G-plated vehicles gave members of the community clear signals that government was present and available to assist. Use of this logo on printed media gave confidence to the community that the information was official and could be trusted as authoritative advice.

- **Information and Service Hubs**

  'Go to' local hubs of information had Unit staff that were available to answer questions face-to-face and provide advice and information about available services, financial assistance and other aspects of recovery. Staff also assisted with filling out forms and brokering relationships between community members and other recovery partners.

- ***Recovery News* newsletter**

  SORELL/TASMAN
  Recovery News
  Edition 12: 29 July 2013
  TASMANIAN BUSHFIRE RECOVERY
  Rebuilding and Revitalising
  Community Kitchen planned for school gym
  In this edition:

  Regular editions of this newsletter had easy to read, engaging content (refer Appendix 5). These were delivered to all households in the fire-affected region and to those who had been temporarily displaced as a result of the fires. Contribution was invited from recovery partners and community members. Recovery partners also appreciated newsletter content as a way of staying in touch with the changing needs of the community.

  Whilst useful to those directly affected, it was found that those who were indirectly affected, such as people who had family and friends with damaged or destroyed properties, were the greatest beneficiaries of *Recovery News*. These community members, who were unlikely to visit the recovery hubs, found that the information contained within the newsletters enabled them to support their family and friends with a better understanding of available assistance and recovery activities. It opened the way for advocacy and volunteer opportunities; alerted them to events such as the Winter Woodchop; and provided ways for them to get involved or give feedback to programs such as the Community Assistance Grants program.

  Accordingly, it can be surmised that the style, format and extensive distribution of the newsletter was a good investment by the Government to enable the wider community to participate more fully in the recovery. The full suite of newsletters was also available online and all were invited to subscribe to receive electronic copies.
  www.bushfirerecovery.tas.gov.au/news_room/recovery_newsletter

- **Fact sheets and fliers**

  Clear and concise information in the form of plain English fact sheets and fliers were developed for various aspects of recovery (refer Appendix 6). Some of these included changeable information that required regular updates, such as information about the clean-up schedule and advice about the various stages of the Appeal Fund distribution. Others included static information that remained the same throughout all phases, such as *Asbestos Safety Fact Sheet* or *Trauma and the Family*. Regardless of type, governments should mark all official documents with a 'release date' to minimise confusion around currency of information. All fliers and information sheets were downloadable on the web site and available at the recovery hubs. www.bushfirerecovery.tas.gov.au/download_resources

- **Traditional media**

  Television, radio and newspaper journalists responded well to media releases and picked up on information and stories released in *Recovery News*. All media releases were widely distributed and made available on the web site www.bushfirerecovery.tas.gov.au/news_room/media_releases2. Importantly, media briefings and press conferences were held on occasions when significant announcements were being made, particularly around funding, to ensure journalists had full understanding of the details. These were positively received and minimised the risk of important information being misinterpreted. Building good relationships with editors of the local newspapers was also important, as local papers have a wide readership in regional communities.

- **Word of mouth and casual conversation** The value of this form of communication cannot be underestimated. It is the place that rumours can be started or dispelled. Keeping such communication positive relies on the genuine relationships built between the community and government representatives, including staff and officials. The influence of community champions to relate key messages to the community was strongly demonstrated by the response to the Community Assistance Grants feedback process. Those communities who had strong local leaders topped the response rates and were rewarded with positive outcomes from the grant program.

- **Community managed blackboards**

  The Government provided for the installation of a number of community blackboards, which were maintained and updated by locals. It was a small investment towards a service that was highly valued by the community as being informative, uplifting and personally engaging.

- **SMS phone tree**

  Once mobile phones were back in use following the emergency, a local group started an SMS phone tree to receive and communicate key messages and reminders about recovery events and activities. It relied on a pyramid approach for community members to forward on these messages. An online bulk messaging tool was introduced mid-way through the year, which brought ease to the process and enabled a more comprehensive coverage of the community. This is something that governments could easily implement in initial stages of the recovery by including an easy opt-in for SMS alerts upon initial registration with Red Cross (including easy op-out at any stage).

- **Community gatherings, such as barbeques and community meetings**

  Community gatherings are an important mechanism for engaging community members in conversation, whether community driven or coordinated by government. Providing support with logistics and food/beverages is an easy and inexpensive way in which governments can foster trust

and strengthen relationships with community members. Showing up at such events, whether in an official or casual capacity, reinforces government's commitment to the community.

- Social media
  - *Twitter* – the official bushfire recovery twitter account had a strong following and was considered most useful by recovery agents, particularly during early phases of recovery. Whilst open to everyone, governments should monitor the makeup of the account's followers so the style of messages contained in tweets can be tailored to the bulk of those followers.
  - *Facebook* – the lack of an official Facebook presence was recognised as a significant gap in the communications effort of the 2013 recovery. Given the popularity and importance placed on social media by the community, a dedicated social media strategy, which includes Facebook options, would aid future recovery efforts.
- 1800 number

  This communication tool allowed queries to be answered for those who did not have the capacity or desire to use other communication mechanisms. Usage statistics show that in the 15 months following the bushfire, almost 11 000 people accessed the service, with 9 500 of those calls within the first three months. During the first three months, the service was handled by the Service Tasmania call centre and, as demand reduced, calls were directed to the Unit.

  For future recoveries, improvements could be made by ensuring that all staff who are taking calls receive recovery specific induction and training to help them problem solve a range of questions. In addition, implementation of a follow-up function would reduce the need for clients to call multiple times on the same issue. The 1800 number remained in operation for 18 months.
- Surveys and feedback forms

  Communities were provided with online and traditional opportunities for individuals to give feedback to the recovery process, including telling the Government about their recovery priorities, as well as their opinions on which processes worked well and those that could have been done differently, and to provide input on the community grants process (refer Appendix 7). Feedback was analysed and formed the basis for recommendations to decision-making committees, councils and funding bodies.
- Psychological recovery community meetings

  Public meetings were held by external specialists such as Dr Rob Gordon, who outlined some of the feelings the community and recovery workers should expect to experience during the various recovery phases. Sessions were also provided on topics such as improving sleep quality and reducing anxiety, with practical suggestions about ways to improve psychological wellbeing. These sessions were well attended and highly valued by many within the community.
- Detailed publications

  Publications such as the *Building Back Better* guide (refer Appendix 8) provided a resource for community members to take away and use in their own time. The *Building Back Better* guide is a good example of a how a communications team can work with councils and industry groups to distil the main elements of a daunting topic like rebuilding a home after a disaster and produce a simple guide to help communities in a practical way.

- **Communication from committees to the public**

  Bulletin updates summarising the main recovery decisions made at committees such as the AARCs can be posted online and on information hub notice boards to provide transparency to interested community members who may not have direct links to committee representatives. This was an area that was highlighted as a relatively easy improvement, which could be supported by the secretariat function of committees.

1.5.4. *Internal communication*

Initial communication needs

During early days of a recovery, newly formed teams with staff from various agencies require induction to understand their roles and responsibilities, with clarity provided around the level of judgment they are encouraged to exercise. While relaxed bureaucratic structures allow for a flexible, responsive approach to address needs as they arise, it is important that lines of command are widely circulated and understood by staff, including those in call centres, so they are able to respond appropriately to stakeholder queries.

This is particularly important during early days of recovery when the community looks to governments to bring stability to the uncertainties and confusion that inevitably follows any emergency. Communication coordinators should work closely with recovery managers to provide all Unit staff with a summary of key issues and appropriate responses.

Establishing clear internal communication processes early will not only give managers an efficient means to keep staff informed of critical issues, it will also help new recruits gain the competence needed to be effective in their roles. As the urgency eases, the regularity and need for updates will also diminish, but the well-established channels for such communication can remain fluid to accommodate increased activity at various times during recovery, such as for staged funding announcements.

Links between central and regional hubs

Complications that arise between a central office and regional hubs are often due to a lack of good communication between sites. The 2013 experience highlighted a need to establish a variety of communication methods early to ease such difficulties.

Access to the 9 am daily staff meetings in the city office was made available to regional hub staff via a simple smartphone speaker system. This function was set up a few months into the recovery and improved the connection between city and regional staff. It provided insight and understanding of experiences in each location and the shared perspectives enabled collective problem solving. In future recoveries, simple arrangements such as this can be set up immediately.

Also important for regional hubs is early connection to the internet, email and telephone facilities, so staff members who are on the ground have access to the latest electronic updates and an ability to direct community members to online information options.

During the 2013 recovery, there were initially three information and service hubs set up in the Sorell/Tasman region, one each in Dunalley, Murdunna and Sorell. Each hub had different communication facilities available to them. Governments must gauge the effect on each community following an emergency and create a setup suitable for each. It is important to be mindful of the limitations of temporary accommodation arrangements in terms of connectivity and consistency of service.

The Dunalley hub was set up as a long-term facility in a well-known local building. As it was expected to remain open for a 12 to 18 month period, communication and information technology infrastructure was set up accordingly. In Murdunna, however, two small demountables were brought in to a central location for the temporary convenience of this smaller community, but they did not have good telephone or internet reception. The facility in Sorell was highly reliant on the local MP office located nearby to provide photocopying and other services. Each set-up also had different procedures for recording visitor numbers and logging issues.

In a future recovery, establishing simple daily procedures for each hub to follow should improve internal communications and understanding of the recovery needs in each area. For example a standard daily record sheet, in paper form if internet is not available, could be used by hubs and call centres to record basic visitor/caller data such as demographics, information sought, issues raised and solutions implemented. Capturing this information in a central issues database would help guide recovery coordination in the central office and equip all staff to address popular queries with greater consistency.

Appendices

- Appendix 4 – Web site key statistics
- Appendix 5 – *Recovery News* newsletter edition

  www.bushfirerecovery.tas.gov.au/news_room/recovery_newsletter for full suite of newsletters
- Appendix 6 – Fact Sheet example

  www.bushfirerecovery.tas.gov.au/download_resources for full suite of Fact Sheets
- Appendix 7 – Surveys and feedback forms
- Appendix 8 – Department of Premier and Cabinet, 2013 *Building Back Better*

  www.bushfirerecovery.tas.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0011/193781/Building_Back_Better_Guide.pdf
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2. Delivering Services

This section looks at the assessment of needs following an emergency and the set-up of recovery structures. It also considers the initial and longer-term elements that will help to deliver a successful recovery across the four functional areas.

2.1. Setting up for recovery

Key points:

- *A range of expertise and a fluid approach is needed to deliver on recovery responsibilities*
- *The context and scale of the emergency will determine the requirements of central and regional recovery operations*
- *When establishing a regional hub, seek to maintain and strengthen existing local capacity*
- *Recovery hubs provide a safe, authoritative interface for advice and support*

2.1.1. *Central Recovery Unit*

The operational structure of the Unit comprised four teams that worked closely together covering the areas listed below. There was some fluidity to the organisational structure, particularly as the roles of the Unit changed over time and numbers of staff reduced. The teams and their designated responsibilities included the:

- *Bushfire Policy team* – worked behind the scenes to support the Taskforce, manage processes such as cleaning-up properties and supporting the Red Cross Appeal funds distribution;
- *Community Engagement team* – communicated with affected communities about the recovery processes and how to access assistance;
- *Community Recovery Support team* – operated on the ground in affected areas to support the community throughout the recovery process; and
- *Social and Personal Support team* – provided counselling, social work and outreach services.

Every emergency will be different and recovery needs may change. While unnecessary for the recovery from the January 2013 bushfires, future recovery managers should consider whether additional units focusing on economic or environmental recovery are required.

Expertise in these areas is essential for the successful execution of the predictable functions of a recovery unit. Of equal importance is flexibility on the part of these teams to anticipate changing priorities, respond to emerging issues and work cooperatively. This flexibility is an essential characteristic for successful delivery of recovery programs, and should be given priority in any recruitment process.

A further key consideration in the establishment of a central recovery unit is to ensure that staff members who will be working with the community are able to do so sensitively, in a way that demonstrates genuine compassion while maintaining professional poise. Having local or familiar faces in the team (either residents or people who have professional networks in the area) is very helpful in achieving this, and also assists in establishing relationships of trust.

2.1.2. *Regional presence*

The scale of the 2013 emergency necessitated the establishment of a central unit based in Hobart, with regional hubs to provide a community presence in the affected areas. This worked well because of the relative proximity between the fire-affected areas and the city. From the community's perspective, this local presence minimised travel time and enabled easier resolution of the various issues faced by people in this situation.

Establishing a regional presence carries the risk of displacing existing service providers in the area, or creating a demand for a level of service that cannot be sustained in the longer-term. Both of these risks can be managed with sensitive attention to community capacity and careful communication about the nature and duration of recovery unit presence and associated services in the area. The implication is that the exit plan for the regional recovery presence should be considered even while it is being established, so that existing local capacity can be maintained or strengthened, rather than replaced.

This approach enables gaps in services to be identified and addressed – for example by coordinating community services such as Legal Aid and providing a base from which to operate in the short-term.

2.1.3. *From the tents to a hub*

The speedy establishment of a reasonably comfortable and functional medium-term operational base that is within the affected area is a fundamental requirement in the early recovery phase. A recovery hub is seen by the community as the authoritative source of information and assistance, and must live up to this expectation as soon as possible after the response phase. Provision must also be made for traumatised people who are in need of counselling or other personal assistance, so accommodation must include an adequate number of interview rooms or other private spaces.

Logistics for this are complex, even if suitable premises are easily found. Telecommunications and IT infrastructure are absolutely essential for service delivery and must be attended to as a priority so that people (both staff and community) have ready access to data, information and facilities that allow for copying and printing. Equipment and systems must be of a standard that enables efficient transactions to take place, to minimise frustration and delays.

The ability of a recovery hub to provide some comfort to affected residents is also of great value, and this should also be considered in the establishment and set-up. Comfortable furniture and tea/coffee making facilities are highly valued and can bring a touch of humanity to an otherwise tedious bureaucratic interaction. This can also assist in giving people an opportunity to slow down and talk about their experience, which is an important part of the recovery process. (Refer Appendix 9)

Appendix

- Appendix 9 – Recovery Hub set-up checklist
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2.2. Immediate relief

Key points:

- *Clear, early and repeated communication helps to manage expectations*
- *A single registration process will reduce stress and improve service coordination*
- *Well established monetary relief provisions are outlined in the Tasmanian Relief and Recovery Arrangements*
- *Provision of a centrally coordinated clean-up minimises health risks and provides a strong contribution to community recovery*
- *Speedy restoration of key infrastructure addresses important needs and sends strong signals of recovery*

Immediately following an emergency, communities are thrown into confusion and reliable communication about available assistance can be difficult to access. Also, the dynamic nature of relief means that the validity of information can change from moment to moment. Word of mouth and social media can quickly spread ideas and information indiscriminately and, as a result, community expectations may not match the reality of relief provisions.

2.2.1. *Managing expectations*

Given the range and nature of personal and social needs during early stages of recovery, government plays a vital role in coordinating critical information so communities are kept up-to-date. This includes making it clear what is and is not possible during this time, along with the where, when and how to's that will help community members to access assistance and enable them to bring order back into their lives.

Web site statistics showed that the most sought after information immediately following the emergency was around road closures, financial assistance and updates on restoration of power and telephones. Keeping track of key word searches and page visits on the web site should help communications teams to identify priorities for updates to staff at relief and recovery centres so they have the most needed information at their fingertips.

2.2.2. *Personal registration*

While community members who have suffered the trauma of loss as a result of an emergency understand that they must register their details in order to be eligible for relief, a common concern voiced by community members (and service providers) is around the stress attached to repeatedly revisiting the trauma to provide information for each registration. Simplifying the registration process would help to reduce this stress. A range of options for a single registration process have been put forward by various governments and recovery partners, including a carbon copied basic information

sheet that can be used multiple times (refer Appendix 10). Such an approach requires coordination and agreement by the various recovery partners in advance of future emergencies. Common templates should be provided to each recovery partner so they can accommodate the individual no matter where the first registration occurs.

2.2.3. *Immediate monetary relief*

Tasmania has well established arrangements for the delivery of immediate financial assistance to a person impacted by an emergency who requires assistance with food, clothing or shelter.

The *Tasmanian Relief and Recovery Arrangements* (TRRA) outline both the immediate and longer-term financial assistance that can be provided by the State and is based on the Australian Government's *Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements* (NDRRA). Both documents are found in the resource section. In addition, the Australian Government Disaster Recovery Payment (AGDRP) was made available to all people who were adversely affected by the January 2013 bushfires.

2.2.4. *Clean-up*

Following the January 2013 bushfires, the State Government coordinated and covered the cost of the clean-up to help communities get back on their feet. The rapid and safe removal of visual reminders of the fires enabled community members to begin the task of repairing and rebuilding.

An important aspect of the clean-up was to quickly minimise health risks to communities from exposure to possible hazardous materials contained in burnt buildings. Some of the destroyed structures included asbestos and the job of safely cleaning-up the properties would have been difficult, time-consuming and costly for property owners.

The average cost of the Government coordinated clean-up was $15 800 per property, with 130 tonnes of waste removed per property at a fee of $60 per tonne at Copping Tip and the balance of the cost spent on contractor fees. If the Government had not taken responsibility for the clean-up, these costs may have come out of property owners' insurance policies, leaving less money for their rebuild. Those who were uninsured would have had to foot the bill for the clean-up themselves.

The Department of Treasury and Finance provided an exemption from the tender process to enable the direct engagement of Tasmanian company, Hazell Bros. This was to ensure that the immediate needs of the affected communities were addressed in a coordinated, safe and streamlined way. This approach was welcomed by local councils. In addition, Hazell Bros employed 16 local people to help with the clean-up, at least five of whom were from the Kelly's Timber Mill at Dunalley that was destroyed by the fires. These workers were reskilled and trained to enable them to participate effectively in the clean-up operations.

The decision to appoint a single contractor for the clean-up of properties was considered to be one of the real successes of the recovery effort. It was a highly visible and tangible activity that made a strong contribution to the recovery of the community.

Importantly, the clean-up process engaged all registered land owners directly, providing the opportunity for each land owner to have ownership over the clean-up of their property. The registration process was coordinated by the Unit, rather than the contractor. Utilising its centralised mapping and property data, this process allowed the Government to ensure that no one in the fire-affected areas was missed. Liaison officers followed up to complete the clean-up consent process. This allowed them to establish relationships with individual land owners. In many instances, this created an

opportunity to assess the needs of community members, alert them to additional assistance and/or provide referrals to other services. (Refer Appendix 11 for clean-up documentation.)

2.2.5. *Restoring key infrastructure*

In addition to immediate interventions such as restoration of roads, electricity and telephones, governments can play a part in helping to restore, or provide access to, key infrastructure as quickly as possible. Governments must weigh the benefit of building temporary infrastructure, such as schools, with other access options. In the case of Dunalley, a number of keystone community facilities were destroyed and their re-establishment played a significant part in building morale, providing for practical needs and assisting with the psychological recovery of the community and its surrounds.

The lead role for this function will vary depending on the infrastructure in question, however an overarching coordination role may be required by State Government to ensure that appropriate and timely action occurs.

School

The destruction of a school may result in a large number of families making alternative plans for schooling, further complicating already difficult circumstances. For Dunalley, this prospect loomed until the announcement of a temporary school was made and confirmation given that a permanent replacement would be built. This news, in the weeks after the fire, was of particular significance to the community of Dunalley as it sent a signal that the area had a positive future. This signal was strengthened by the speedy commencement of establishment works for the temporary school, which provided visible evidence that the town was bouncing back.

Toilets/facilities

For many people, particularly those that had lost their homes, the lack of ablutions and laundry facilities can be a very significant long-term inconvenience. Although a demountable facility was provided for the community in Dunalley, its installation was considerably delayed by process issues that could have been anticipated and resolved. In future disasters involving significant numbers of destroyed dwellings, this need could be anticipated and appropriately coordinated with relevant authorities as a priority.

Informal community meeting places

The loss of community meeting places, such as Community Halls, clubrooms and sporting facilities is recognised as having a significant impact beyond the inconvenience of not having a space to meet or hold events. Memories, associations and a sense of place are all tied in to these places, so their replacement needs to be managed sensitively.

Where possible, temporary meeting facilities should be provided until replacements are complete. This may involve strategies such as removing pews from a church to provide more flexible meeting spaces, or arranging for public use of school facilities outside school hours. Meeting spaces in recovery hubs can also be advertised to provide existing groups and clubs with meeting continuity, as well as providing a place for newly formed groups to gather and support one another.

Appendices

- Appendix 10 – Personal Registration Form

- Appendix 11 – Clean-up supporting documentation (including Fact Sheet, Referral Form and Deed)

Additional resources

- Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements (NDRRA)

  www.em.gov.au/Fundinginitiatives/Naturaldisasterreliefandrecoveryarrangements/Pages/default.aspx

2.3. Longer-term recovery

Key points:

- *Monetary assistance is best provided through a multi-pronged approach, with a range of government and non-government funding sources*
- *Collaboration is essential for effective distribution of overall funds*
- *Monetary donations deliver a greater benefit than material donations*
- *Social and personal support must be sensitively delivered with individualised assessment of need*
- *Practical support, such as the clean-up and easy to follow publications, takes the edge off the daunting task of rebuilding*
- *Community driven projects enable greater influence and ownership of long-term recovery outcomes*
- *Economic recovery requires a sound understanding of existing economic conditions and strategic regional opportunities*
- *Environmental regeneration can be assisted through good communication, targeted programs and volunteer retention*

When a community-led approach is used to plan for longer-term recovery, governments can customise established arrangements to meet the unique needs of affected communities. This section considers some of the longer-term arrangements that followed the 2013 bushfires.

2.3.1. *Monetary assistance*

Under the Tasmanian Relief and Recovery Arrangements, the State had pre-established arrangements in place to provide recovery and restoration grants to low income persons for the replacement of essential household items, living expenses and repairs to property. Individual grants were calculated for by taking into account the actual, identified need of the applicant. This assessment of needs provides the opportunity for applicants to be directed towards particular government services that may be better suited to meeting their needs, rather than only offering a straight financial grant.

Funding sources

Medium- to long-term financial assistance was provided to the community from a number of sources. These included financial assistance from the State and Australian Governments (through pre-existing arrangements) and more extraordinary circumstances where third party organisations, such as the Australian Red Cross, undertook public appeals.

The Australian Government's NDRRA provides a financial safety net for states and territories for the costs incurred following an 'eligible natural disaster', such as the January 2013 bushfires. Costs for which the State can seek partial reimbursement from the Australian Government are known as Category A, B, C and D costs. These categories effectively represent the provision of relief and assistance to an individual (Category A), the repair/replacement of public infrastructure and more general counter disaster operations (Category B), assistance to the primary production/small business sectors and a community recovery fund (Category C) and other relief and recovery measures as agreed between the State and Australian Governments (Category D).

The State sought reimbursement for costs incurred under Categories A, B and C. The ability of the Department and Premier and Cabinet to consolidate costs and appropriately categorise them into a form that could be submitted to the Australian Government was, however, hampered by a limited understanding of the arrangements across government agencies. Future recovery processes would benefit from further awareness-raising and more rigorously designed administrative processes for capturing cost information.

Charitable Appeals

The Red Cross Tasmania Bushfire 2013 Appeal (the Appeal) officially raised $8.74 million. With the additional interest earned of $123 000 (to the end of February 2014), the total amount increased to $8.86 million.

When conducting an appeal, care must be taken to comply with all legal and regulatory requirements relating to the distribution of funds raised. The complexity of these matters should not be underestimated. All material risks must be clearly identified, measured and managed to ensure that the integrity of the process is not compromised.

In some instances, unregistered fundraising bodies may surface and governments have a role in assisting these bodies to understand their legal responsibilities, help them with the registration process and/or broker relationships with other registered funding bodies.

2.3.2. *Monetary distribution*

Appeal Distribution Committee

The Tasmanian Bushfire Appeal Distribution Committee was an independent committee made up of community leaders who volunteered their time to oversee the Appeal's operation and the allocation of Appeal funds.

The Committee was chaired by former President of the Tasmanian Industrial Commission and Deputy President of Fair Work Australia, Mrs Patricia Leary. Other members of the committee included Executive Director of the Tasmanian Office of Australian Red Cross, Dr Ian Burke; Chief Executive Officer of Blundstone Pty Ltd, Mr Steve Gunn; the General Manager of the Sorell Council, Mr Robert Higgins; and the Bushfire Recovery Coordinator, Mr Michael Stevens (non-voting member). The broad, high-level membership provided balanced oversight for this responsibility, with secretariat and administrative support provided by the Unit. This approach worked well.

Members of the Committee met 20 times over a 16 month period. There was also some out-of-session interaction and decision-making required of the Committee. The Committee's priority was to ensure the funds flowed quickly and efficiently to those directly affected by the January 2013 bushfires and that there was an appropriate balance of disbursements between individuals, families and

communities. Its initial focus was to provide immediate financial support to those who lost their primary residence.

All decisions in relation to the distribution of the Appeal funds were made in adherence with the ToR for the Tasmanian Bushfire Appeal Distribution Committee 2013, which includes the Appeal Intent (refer Appendix 12). All administrative costs associated with the distribution of the Appeals funds were funded from within the budget of the Unit.

Monetary assistance for individuals and families

An extensive amount of work went into the distribution of Appeal funds to ensure fair distribution across the variety of recovery needs for individuals and families. The distribution occurred in four stages, with the development of complex algorithms for the later stages:

- *Immediate Assistance*: Stage1provided urgent relief (eg ability to buy water, food or clothes) to individuals and families whose homes were destroyed in the bushfires. It was administered by Unit staff who made direct contact with the owners and occupiers of properties that were destroyed.
- *Short-Term Assistance*: Stage 2 built on the assistance provided in Stage 1 and focused on relieving hardship and distress arising out of the short-term costs associated with housing relocation and replacing essential household items.
- *Medium-Term Assistance*: Understanding that the distress caused by the bushfires extended beyond those who lost their homes, Stage 3 focused on assisting those still living in the impacted communities to remove damaged property and, with it, the constant visual reminder of the fires.
- *Ongoing/Long-term Assistance*: Stage 4 provided support for individuals and families experiencing ongoing financial hardship as a direct result of the bushfires.

Refer to Appendix 13 for a variety of fact sheets that cover some of these elements.

Monetary assistance for communities

The Appeal Distribution Committee recognised the substantial loss to the broader community, including those who may not have been directly affected by the fires. Twenty per cent of the Appeal fund was allocated to community recovery by way of locally-led community projects (refer Section 2.3.6). Further funding was provided for a garden revegetation program to assist with early, physical support for personal recovery (refer Section 2.3.8) and psychosocial recovery for various community groups (refer Section 2.3.4).

Governing bodies must carefully manage public perceptions by partnering with service providers that are known and trusted by the community. It is ideal if local organisations have capacity to provide effective programs. If partnering with external organisations that lack local knowledge or networks, setting up strong communication and reporting channels should help to maximise the value of their services to the community.

Monetary Donations Sub-Committee

The Bushfire Monetary Donations Sub-committee (BMDS) was established to ensure a collaborative approach to the provision of financial assistance to affected households using funds raised by the member organisations in ways that complemented the distribution of monies from the Appeal. Membership of BMDS included Rotary and Lions Clubs of Tasmania, St Vincent de Paul Society, UnitingCare Tasmania, the Salvation Army and the Australian Red Cross. Meetings were held monthly from May 2013.

Unit staff and staff of the various organisations referred individuals and households to the BMDS, who would allocate an appropriate point of contact from among its members. Through this process, approximately 40 individuals and households were directly assisted by member organisations through the provision of counselling, payment of bills and resolution of bushfire-related problems or damage that was beyond their capacity.

Member organisations also provided direct funding for a range of community initiatives, and the regular meetings enabled discussion about particular community needs. Often, quick resolutions were found as to an appropriate course of action or follow up.

The value of this collaborative approach was recognised by the participating organisations, which stated that it greatly assisted with the delivery of their programs and brought a much higher level of integration than would otherwise have been achieved. This was particularly so for those partners who did not ordinarily work together with charitable NGOs (for example Rotary Tasmania). Although it is recognised that the management of committees does have a time impost, the value of the work far outweighs the cost. This being the case, in future disasters such arrangements should be implemented as soon as possible to ensure that collaboration occurs from the outset.

2.3.3. *Donated goods*

During the immediate response phase following the January 2013 bushfires, a common concern was raised around the need for better logistical processes to track needs, supply and distribution of donated goods. There was no registration system and no tracking system for loaned goods, such as generators, which some contributors later asked to be returned. Often, the goods donated were mixed together (for example, crockery wrapped in clothing or linen) and needed considerable sorting to determine what was appropriate to pass on. Separating good quality items took time and effort.

Changing needs

The needs of affected community members change over time. For example, in the first week affected people may need personal hygiene items, generators, nappies, basic food, gas cookers, water and torches. In later phases, those affected may require assistance with property clean-up, refurnishing or rebuilding. Allocating responsibility to specific organisations for provision of particular donations within each response/recovery phase would improve coordination. Appendix 14 suggests items that may be needed at each phase of disaster recovery.

Unsolicited donations

As is often the case after disasters, managing donated goods takes a significant amount of logistical and financial capacity from various organisations and staff and volunteers in the affected areas. Also, when people drive to affected areas to directly give goods to local organisations, it takes effort and resources away from dealing with local issues. This is because focus is turned to storing, sorting and distributing goods.

Undue responsibility can be placed on local workers who may be asked to decide who is 'deserving' of goods. When donations are given directly to people in the affected areas, it can also cause an emotional and physical burden (in the sense of transferring responsibility for storing and sorting donated goods). Receipt of unwanted unsolicited donations can have negative emotional effects on the people receiving old, used or unwanted items.

In addition, an unintended impact of material aid to an emergency affected area is the potential loss of income to local businesses and suppliers, with a flow on effect to the overall economic recovery of the area. Vouchers and gift cards sourced from local businesses are useful as they provide gift recipients with autonomy and boosts local spending.

Donations and social media

The use of social media is inevitable following a disaster, which can result in significant pros and cons for the flow of donated goods.

Some positives may include:

- needed items get to the affected areas quickly (particularly items such as generators);
- matching of needs with goods, for example if affected individuals post their specific needs on Facebook (such as a particular size men's wetsuit); and
- the generosity of external communities can be harnessed through the widespread 'viral' nature of social media communication.

Some negatives may include:

- priority during the early days of recovery given to convoys of donated goods, over trucks who are delivering regular supplies (such as medications to the health service);
- risk of injury to people who bring donations into an affected area; and
- items arriving in the affected area without knowing where/for whom they are intended.

Government response

The foremost principle of government should be that the needs of disaster-affected people and communities are always the prime consideration. The needs and wishes of donors should be secondary.

Therefore, donations of money or vouchers are the best options as these provide flexibility, timeliness and effectiveness as well as choice for disaster-affected people. This also enhances the economic impact on local businesses A register for donated goods which is matched against individual/community needs would also assist in future recovery efforts. Ideally, this would be built into the overarching client management system. Client management systems are covered in more detail in Section 1.3.6.

The following principles are found in the *National Guidelines for Managing Donated Goods*, which address issues raised through national research and consultation:

- *Firstly understand the needs* – the needs of disaster affected people and communities should always be the first consideration.
- *Explain money is the preferred option* – where the need for public assistance is identified, donation of money (or vouchers) should always be the preferred option.
- *Communicate clearly* – a clear and transparent communication process should be used to inform workers (government and non-government), the community and the media about how best to assist the people and communities affected by disaster.
- *Establish an effective donations management system* – donation of material goods should be managed through an equitable, efficient and coordinated system.

- *Seek and consider recipients' feedback* – a review which is inclusive of recipients' views of the donated goods program, should occur after every disaster.
- *Plan ahead* – arrangements for donated goods should be encapsulated in national, state/territory and regional/local policy and planning.

2.3.4. *Social and personal support*

Following an emergency, the main concerns for individuals may include grief, trauma and relationship issues, dislocation from the community, as well as loss of property and personal belongings. Depending on the level of affect, the role of governments can include the secondment of staff to local areas to enable easy access to personal services without the need to travel.

After the January 2013 bushfires, DHHS led the social and personal support team and provided services out of the regional hub in Dunalley, in partnership with a number of key organisations. The range of direct client services included counselling, outreach visits, practical support (for example, help with accessing housing, material goods, filling in forms, accessing the Australian Government's Centrelink services, and referrals to other services etc) and community development.

In addition to the services that operated out of the hub, partnerships were formed with well-known and publicly respected organisations such as beyondblue and Rural Alive and Well. These organisations provided roving support services to various segments of the community.

In all situations, sensitivity must be employed around the provision of psychological support, particularly where long-held stigmas may exist. The use of unmarked vehicles when visiting rural properties was helpful in this regard.

Timeline of needs

In terms of the client load on the social and personal support team, the client numbers for the first 12 months are shown in the chart below.

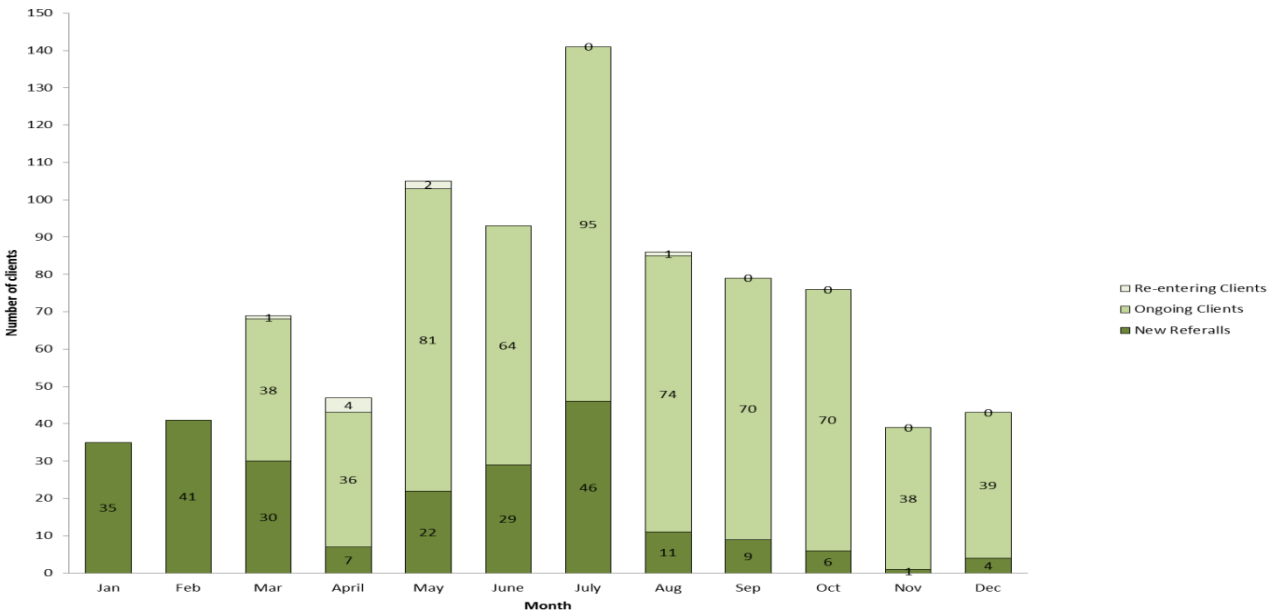

Figure 8. Monthly client numbers of the Social and Personal Support Team

Temporary accommodation

As provided for under the TEMP, Housing Tasmania assisted many of those who had lost their homes due to the fires with temporary accommodation. All of the people who required this solution were able to access it, and short-term leases were extended, in many cases, to ensure that people using this option were not pressured to move on at the end of their initial lease period. It is a reasonable expectation that this service would be provided in future disasters, but it should be noted that due to a range of factors, including the lack of emergency housing in the actual area affected by the disaster, many people do not seek out this option.

For some people after a disaster, it is important to stay on their land and in their communities, and their proximity to the area can contribute to overall community recovery. An important consideration for a recovery team facing this situation is whether the temporary accommodation (often caravans or sheds) used by these people is adequate in terms of security, sanitation, privacy and health, particularly for winter months. In order to determine this with any certainty, an assessment must be made of every temporary dwelling. If they do not provide reasonable standards, intervention may be necessary.

In the case of the Sorell/Tasman area, many of the households who lost their homes in the fire chose to live in temporary accommodation until an alternative was available. The Unit made contact with all people displaced by the fires, discussed their circumstances and then provided appropriate follow up where required. Most of the households did not require any assistance, however ongoing contact was maintained with those who accepted the offer.

Approximately 30 households living in temporary accommodation were assessed and 17 of them were provided with targeted assistance. This included management of appropriate contractors and sourcing of materials to ensure that upgrades were done legally and professionally and did not cause problems for the residents or lead to other adverse outcomes for the recovery team. While the initiative was not publicised, for a range of reasons including protecting the privacy of the recipients, it was well recognised as being a highly valuable component of the recovery effort.

Adding to this was Lions Tasmania's donation of a laundry and ablutions facilities block, which was enormously helpful for residents. Again, owing to the complexity of establishing these facilities, in future recovery efforts it should be determined at the outset whether such provisions will be required and if so, planning should commence as soon as possible.

2.3.5. *Infrastructure*

Restoration of homes

The restoration or rebuild of homes following a disaster is an enormous undertaking for the people involved. There are clear roles for governments to play in this complex process. As detailed in previous sections, the early removal of destroyed buildings through a government coordinated clean-up process eliminates this burden from community members and removes visual reminders of the devastation. It also allows government to deal with potentially hazardous materials in a systematic way.

A further avenue of assistance includes a boundary resurvey program, to re-establish survey pegs on properties and update the cadastre with any new information. Following the 2013 bushfires, this service was provided by DPIPWE, enabling property owners to proceed with design and development applications for their new buildings, as well as position their fences in the correct place. In cases where surveys were paid for by residents, costs were reimbursed.

Given the level of trauma experienced by fire-affected residents, and mental energy spent on regaining a sense of normality in their everyday lives, the task of rebuilding a home can be overwhelming. Community members appreciate basic assistance in a format that enables them to make decisions in their own time. Publications such as the *Building Back Better* and *Building for Bushfire* guides (see resource section below) provide clear and simple tips and pointers that help to get the rebuilding journey underway.

Local governments can also assist in this process by taking a flexible approach to the development and building application process, particularly by streamlining applications for new dwellings that are designed to occupy the footprint of the original. Local governments can also assist by waiving fees and providing clear and easy to understand information about their processes.

Restoration of Community Infrastructure

A disaster can radically change the face of a community by destroying significant infrastructure. It can also provide an opportunity to renew the area, rather than simply rebuilding it back to the way it was. The approach used needs to be balanced sensitively with the fact that community infrastructure is not just a collection of buildings, but also holds memories and connections for people. Community consultation is therefore an important part of this process; ascertaining the values of the destroyed settlement and creating a vision or consensus for the future allows a different approach to be taken with the agreement of the affected communities. Such a process is necessarily more time consuming than simply getting down to work and replacing assets as they were, but may provide better future outcomes for the community. The process used in the Sorell/Tasman region is discussed in more detail in Section 2.3.6.

Public and environmental health

Further complicating the process of re-establishing infrastructure following a disaster are considerations of public health, such as contamination of water supplies and disruption of services such as sewer/on-site effluent management. It is in the interests of the community and the responsible authority to act promptly to resolve such issues. Given that it is predictable that there will be a spike in these issues post-fire or flood, the engagement of appropriate personnel to deal with it is an important step.

In the case of the areas affected by the Forcett fires of January 2013, an additional environmental health officer was engaged for approximately six months, working across both Sorell and Tasman local government areas. This strategy greatly assisted with the multitude of issues associated with public health, and was much appreciated by residents.

2.3.6. *Community driven projects*

In addition to recovery projects that are instigated and coordinated by governments and recovery partners, communities that are given opportunity to design, select and coordinate their own recovery projects are found to become more cohesive and resilient, with faster overall recovery. Depending on the scale of the emergency, opportunity may exist for communities to completely rethink and help redesign damaged or destroyed community spaces to better suit their future needs.

Community assistance grant fund

Following the 2013 bushfires, 20 per cent of the Appeal funds were allocated for community projects through a community assistance grant fund. The grant was designed to allow community members to:

- self-identify their community's social, infrastructure or environmental recovery priorities;

- develop ideas and submit expressions of interest for community based projects that addressed those priorities;
- provide feedback to determine which eligible project proposals were best supported by the broader community; and
- manage and implement the projects selected for funding.

This process enabled both directly and indirectly affected community members to take stock and consider how they could personally contribute toward the recovery of their greater community. Project proponents were given an avenue to participate and those providing feedback enabled funding bodies to assess which proposals would be most valued by the community. Appendix 15 provides a summary of the projects endorsed for funding, along with a sample of fact sheets, and communication and feedback results that were used to provide recommendations to funding bodies.

Phased grant funding

The trauma and disruption to communities can make it difficult for individuals to engage meaningfully in community recovery decisions, particular during early stages of recovery when their primary focus is on personal recovery. However, other pressures exist to distribute funds quickly to create early and visible signs of progress. The initial timeline for the 2013 Sorell/Tasman community assistance grant process was developed to meet such pressures, but the community was quick to voice their need for more time in order to contribute responsibly. The community requested that this process was not rushed and time frames were adjusted accordingly to enable greater levels of participation, particularly for larger infrastructure projects.

A phased release of funds also provided time for the community to better understand the responsibility extended to them to contribute to the reshaping of their public spaces. The variety of projects endorsed through Rounds 1 and 2 of the phased process inspired new ideas, provided motivation to be involved and fostered greater cohesion within communities to support proposals with long-term, broad community benefit. Some of the smaller projects were completed quickly, and others are likely to take some time to complete. Figure 9 provides a timeline of phases used for the 2013 Community Assistance Grant process, which required coordination with council planning activities.

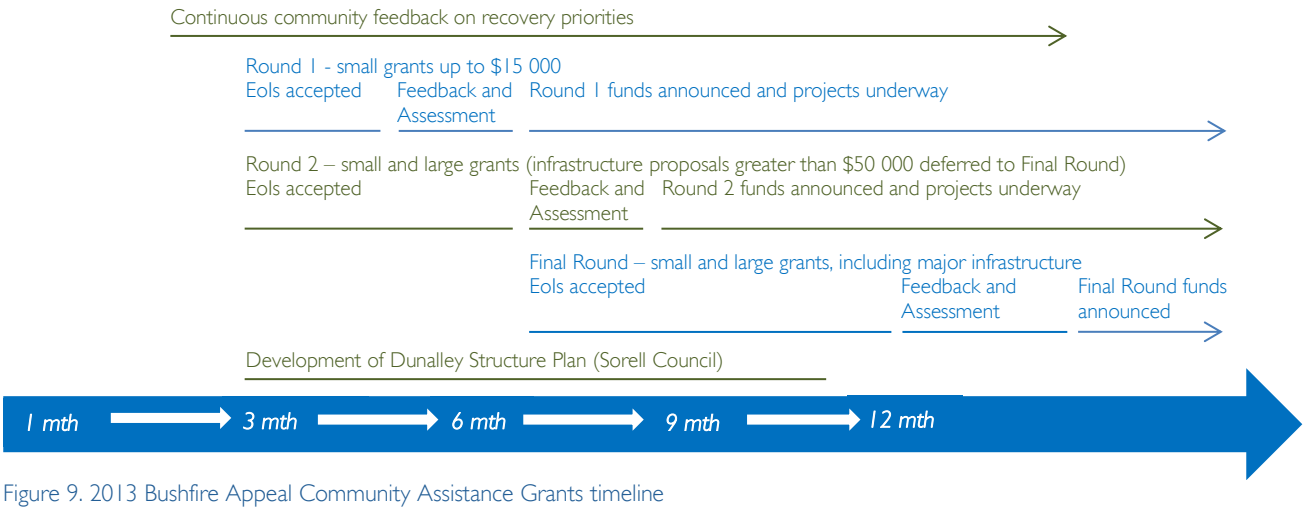

Figure 9. 2013 Bushfire Appeal Community Assistance Grants timeline

Coordination with councils

Coordinators of community grant processes must stay closely connected to the councils to ensure community driven infrastructure projects are aligned with other infrastructure plans and activities. During 2013, Sorell Council was developing a structure plan for Dunalley and worked with the Unit to draw recovery priorities and community preferences into their planning process. Development concept designs were also commissioned by the Sorell and Tasman Councils. The Unit ensured its communication referenced the planning activities of the respective councils.

Feedback from communities

Investment into gathering qualitative and quantitative feedback on recovery priorities and project preferences can enable coordinators to develop evidence based recommendations to funding bodies and clear and transparent communication back to communities about why funding decisions are made.

Data collection

When collecting feedback, mandatory provision of demographic details will enable coordinators to ensure feedback is obtained from a representative sample of the community. Where the recovery covers a large geographic area, it also enables funding bodies to gauge whether location based projects are appropriately supported by the relevant communities. For example, for large projects that may have a significant impact on a wider area, quantitative data can establish whether overall support exists and qualitative data will help to highlight major concerns.

As with any survey work, a bigger sample will provide a more accurate picture, so it is important to reach as many parts of the community as possible. The 2013 grants process used a comprehensive engagement strategy and the various communication tools, outlined in Section 1.5.3, to encourage participation. The survey instrument used for the final grant round is found in Appendix 15 – this was also made available online through the user friendly Survey Monkey tool. All paper surveys were entered into the online tool for ease of data analysis.

From this data, clear indication of community preferences could be drawn and broken down into the major settlement areas, and recommendations for funding were based on this analysis (refer Appendix 15). This is an example of the way the qualitative and qualitative feedback data was used to communicate messages to the community and the Appeal Distribution Committee.

2.3.7. *Economic recovery*

A clear understanding of the economic landscape of affected regions is essential for governments to know how best to proceed with economic recovery assistance and activities. While it is important to learn from the experiences of other areas impacted by similar events, it is critical to develop a response that is specific to the competitive advantage of the area. For example, the provision of small injections of immediate or short-term assistance to enable businesses to get back on their feet must be balanced with a good understanding of the economic nuances of the region.

It is critical to engage quickly with key business and industry leaders in an impacted community to gain a fast understanding of key issues including the local business culture. Also, a pre-disaster assessment of the economic performance of the region, beyond the material damage of business and industry, will enable a better understanding of what might be sustainable in a new local economy. Together with consideration of broader regional objectives, a robust long-term strategic economic recovery plan can be supported, and may include encouragement and facilitation of investment into emerging industries.

Governments can provide business mentoring to enable business owners and operators to understand sustainable options for their individual circumstances and to chart a course to recovery that may result in a better prospect of long-term economic sustainability of their operations. Importantly, governments can help communities to avoid rushing into decisions by employing a 'needs' based strategic approach that involves broader stakeholder engagement beyond the immediate recovery effort.

Vested interests that engender separate media, political and industry responses should be discouraged outside the recognised recovery governance structure. All communication should reinforce a single clear message: one disaster, one response effort. It is important that the government's entire recovery response is communicated effectively to the impacted community from the outset to effectively engage and assist local enterprise and industry and help to manage their expectations.

A number of initiatives used in the 2013 recovery are outlined below as examples of how government interventions assist with long-term economic recovery.

Recovery of economic infrastructure

Prior to any rebuilding of economic infrastructure, potential property development options should be identified and explored, with consideration given to alternate subdivisions, dwelling location and building design; and whether it is valuable for local council to compulsorily acquire land in the strategic interest of the region.

In this instance, a substantial grant was provided by DEDTA to the Sorell and Tasman Councils to commission Structure and Environs Plans for Dunalley and Murdunna respectively. Adopted by the Councils, these structure plans served to inform the development of the new Sorell and Tasman Planning Schemes. It also provided a strategic planning framework for Dunalley to encourage connectivity, access, quality and non-duplication of services. This was particularly relevant for the rebuild of the Dunalley Primary School and Dunalley Community Hall, as the framework was designed to help ensure that these and other projects integrated well with the overall strategic development of the town in terms of design, function and location.

In addition to this, DEDTA provided funding to Sorell Council for the Dunalley Cove Marina Redevelopment Feasibility Study, to explore the potential of commercial opportunities that would enhance the liveability of Dunalley, increase visitation activity and grow the local economy. A project working group was formed and its recommendations will constitute a set of coordinated actions and strategies for the stakeholders to work with.

Assistance to primary producers

The destruction of fences, crops, stock and infrastructure had a serious impact on the income of a large number of primary producers. The volunteer group BlazeAid was on the ground within 10 days of the main fire to help repair of boundary fences and keep stock off roads. While government did not coordinate this activity, the practical work carried out by BlazeAid volunteers had a huge impact on improving morale of farmers, enabling them to focus on other aspects of their recovery.

BlazeAid operates autonomously, and works directly with affected landowners. It manages its own resources and provides registration and appropriate cover for volunteers. While is does not require coordination from formal recovery structures, governments can assist with the provision of materials, tools or contributions towards fuel or food costs incurred by volunteers and coordinators. Often, it was the lack of materials that held up the progress of its operations.

Following the initial start from BlazeAid, the Government coordinated fencing crews via the Tasmania Prison Service and provided funding for overall program coordination. This work continued after BlazeAid had wound up its services. More detail on this program was provided in Section 1.3.7.

Coordination of more general government assistance to primary producers has been recognised as a significant issue requiring action in advance of future disasters. Specific consideration should be given to the coordination and distribution of donated fodder, in addition to fencing materials. The 2013 experience highlighted the tensions of balancing short supply with high demand, along with the quality of feed and fodder donations. It was suggested that an independent organisation with strong local networks, such as Rotary Tasmania, take a lead role in coordinating quality assurance and distribution of feed and fodder to affected properties.

Part of the 2013 recovery included a Primary Producers Winter Assistance Package by funds generously provided by the Governments of South Australia and Western Australia, and the Rotary and Lions Clubs of Tasmania (refer Appendix 16). These funds did not have compliance issues that surrounded the Australian Red Cross and other charitable appeal funds, so there could be greater flexibility in the assistance provided. The coordination of the Winter Package was overseen by a steering committee comprising representatives from the Unit, TFGA, Tasmania Prison Service, Sorell Council, Central Highlands Council, NRM South, Rotary Tasmania and Lions Tasmania, with the TFGA and NRM South taking a lead role and the Unit providing administrative and communications support.

These initiatives were in addition to clean-up and recovery grants to primary producers, as well as several other coordinated efforts. The scale and scope of support to the sector provides a clear indication that the impacts of bushfires falls heavily on primary producers and that a tailored response by the Government may be required in future disasters.

Local Economic Development Officer presence

Following an emergency, the effect on businesses can be far ranging. As part of its rapid response during the first half of 2013, the Government provided direct assistance to tourism operators, primary producers and other businesses to give short-term relief from the cost pressures of clean-up and disruption to business. The focus of DEDTA's support was via the Southern Region Office (SRO) on the Sorell/Tasman area, to ensure that sufficient resources were provided to businesses that needed help with strategy and planning. The SRO worked closely with the Unit and a dedicated project manager was based in the regional hub for 12 months to provide easy access for local businesses.

Through this arrangement, the SRO worked closely with industry groups, NGOs, governments, local leaders and community groups to progress long-term social and economic development rather than simply addressing shorter term economic recovery. In addition, this collaborative approach enabled better recognition of the extent of the personal and financial stresses in rebuilding businesses, and in many cases homes.

This work was underpinned by an objective assessment of the region's economic performance prior to the fires, which found that with a few exceptions, the area had been in long-term decline. This being the case, the SRO's efforts attempted to steer the economic recovery in a direction to generate lasting sustainability.

To that end, between January and September 2013, the SRO worked with an estimated 150 businesses and not-for-profit organisations in the area, leading to the successful application for a range of grants that would underpin recovery, innovation and future growth of the recipients' businesses. The

close working relationship helped build the capacity of several small businesses by assisting them to establish credentials and qualifications and provide legitimacy over the longer-term.

Also for the longer-term, a business mentoring program will be delivered in the 18-30 month period following the emergency (ie the 2014-15 financial year). This will target particular sectors to help them build on outcomes already achieved.

Sorell Tasman Economic Recovery Group

The Sorell Tasman Economic Recovery Group (STERG) was created to assist with the delivery of Southern Regional Economic Development Plan in the area. Supported by DEDTA, this group comprised mostly local business operators from a range of interests and provided a useful reference point as concepts for economic recovery were developed.

The objectives of the STERG included:

- the provision of strategic advice to DEDTA about regional economic recovery issues;
- contribution of local expertise and knowledge of regional issues as an input to the economic recovery;
- support for community/business consultation for economic recovery;
- consideration of strategic projects and funding approaches in the affected areas; and
- contribution to the long-term vision for the economic development of the region.

In establishing STERG, an attempt was made to involve at least one representative from each of the key industries/employer groups, to enable consideration of the views of the broader industry. Given the timing, this was challenging for many of the representatives, particularly as several had lost their businesses. As with any initiative involving the community, it is important for members to be clear about the group's intention, drivers and underlying value. Without clarity on these points, members will struggle to remain engaged, even under ideal circumstances.

2.3.8. *Environment*

Hazardous waste

Hazell Bros' clean-up of properties provided substantial environmental benefits by removing hazardous materials from the fire-affected areas, as well as enabling residents to commence rehabilitation of their private properties. Although not all properties were attended to by Hazell Bros, the vast majority were, and this provided a high level of confidence that short-cuts or inappropriate practices would not be employed in the disposal of substances such as asbestos and copper chrome arsenate treated timber. This peace of mind was valuable for both residents and authorities involved in the recovery, as it gave confidence that the region would not be left with a legacy problem.

Vegetation regeneration

A number of initiatives were developed to assist with vegetation regeneration. These included a Revegetation and Garden Restoration Program, led by the Dunalley Tasman Neighbourhood House. The program aimed to help private property owners begin the re-establishment of their gardens by providing advice and information, as well as hands-on assistance in some circumstances. Working bees and gardening related courses were conducted. The most popular courses were around post fire care, fruit tree maintenance and grafting, native plant propagation, and a trip to the Royal Tasmanian

Botanical Gardens and Spring Garden Design course. A number of other courses were scheduled across the summer months, a full year after the fires.

Assistance was also provided to primary producers dealing with environmental issues, either caused or worsened by the fires, which was delivered by NRM South as part of the Winter Package. Funds were allocated to re-establish pasture and shelter belts, repair internal fencing and protect remnant native vegetation. This built on an earlier initiative led by NRM South which used Australian Government funding.

Assistance was also provided to community and Landcare groups to conduct a variety of activities including weed mapping, field days and weed eradication. Finally, in recognition that private landowners may also be confronted with significant weed problems in future seasons, and that dealing with new fire related weed infestations may be problematic, an amount of funding was reserved for expenditure on weed control for the second spring following the fires (2014). This allocation will be managed by DPIPWE in collaboration with relevant partners, including councils. The project will require careful planning to ensure that it has some impact beyond the immediate term.

Vegetation clearance

In the weeks and months following the fires, there was a high level of concern about vegetation clearance on public and private land. The generous support of neighbouring councils in providing loans of roadside trimmers and undertaking green waste removals was greatly appreciated in the Sorell and Tasman municipalities. However, communities felt that more support could be provided by local government and other groups to inspect and remove unsafe burnt trees on public land. Conversely, many in the community felt that more measures could be taken to ensure that trees that would rejuvenate with time were identified so they could be left alone.

This was an issue raised consistently by residents and landowners throughout the duration of the recovery. As it can be expected that a similar level of damage may occur in other municipal areas in the future, it is likely that a similar response will be experienced. Accordingly, there may be merit in developing a bushfire response policy and strategy for vegetation clearance, particularly for public areas. A clear policy position may then be disseminated to local residents, particularly in cases where there is concern regarding the legitimacy of clearing that is taking place., This would act to reduce community concern that too much/not enough/the wrong type of vegetation is being cleared in the aftermath of a fire.

Managing volunteers

As is common in post-disaster situations, it is challenging to manage volunteer expectations and motivation in the period immediately following the fires.. This was particularly so in the area of environmental recovery where voluntary effort is characteristically high. On one hand, BlazeAid is an example of a highly successful initiative concerning volunteer coordination and registration. However some environmental projects had an initial groundswell of support, followed by difficulties in retaining long-term motivation of volunteers. This was at least in part due to complications that delayed the initiation of some environmental recovery projects. Provision of timelines of need for specific projects may assist with this process. Volunteering Tasmania was able to provide some support for volunteer coordination and is committed to fulfilling this role in future disaster recovery situations.

Appendices

- Appendix 12 – Red Cross Appeal Distribution Committee Terms of Reference

- Appendix 13 – Monetary assistance fact sheet samples
- Appendix 14 – Donated Goods flowchart and summary of needs
- Appendix 15 – Community Assistance Grant example documents:
  - Development Process (flowchart)
  - Final Round Fact Sheet
  - Final Round Flier
  - Final Round Expression of Interest form
  - Final Round Feedback form
  - Analysis of feedback from the Final Round which was made publicly available and formed the basis of advice to Appeal Distribution Committee
- Appendix 16 – Winter Assistance Package Fact Sheet

Additional resources

-
-

- Government of South Australia, 2011 *National Guidelines for Managing Donated Goods*

  www.dcsi.sa.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0004/1894/national-guidelines-for-managing-donated-goods.pdf

3. Review and winding down

3.1. Capturing the lessons

Key points:

- *Important learnings should be captured to aid future recoveries, including:*
  - *what worked well*
  - *what could be done differently*
- *Feedback for review purposes is best gathered verbally, through interviews, workshops or telephone surveys*

Learnings from the 2013 Tasmanian bushfire recovery were captured through the Taskforce's comprehensive review, which included community and stakeholder surveys, interviews, and workshops conducted during November and December.

The aim of the review was to better understand which processes worked well and which things could have been done differently in order to respond to future emergencies in the best possible way.

Community feedback was sought using paper surveys that were widely advertised using social media, local papers, SMS telephone alerts, and word of mouth. These were distributed to all households via an insert in *Recovery News,* and placed at local community centres, including hubs, shops and service stations. This survey was also available online on Survey Monkey. Despite the wide distribution, the response rate to this traditional style of survey was relatively low.

At the same time, a telephone survey of the same content was implemented using the services of an external provider, EMRS, to ensure that views were captured from a representative sample of the community. Almost everyone who was contacted was happy to participate and more than 300 people contributed their views (or five per cent of the population of the fire-affected areas). This suggests that people were not inclined to fill out a form but were happy to be interviewed and talk about their experience.

Similarly, in the stakeholder survey, few responses were collected electronically, but stakeholders responded well to interviews and workshops.

Much of the feedback from the review is captured in the publication *Transition to Long-Term Recovery*, with the intention that the learnings will aid future recovery efforts. Appendix 17 contains the Bushfire Recovery Review Fact Sheet, survey instruments used for the review and the coverage map used to draw the representative sample of community views.

Appendices

- Appendix 17 – Bushfire Recovery Review sample of documentation

Additional resources

- Bushfire Recovery Taskforce, 2014. *Transition to Long-Term Recovery* – Appendix Three: Community Survey feedback form and survey results, Bushfire Recovery Taskforce.

3.2. Planning for closure

Key points:

- *Transitioning to long-term recovery should commence in very early stages*
- *Strengthening community capacity will assist governments with the smooth handover of long-term responsibilities*
- *Clear communication is important for implementing transitional arrangements and providing continued support to communities*

The planning process for the transition from a full-scale recovery operation back to the usual level of government involvement in a community needs to commence very early in the recovery journey. This allows roles and functions to return to normal as quickly as possible without leaving the community feeling abandoned or creating expectations of ongoing government services that cannot be maintained. Systems and processes implemented to facilitate recovery require flexibility to adapt to evolving circumstances, and should be implemented in a way that helps affected communities to build capacity to manage their own longer-term recovery, rather than creating dependencies on new and temporary arrangements.

Governance structures

Clear terms of reference enable governance bodies (such as committees and taskforces) to determine whether they have fulfilled their designated function and are able to disband. In the case of AARCs, the longer-term commitment to community recovery may mean that these committees operate beyond the period of formal state government recovery work, acting as a conduit between the community, local and state government, as well as overseeing community projects and activities.

State Government involvement

The timing of a phase-out of government involvement in disaster recovery will vary depending on the circumstances. Many of the recovery activities connected with the 2013 fires were implemented as programs or projects, meaning that they had defined budgets, deliverables and timeframes. As these drew to a close, the personnel required to deliver them returned to their normal duties and the recovery team gradually reduced in line with the requirements of remaining programs.

The majority of work was concluded around 12 months after the fires. This coincided with a tangible upswing in the mood of the community, particularly with those areas hardest hit. These factors gave the Taskforce confidence that a phased withdrawal was appropriate and carried a low risk of adverse outcomes.

The Tasmanian Government committed to the provision of social and personal support services up to 18 months following the emergency. Psychosocial support is recognised throughout disaster affected areas as being necessary for a considerable period (often several years) following a major community trauma. For the Sorell/Tasman area, a structured transition to alternative service providers,

implemented over several months, has ensured that people using or needing these services are still able to easily access them.

Government and a range of Tasmanian health organisations, have specific responsibilities for ensuring appropriate service delivery in the area of psychosocial recovery. Individual provider organisations such as the St Vincent de Paul Society and the Salvation Army play an important role in supporting this activity, particularly at the local level. There may also be a role for smaller scale, locally-based churches or other community organisations. This should be considered when planning the transition of social and personal support.

Communication

Communication is a key consideration in implementing transition arrangements. As mentioned in earlier sections, communication with disaster-affected areas needs to be done on a number of levels, using a range of media, and this principle is no less important as service delivery reduces. Raising awareness of timelines and transition arrangements with staff in the recovery team, as well as service providers, is an important first step as they will have input into the implementation of wrap-up arrangements and will be able to communicate intentions to the community more broadly.

A further consideration is to ensure web site content remains up to date well beyond the closure of regional facilities. In addition, the material developed for the recovery that may be useful for adaptation for future recoveries, along with the learnings, should be appropriately managed as the web presence is decommissioned.

4. Appendices

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NATIONAL PRINCIPLES FOR DISASTER RECOVERY

DISASTER RECOVERY is part of emergency management, which includes the broader components of prevention, preparedness and response. Planning for recovery is integral to emergency preparation and mitigation actions may often be initiated as part of recovery.

DISASTER RECOVERY includes physical, environmental and economic elements, as well as psychosocial wellbeing. Recovery can provide an opportunity to improve these aspects beyond previous conditions, by enhancing social and natural environments, infrastructure and economies – contributing to a more resilient community.

SUCCESSFUL RECOVERY RELIES ON:

- **understanding the *context:***

Successful recovery is based on an understanding of the community context.

- **recognising *complexity:***

Successful recovery acknowledges the complex and dynamic nature of emergencies and communities.

- **using *community*-led approaches:**

Successful recovery is responsive and flexible, engaging communities and empowering them to move forward.

- **ensuring *coordination* of all activities:**

Successful recovery requires a planned, coordinated and adaptive approach based on continuing assessment of impacts and needs.

- **employing effective *communication:***

Successful recovery is built on effective communication with affected communities and other stakeholders.

- **acknowledging and building *capacity:***

Successful recovery recognises, supports and builds on community, individual and organisational capacity.

NATIONAL PRINCIPLES FOR

DISASTER RECOVERY

Disaster recovery is part of emergency management, which includes the broader components of prevention, preparedness and response. Planning for recovery is integral to emergency preparation and mitigation actions may often be initiated as part of recovery.

Disaster recovery includes physical, environmental and economic elements, as well as psychosocial wellbeing.

Recovery can provide an opportunity to improve these aspects beyond previous conditions, by enhancing social and natural environments, infrastructure and economies – contributing to a more resilient community.

The relationship between the principles.
Whilst all are equally part of ensuring effective recovery, the understanding of the context and the recognition of complexity are seen as foundation factors. The paragraphs overleaf describe all six principles in more detail.

SUCCESSFUL RECOVERY RELIES ON:

- understanding the *context.*
- recognising *complexity.*
- using *community*-led approaches.
- ensuring *coordination* of all activities.
- employing effective *communication.*
- acknowledging and building *capacity.*

Community and Disability Services Ministers' Advisory Council

PARTNERS IN DEVELOPMENT

Australian Government
Department of Education, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs
Australian Government
Attorney-General's Department
Emergency Management Australia
DoCS
Northern Territory Government
Queensland Government
Department of Communities
Government of South Australia
Tasmania
Department of Human Services
Government of Western Australia
Australian Red Cross

NATIONAL PRINCIPLES FOR

DISASTER RECOVERY

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UNDERSTANDING THE CONTEXT

Successful recovery is based on an understanding of the community context. Recovery should:

- appreciate the risks faced by communities;
- acknowledge existing strengths and capacity, including past experiences;
- be culturally sensitive and free from discrimination;
- recognise and respect differences; and
- support those who may be more vulnerable; such as people with disabilities, the elderly, children and those directly affected.

RECOGNISING COMPLEXITY

Successful recovery acknowledges the complex and dynamic nature of emergencies and communities. Recovery should recognise that:

- information on impacts is limited at first and changes over time;
- affected individuals and communities have diverse needs, wants and expectations, which are immediate and evolve rapidly;
- quick action to address immediate needs is both crucial and expected;
- disasters lead to a range of effects and impacts that require a variety of approaches; they can also leave long-term legacies;
- conflicting knowledge, values and priorities among individuals, communities and organisations may create tensions;
- emergencies create stressful environments where grief or blame may also affect those involved;
- the achievement of recovery is often long and challenging and
- existing community knowledge and values may challenge the assumptions of those outside the community.

USING COMMUNITY-LED APPROACHES

Successful recovery is responsive and flexible, engaging communities and empowering them to move forward. Recovery should:

- centre on the community, to enable those affected by a disaster to actively participate in their own recovery;
- seek to address the needs of all affected communities;
- allow individuals, families and communities to manage their own recovery;
- consider the values, culture and priorities of all affected communities;
- use and develop community knowledge, leadership and resilience;
- recognise that communities may choose different paths to recovery;
- ensure that the specific and changing needs of affected communities are met with flexible and adaptable policies, plans, and services; and
- build strong partnerships between communities and those involved in the recovery process.

ENSURING COORDINATION OF ALL ACTIVITIES

Successful recovery requires a planned, coordinated and adaptive approach based on continuing assessment of impacts and needs. Recovery should:

- be guided by those with experience and expertise, using skilled and trusted leadership;
- reflect well-developed planning and information gathering;
- demonstrate an understanding of the roles, responsibilities and authority of other organisations and coordinate across agencies to ensure minimal service disruption;
- be part of an emergency management approach that integrates with response and contributes to future prevention and preparedness;
- be inclusive, using relationships created before and after the emergency;
- have clearly articulated and shared goals based on desired outcomes;
- have clear decision-making and reporting structures;
- be flexible, take into account changes in community needs or stakeholder expectations;
- incorporate the planned introduction to and transition from recovery-specific actions and services; and
- focus on all dimensions; seeking to collaborate and reconcile different interests and time frames.

EMPLOYING EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

Successful recovery is built on effective communication with affected communities and other stakeholders. Recovery should:

- ensure that all communication is relevant, timely, clear, accurate, targeted, credible and consistent;
- recognise that communication with a community should be two-way, and that input and feedback should be sought and considered over an extended time;
- ensure that information is accessible to audiences in diverse situations, addresses a variety of communication needs, and is provided through a range of media and channels;
- establish mechanisms for coordinated and consistent communication with all organisations and individuals; and
- repeat key recovery messages because information is more likely to reach community members when they are receptive.

ACKNOWLEDGING AND BUILDING CAPACITY

Successful recovery recognises, supports and builds on community, individual and organisational capacity. Recovery should:

- assess gaps between existing and required capability and capacity;
- support the development of self-reliance;
- quickly identify and mobilise community skills and resources;
- acknowledge that existing resources will be stretched, and that additional resources may be required;
- recognise that resources can be provided by a range of stakeholders;
- understand that additional resources may only be available for a limited period, and that sustainability may need to be addressed;
- provide opportunities to share, transfer and develop knowledge, skills and training;
- understand when and how to disengage; and
- develop networks and partnerships to strengthen capacity.

SECTION 3
EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS
3.4 RECOVERY
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3.4 Recovery

Principle

3.4.1 Effective recovery involves whole-of-government with its recovery partners in planned and coordinated activities for social, economic, infrastructure and the environmental elements applying the national principles for disaster recovery (Detailed in Appendix 5.12).

Legal Requirements

3.4.2 The general legislative requirements relevant to recovery in Tasmania are outlined here and incorporated in the arrangements described later in this section. A summary of other legislation that is relevant to Tasmanian emergency management is provided in Appendix 5.3.

3.4.3 The Act outlines emergency powers (Schedule 1) and special emergency powers (Schedule 2) for authorised officers (Section 31).

3.4.4 The SEMC (Section 9) and the State Controller (Section 11) can request debrief reports for the benefit of emergency management.

3.4.5 Section 46 requires councils to use their resources and make them available for managing emergencies in their municipal area, in accordance with the municipal plan (this includes recovery).

Current Tasmanian Arrangements

Overview

3.4.6 Recovery is an integral part of emergency management. It occurs through effective communications with emergency affected communities and can provide an opportunity to improve these aspects beyond previous conditions, contributing to a more resilient community (ie restoration of facilities and services may not be the most valuable course of action).

3.4.7 Recovery is usually managed initially in close collaboration with emergency response efforts and then, if needed, transitions into a longer term effort that is community-centred, enabling the community to actively participate in their own recovery. This can take time, and may even occur over a number of years. It is also acknowledged that full recovery does not always occur.

3.4.8 Recovery requires a holistic approach that includes consideration of the following elements:

a. Social.
b. The economy.
c. Infrastructure (including the restoration/resupply of goods, services, and conditions).
d. The environment.

3.4.9 In Tasmania, recovery services are provided through partnerships between local, State and Australian Governments and Non-Government Organisations, and generally include the following activities:

a. Management of recovery at the municipal level with the affected community/s.
b. Ongoing assessments of consequences affecting the community.
c. Maintenance of transparent and flexible relief assistance packages.

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3.4.10 Tasmania also supports recovery of other communities by maintaining broad arrangements to complement activation of COMRECEPLAN by the Commonwealth.

3.4.11 Councils are responsible for maintaining recovery arrangements, including appointing workers to coordinate recovery activities. Often the workers holding community/economic development roles are appointed as Municipal Recovery Coordinators and Deputies. The Municipal Recovery Coordinator usually chairs the Municipal Recovery Committee (which is a subcommittee of the Municipal Emergency Management Committee). These roles provide a conduit between emergency affected people and State Government agencies for recovery support, usually in collaboration with Regional Emergency Management Committees and subcommittees. Where a council worker is not nominated for recovery coordination, the Municipal Emergency Management Coordinator is the initial point of contact for recovery matters.

3.4.12 Regional Social Recovery Coordinators chair the Social Recovery Working Group of the respective Regional Emergency Management Committee. The Regional Social Recovery Coordinators work closely with the Regional Managers of the State Emergency Service and the Municipal Recovery Coordinators.

3.4.13 The typical considerations in recovery include, but are not limited to:

a. Assessing recovery needs across the four elements and prioritising the actions required.
b. Developing, implementing and monitoring the provision of recovery activities that are aligned as much as possible with municipal long-term planning and goals.
c. Enabling communication with the community and community participation in decision making.
d. Where possible, contributing to future mitigation requirements or improvements to planning requirements (eg through debrief processes).

Immediate Recovery

3.4.14 In the immediate aftermath of an emergency, recovery is mostly focused on supporting affected persons to deal with the immediate consequences of the event, and in particular to meet basic personal needs (eg food, water, shelter).

3.4.15 Councils undertake the primary role in providing recovery services in the immediate aftermath of an emergency, and can be supported by a number of State Government agencies and Non-Government Organisations, depending on their capacity and the presence of support services in the area. Council assistance is usually provided in any of three main ways:

a. Councils provide the assistance that is required.
b. Councils coordinate and prioritise the provision of the assistance that is required from external parties.
c. Councils request that the Regional Social Recovery Coordinator coordinates provision of the assistance for social recovery.

Requests for government agency/s assistance are made by Council to the Regional Controller or their delegate.

3.4.16 Social recovery assistance is delivered, wherever possible, from recovery centres and councils may establish a community-based recovery group to coordinate these recovery activities (usually chaired by the Municipal Recovery Coordinator). The TEIS can also be activated to support the provision of information to affected communities, especially where they are spread over substantial geographic areas or in isolated situations. See paragraph 3.3.50 for more information.

3.4.17 Rapid impact and damage assessments that were initially coordinated by the response Management Authority provide indicators of the impact on the community and can assist to prioritise recovery activities. Ongoing assessments are carried out as required by councils/the community-based recovery group, and these assessments inform the need to consider an appropriate governance structure that will assist councils in the longer term recovery process.

Longer Term Recovery

3.4.18 Longer term recovery focuses on assisting the community to manage its own recovery through a coordinated and planned process that draws together the relevant recovery partners to address the needs created by the emergency, governed by an Affected Area Recovery Committee.

3.4.19 Affected Area Recovery Committees can be established through the functions and powers provided in the *Emergency Management Act 2006* at State/regional level (Section 9, 11/18). The decision to establish an Affected Area Recovery Committee can result from advice/requests from:

a. The SEMC members.
b. Regional Controller.

3.4.20 Affected Area Recovery Committees operate under the protection of the Act when the Regional/State Controller accepts the Terms of Reference developed by the committee. Guidance for this is provided in Appendix 5.4 and a model Terms of Reference for Affected Area Recovery Committees is available at www.ses.tas.gov.au.

3.4.21 The Affected Area Recovery Committee's role is to coordinate recovery activities through information sharing and collective decision making. The typical membership of this committee is outlined in Appendix 5.4 and it is usually chaired by the Mayor of the affected council.

3.4.22 A priority focus of the Affected Area Recovery Committee is to identify appropriate processes and structures to fully engage the community during the recovery process.

3.4.23 The committee is responsible for arranging and monitoring a communications program for the duration of the recovery program. It can include, but is not limited to:

a. Forums/information sessions for the community.
b. Debriefs for recovery workers.
c. Progress reports for council, the community, the SEMC, and any other agency/organisation as agreed. As appropriate this includes progressive summaries/analysis of records (financial and information).

3.4.24 The DPAC can coordinate State Government recovery efforts to assist Affected Area Recovery Committees.

Elements of Recovery

Social Recovery

3.4.25 Social recovery focuses on assisting the community manage its own recovery, rebuilding emotional, social and physical wellbeing through a coordinated and planned process that can also include other recovery partners.

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3.4.26 Councils deliver or coordinate a range of services to meet the emotional, social and physical wellbeing needs of emergency affected people within the municipality, under the guidance of the Municipal Recovery Coordinator. The DHHS, through the Regional Social Recovery Coordinators support councils' arrangements and can coordinate additional services from within the region or from within the State.

3.4.27 The DHHS either delivers directly, or has arrangements in place to coordinate, a range of services to support the emotional, social and physical wellbeing of emergency affected people. Regional Social Recovery Coordinators are appointed, and through the Regional Social Recovery Committees, a state of preparedness is maintained for the recovery function with specific plans, training and exercises. Typical services provided and the relevant Support Agencies are noted in Section 2 of this plan (Table 5).

3.4.28 The Tasmanian Relief and Recovery Arrangements include a Personal Hardship and Distress package that can provide individuals and families with financial assistance following an emergency, in line with established criteria and guidelines. See Appendix 5.8 for more details.

Infrastructure Recovery

3.4.29 The need for coordinated infrastructure recovery efforts (including the restoration/resupply of goods, services, and conditions) varies with each emergency. This includes, but is not limited to:

a. Water quality (especially the supply of potable/drinking quality water).
b. Waste and storm water systems.
c. Other infrastructure that supports environmental and public health.
d. Electricity, liquid fuels and natural gas.
e. Telecommunications.
f. Transport networks (repairs to roads, bridges, rail, air and sea ports).
g. Public/Government owned and operated facilities (eg schools, health care).
h. Point of sales for food and water for households and livestock.
i. Postal, banking, medical.
j. Garbage disposal.
k. Public transport.
l. Community radio and television.
m. Management of demolition and clean-up processes.
n. provision of temporary replacement services so that environmental health and workplace standards can be maintained.

3.4.30 Environmental health conditions are an important component of community recovery as they address health issues that can arise as the consequence of an emergency (eg disease, acute illness and infections) from any number of sources including, but not limited to:

a. Failure of waste water infrastructure.
b. Contamination of drinking water.
c. Polluted waterways.
d. Waste that can rot.
e. Loss of power affecting the capacity to store food safely.
f. Noxious fumes/radiation issues from leaks/spills.
g. Deceased stock and other vermin (eg small animals/other pests).

3.4.31 Environmental health considerations have particular consequences for populations with existing vulnerabilities, or those who develop vulnerability due to the emergency.

3.4.32 The DHHS and local councils are responsible for overseeing and monitoring environmental health standards.

Economic Recovery

3.4.33 Arrangements for economic recovery are coordinated by the DEDTA as required. The DPIPWE administers compensation arrangements that may be applicable in some bio-security emergencies subject to established criteria and guidelines. These activities are supported by the DPAC and the DoTF.

3.4.34 These activities are usually undertaken in consultation with affected councils, businesses, industry groups and other relevant stakeholders and can include:

a. Provision of information to the business sector.
b. Development and implementation of an economic recovery strategy.
c. Delivery of relevant relief packages activated as part of the Tasmanian Relief and Recovery Arrangements.

3.4.35 The Tasmanian Relief and Recovery Arrangements include Local Government and Emergency Works and Community Recovery Assistance packages. See Appendix 5.8 for more information.

Environmental Recovery

3.4.36 As required, arrangements for environmental rehabilitation are coordinated by the DPIPWE, in consultation with owners/managers of relevant property/premises, affected council/s and the community. This includes, but is not limited to consideration of:

a. Flora.
b. Fauna.
c. Air/water/soil conditions.
d. Aboriginal heritage sites.

Other Assistance and Mechanisms

3.4.37 There is a range of financial relief and assistance mechanisms that can support recovery following an emergency, including:

a. Private insurance arrangements and Insurance Council of Australia's response arrangements.
b. Guided self-help.
c. Australian Government assistance.

Insurance

3.4.38 Individuals and businesses arrange private insurance on a risk basis. Maintaining appropriate private insurance is encouraged.

3.4.39 Insurance Council of Australia maintains a set of arrangements to coordinate insurance related information following a significant emergency to:

a. Increase the effectiveness of insurers' efforts for their clients.
b. Improve and simplify liaison with jurisdictional emergency management systems.

SECTION 3
EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS
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3.4.40 In the preparedness phase the Insurance Council of Australia's work is mostly achieved through the membership on State subcommittees. In the response phase, the plan is largely triggered by monitoring the number of claims made by clients. For State emergency management purposes, the Insurance Council of Australia provides valuable early advice of likely costs incurred by emergency events for the Tasmanian Government.

Guided Self-Help

3.4.41 As noted in the response section, information services to promote self-help and recovery can be supplemented by activation of the Tasmanian Emergency Information Service (Refer to paragraph 3.3.50).

Australian Government Assistance

3.4.42 While the primary responsibility for community recovery rests with state and territory governments, the Commonwealth Government, working within the parameters of the Australian Government Disaster Recovery Arrangements, administered by the Australian Government Disaster Recovery Committee, supports the states and territories through tailored assistance, appropriate to the circumstances. Based on advice from the Tasmanian Premier, the Prime Minister may activate Commonwealth arrangements and develop an assistance package (with communication and/or financial elements).

3.4.43 The Minister for Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs, in consultation with the Prime Minister, has the authority to activate the Australian Government Disaster Recovery Payment when considered appropriate. This payment provides one-off financial assistance to Australians adversely affected by a major disaster (currently $1 000 to an eligible adult, and an additional amount for each child for whom the adult is the principal carer). These payments are usually arranged by Centrelink and details of the payment's availability (or otherwise) will be advertised on www.disasterassist.gov.au. Factors relevant to the consideration are the:

a. Scale of the emergency.
b. Impact on individuals.
c. Extent to which the emergency is unusual.
d. Capacity of the State/Territory to respond.

3.4.44 The Commonwealth Government also administers a system of financial assistance to states and territories for natural disasters, known as the Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements, which are usually triggered once a state's expenditure on natural disasters exceeds established thresholds. Tasmania's Relief and Recovery Arrangements are aligned with these thresholds. Council community recovery arrangements provide the conduit for this assistance to be delivered with a State Government partnership. The Department of Treasury and Finance is responsible for collating eligible costs for emergency events and submitting claims to the Attorney-General's Department.

3.4.45 Where agencies incur extraordinary expenditure during recovery efforts, established State arrangements for the Requests for Additional Funds process are used to seek supplementary assistance.

SECTION 3
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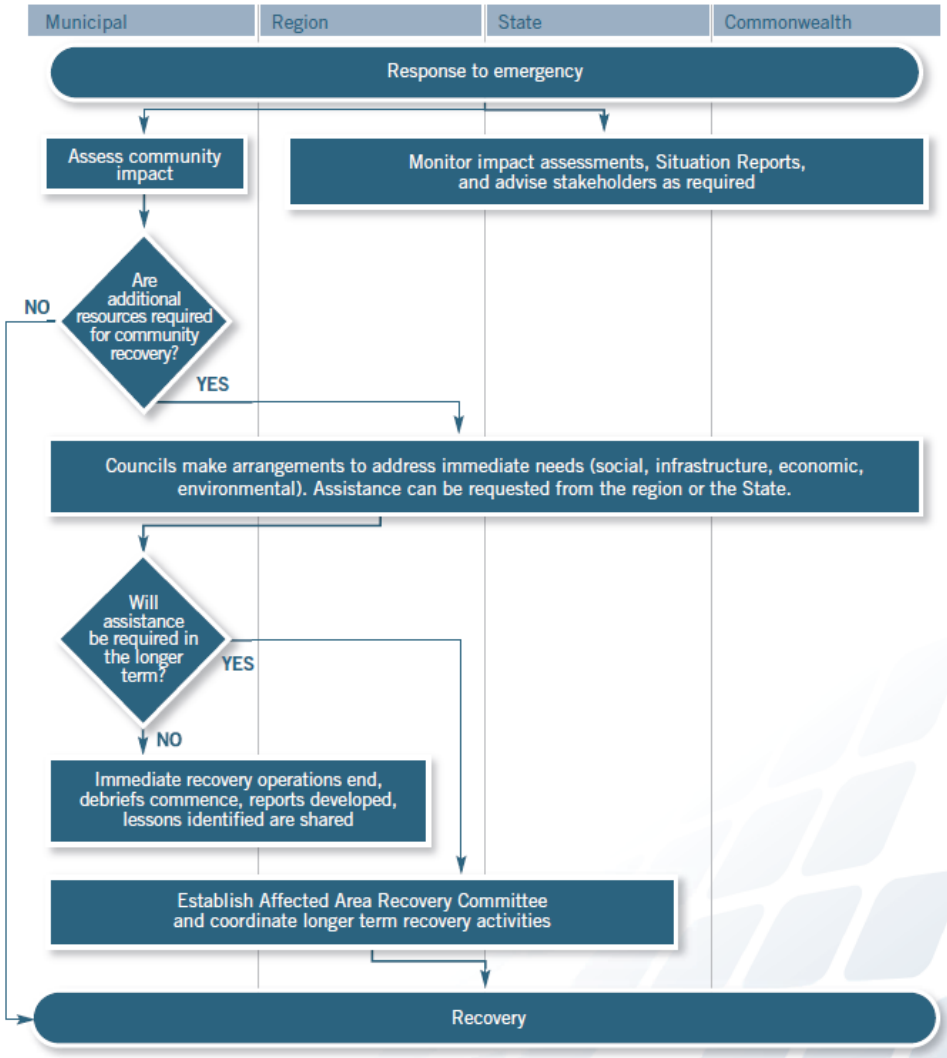
Summary

3.4.46 Figure 6 shows a summary of recovery processes for emergency management in Tasmania.

Figure 6: Summary Processes for Recovery for Tasmanian Emergency Management



Emergency Management

SORELL AND TASMAN

BUSHFIRE AFFECTED AREA RECOVERY COMMITTEE (STAARC)

Terms of Reference

Terms of Reference are aligned with arrangements described in the Tasmanian Emergency Management Plan Issue 6.

AARC for:	Sorell and Tasman Bushfires
Date and Status of these Terms:	Version 1.a 04 September 2013
Authority:	This committee is established under the authority of the *Emergency Management Act 2006* by the State Emergency Management Committee (Section 9(2)).
Enquiries:	Bushfire Recovery Unit, DPAC.
Review notes	These Terms of Reference will be reviewed on or by 04 February 2014.
General Standards & Practices	The Tasmanian Emergency Management Plan describes the framework for this committee and its usual practices are aligned with the guidelines maintained by the SES for emergency management committees (available from www.ses.tas.gov.au. The following points are specific to this group:
1. Background	This committee has been formed to plan and lead the long-term recovery from the consequences of the major bushfires that affected the Sorell and Tasman Municipal Areas in January 2013.
2. Purpose	To assist the communities of the Sorell and Tasman Municipal Areas to manage their own recovery following the major bushfires in January 2013. Specifically this includes: • Providing advice to the State Government, Sorell and Tasman Councils to ensure that recovery programs and services meet the needs of the communities impacted by the fires. • Overseeing the delivery of projects that support social, infrastructure, economic and environmental recovery to ensure that they are community-owned and targeted to best support the recovery of impacted communities; • Providing a central point of communication and coordination for the actions of the wide range of recovery-related services and projects being progressed outside of

the direct control of the Committee;

- Providing input into evaluations concerning the recovery process;
- Responding to recovery-related issues that arise in the community and ensuring that appropriate action is taken.

3. Functions

The work of this Affected Area Recovery Committee will include:

- Reviewing recovery-related services and programs and identifying gaps;
- Providing advice and recommendations to Governments and non-government organisations on priorities for investment to support the environmental, social, infrastructure and economic recovery of impacted communities;
- Maintaining arrangements to ensure that organisations involved in the recovery process can communicate with each other and align programs and projects for maximum benefit to the community;
- Where required, requesting individuals or organisations to oversee delivery of projects that support recovery;
- Providing advice to Governments and non-government organisations on actions required to address issues as they arise;
- Seeking input from members of the community on recovery needs and communicating with members of the community regarding recovery-related services and programs;

4. Reports to: Tasmanian Bushfire Recovery Taskforce

5. Membership

5.1 Determined by: State Controller under advice from the following organisations:

- Sorell Council
- Tasman Council
- Department of Premier and Cabinet
- Department of Health and Human Services
- State Emergency Service
- Southern Regional Emergency Management Controller

5.2 Chairperson: Kerry Vincent, Mayor, Sorell Council
Jan Barwick Mayor, Tasman Council

5.3 Executive Officer: Provided by Bushfire Recovery Unit, DPAC

5.4 Members Mayor, Sorell Council (co-chair)
Mayor, Tasman Council (co-chair)
Robert Higgins, General Manager, Tasman Council
Mathew Healy, Director – Bushfire Recovery Unit, DPAC

	Caroline Bignell, community representative Elizabeth Knox, community representative Fiona Jennings, community representative and Local and Regional Social and Personal Support Recovery Coordinator Geoff Martin, community representative Graham Millar, community representative Joanne Curran, community representative Roseanne Heyward, community representative Tony Ryan, Department of Economic Development, Tourism and the Arts John Harkin, BRU community recovery manager
5.5 Additional Members	As required, the Committee may seek as members representatives of other organisations required to support the recovery task.
5.6 Executive Committee	The Committee form an Executive Committee to manage the administrative functions of the Committee.
5.7 Working Groups	The Committee may form Working Groups as required. The Committee is to inform the Tasmania Bushfire Recovery Coordinator of any Working Groups that are formed. Working Group members are to consist of Committee members or their proxies. Working Groups of STAARC are to be chaired by a member of the Committee, unless otherwise agreed by the Committee. The Committee is to provide Working Groups with Terms of Reference.
5.8 Reference Groups	The Committee may form Reference Groups as required to assist with the participation of stakeholders in the development, planning and implementation of recovery activities. The Committee is to provide Reference Groups with Terms of Reference. Reference Group members may consist of stakeholder representatives and subject matter experts.
5.9 Proxies	Proxies are nominated for members and they assume the member's role if the member is unable to attend the meeting or is unable to perform his or her usual role for the committee.
5.10 Guests	The Committee may invite guests to attend Committee or Working Group meetings.

6. Roles and Responsibilities

6.1 Chairperson	It is expected that the Chairperson will: • chair meetings of the committee • coordinate the development and delivery of the meeting agendas, reports and advice, and work program,

including maintaining an accurate Terms of Reference;
- provide leadership and direction to the committee.

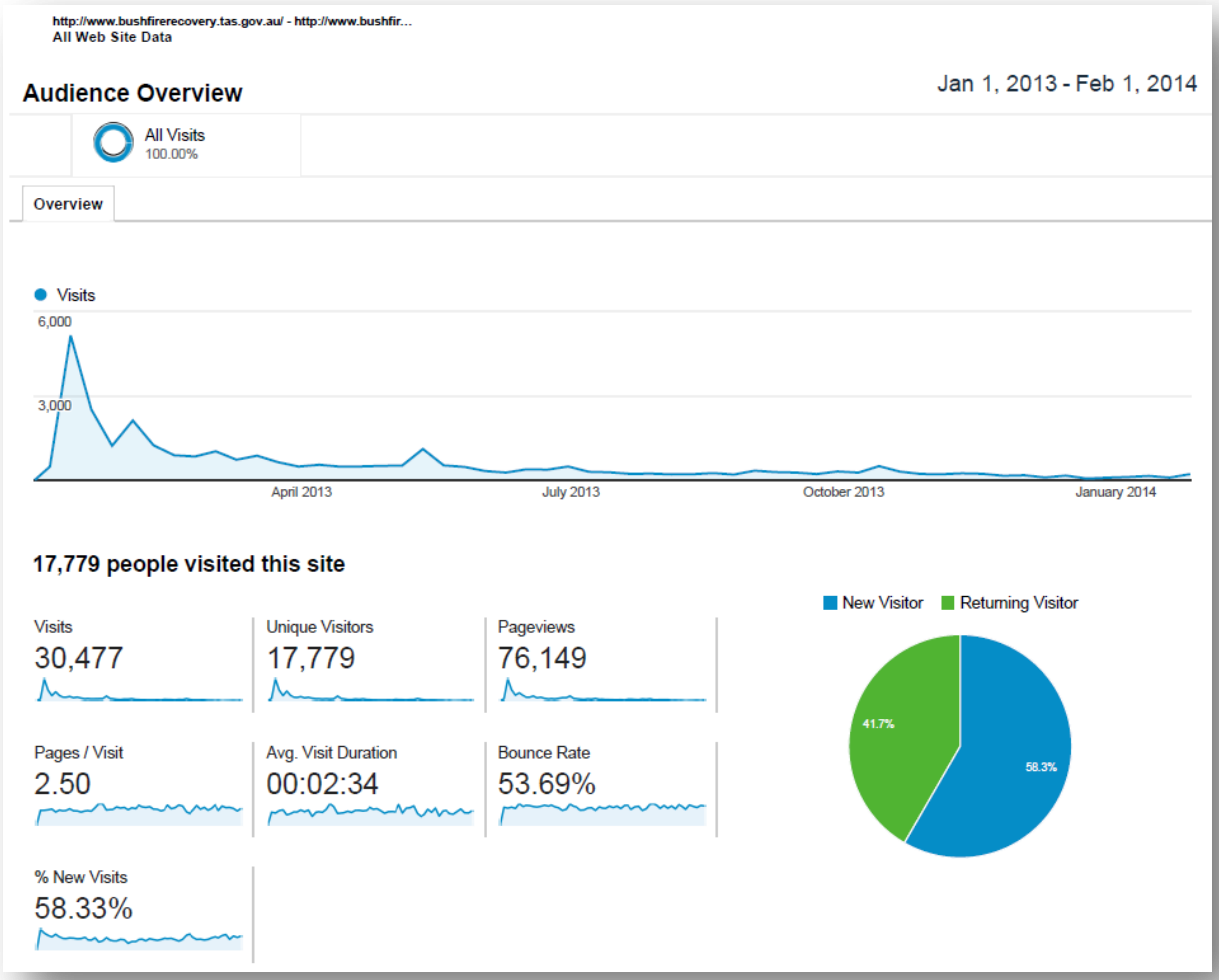
6.2 Executive Officer	It is expected that the Executive Officer will: • manage and coordinate the administration of meetings, and provide secretariat support (including the distribution of the Terms of Reference) • act as a primary point of contact and liaison for the committee members, stakeholders and proxies (if required) • arrange for reports to be provided as and when required.
6.3 Members	It is expected that members will: • attend and participate in each meeting using existing skill and knowledge sets, and available resources to support the affected communities' recovery • actively maintain communication and relationships to achieve the Committee's purpose, including liaising in a timely way with relevant stakeholders and proxies • contribute to setting the agenda for meetings, developing key reports, plans and these Terms of Reference • actively participate in setting and supporting the agreed recovery activities.
6.4 Proxies	It is expected that proxies will: • fulfil their member's obligations to the Committee • participate in working groups as directed by the Committee
6.5 Stakeholders/ Guests	Guests, including stakeholders, may address the Committee and contribute to Committee discussions. Guests may not participate in the decision-making of the Committee.

7. Practices and Protocols

7.1 Stakeholder Management	The Committee will undertake detailed stakeholder analysis and participation planning. Stakeholders to be considered should include, but not be limited to: • Communities and individuals within the affected areas • People affected by the bushfires external to the affected area, eg tourists • Councils • Local industry / businesses / environmental / community groups • Southern Region Emergency Management Committee • Southern Region Community Recovery Committee • Sorell Municipal Emergency Management Committee • Tasman Municipal Emergency Management Committee • Non Government Organisations, volunteer/charity groups
7.2 Terms of Reference	This Terms of Reference is the instrument of authorisation for the Affected Area Recovery Committee. It is accepted by the State Controller at the outset of the committee's work and will be reviewed at regular interviews while recovery activities are being

	supported no less than every 6 months. Material changes to the Terms of Reference are endorsed by the State Controller, as required. The Executive Officer is responsible for arranging distribution of the updated Terms of Reference (this includes sending a copy to the State Emergency Service).
7.3 Meeting frequency	The Committee will meet fortnightly. The Committee may alter this schedule according to need.
7.4 Standard Meeting Arrangements	The Committee will follow standard committee practices, keeping minutes and circulating agendas and meeting papers in a timely manner prior to scheduled meetings.
7.5 Decision Making and Quorum	A quorum is no fewer than 3 members including the Chairperson, the Executive Officer and one other member. Decisions of the Committee shall be arrived at by consensus. In the event that consensus cannot be found, the Chair will have the final say. Arrangements for out-of-session decisions should align with the following points : • The Committee can make resolutions without meeting in person as long as a quorum indicates they support the written resolution. • To indicate support, the paper containing the resolution must be signed by the quorum (hand or electronic signature). • Multiple copies of the same paper with individual signatures are considered to be one paper.
7.6 Reporting	The committee will report to the Tasmanian Bushfire Recovery Taskforce. This committee aims to provide a written report that includes outcomes achieved, and will note any emerging issues/future directions. Other reports will be made as required to other stakeholders and the affected communities.

The following charts show the visitor numbers to the Tasmanian Bushfire Recovery web site www.bushfirerecovery.tas.gov.au between January 2013 and January 2014.



Click on the image below to access this edition of *Recovery News*.

Additional copies can be found at www.bushfirerecovery.tas.gov.au/news_room/recovery_newsletter.

SORELL/TASMAN

Recovery News

Edition 12: 29 July 2013

TASMANIAN BUSHFIRE RECOVERY

Welcome to Recovery News. This newsletter will provide those affected by the January bushfires with practical information and advice. There will be future editions providing updates as required.

Rebuilding and Revitalising

Mother Nature recently provided a gorgeous backdrop to the rebuilding job in Dunalley.

Xanath and Trevor Newbold's new home is taking shape – and one of their builders took this photo which we thought we'd share with you all as an example of the beauty of our local environment.

Photo by: Kyle Cooper

Community Kitchen planned for school gym

More than $200,000 of funds and in-kind support have been secured by the Dunalley School Association to build and fit-out a Community Kitchen, planned for inclusion in an extended school gym.

Elizabeth Knox, Chair of the Dunalley School Association, said the project will not only enhance the experiences of the students within the school but also provide the whole community with access to a modern commercial kitchen – particularly until the Community Hall is rebuilt (which may be some time away).

The funds raised to date include a $100,000-plus donation from a US philanthropic organisation, Give2Asia (backed by the Caterpillar Foundation).

"Schools are the beating hearts of regional communities," Elizabeth said. "That was one of the most important lessons we learned when our school was burned to the ground by the bushfires – and it was the basis of the decision to permanently rebuild the school on its current site.

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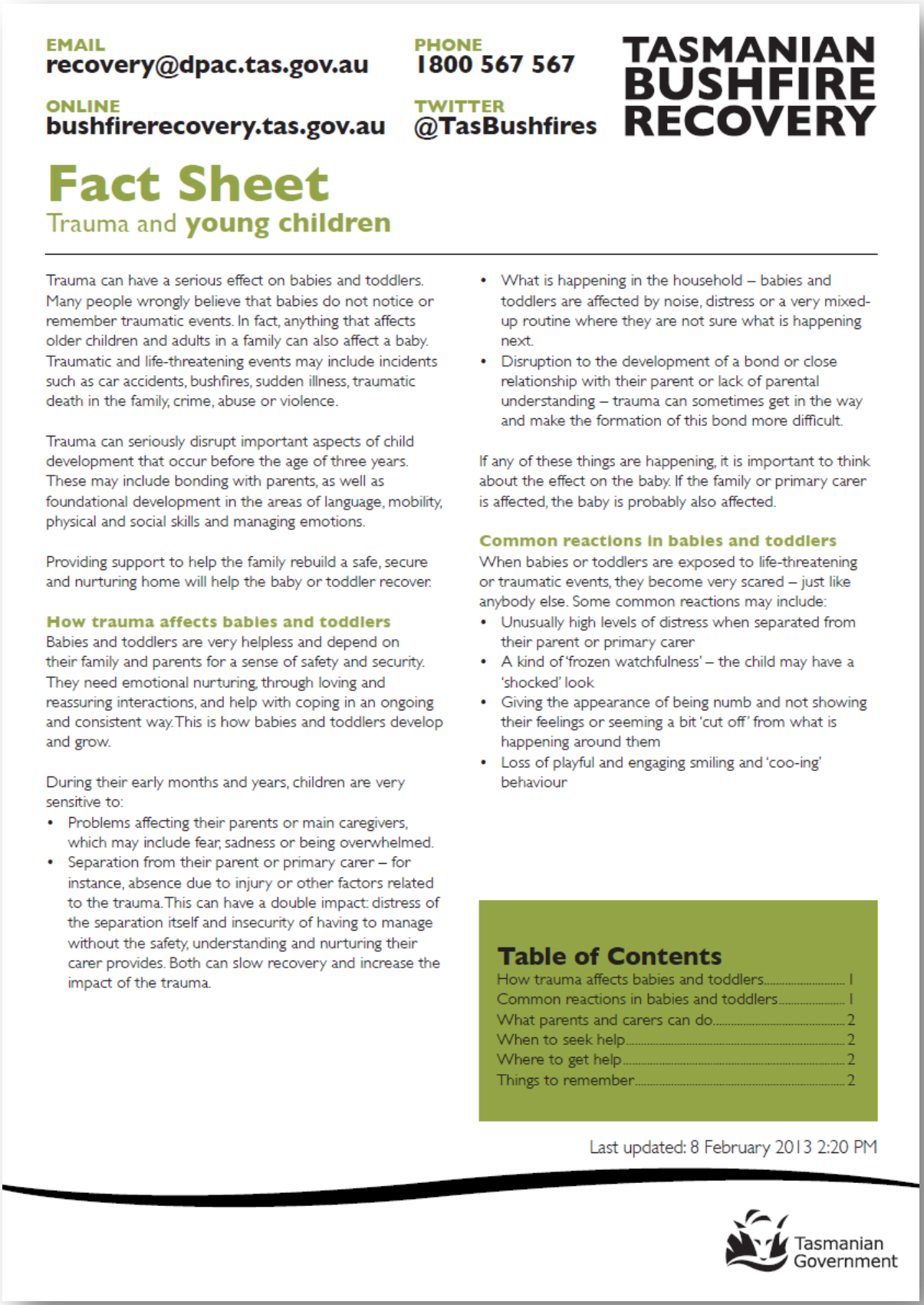
Tasmanian Government

Below is an example of a fact sheet used throughout the recovery. The full suite of fact sheets can be found at www.bushfirerecovery.tas.gov.au/download_resources.



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TASMANIAN BUSHFIRE RECOVERY

Fact Sheet

Trauma and young children

Trauma can have a serious effect on babies and toddlers. Many people wrongly believe that babies do not notice or remember traumatic events. In fact, anything that affects older children and adults in a family can also affect a baby. Traumatic and life-threatening events may include incidents such as car accidents, bushfires, sudden illness, traumatic death in the family, crime, abuse or violence.

Trauma can seriously disrupt important aspects of child development that occur before the age of three years. These may include bonding with parents, as well as foundational development in the areas of language, mobility, physical and social skills and managing emotions.

Providing support to help the family rebuild a safe, secure and nurturing home will help the baby or toddler recover.

How trauma affects babies and toddlers

Babies and toddlers are very helpless and depend on their family and parents for a sense of safety and security. They need emotional nurturing, through loving and reassuring interactions, and help with coping in an ongoing and consistent way. This is how babies and toddlers develop and grow.

During their early months and years, children are very sensitive to:

- Problems affecting their parents or main caregivers, which may include fear, sadness or being overwhelmed.
- Separation from their parent or primary carer – for instance, absence due to injury or other factors related to the trauma. This can have a double impact: distress of the separation itself and insecurity of having to manage without the safety, understanding and nurturing their carer provides. Both can slow recovery and increase the impact of the trauma.
- What is happening in the household – babies and toddlers are affected by noise, distress or a very mixed-up routine where they are not sure what is happening next.
- Disruption to the development of a bond or close relationship with their parent or lack of parental understanding – trauma can sometimes get in the way and make the formation of this bond more difficult.

If any of these things are happening, it is important to think about the effect on the baby. If the family or primary carer is affected, the baby is probably also affected.

Common reactions in babies and toddlers

When babies or toddlers are exposed to life-threatening or traumatic events, they become very scared – just like anybody else. Some common reactions may include:

- Unusually high levels of distress when separated from their parent or primary carer
- A kind of 'frozen watchfulness' – the child may have a 'shocked' look
- Giving the appearance of being numb and not showing their feelings or seeming a bit 'cut off' from what is happening around them
- Loss of playful and engaging smiling and 'coo-ing' behaviour

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Tasmanian Government

- Loss of eating skills
- Avoiding eye contact
- Being more unsettled and much more difficult to soothe
- Slipping back in their physical skills such as sitting, crawling or walking and appearing clumsier.

What parents and carers can do

Structure, predictability and nurturing are key to helping a baby or toddler who has been traumatised. There are a number of things parents and carers can do to help their baby or toddler cope with and recover from trauma:

- Seek, accept and increase any support you need to help you manage your own shock and emotional response.
- Get information and advice on how the baby or toddler is going.
- Learn to recognise and manage the child's signs of stress and understand cues for what is going on for them.
- Reduce the intensity and length of the initial stress reaction by helping the child settle and to feel safe and cared for as quickly as possible.
- Maintain the child's routines around being held, sleeping and feeding.
- Offer a calm atmosphere and soothing activities.
- Avoid any unnecessary separations from important caregivers.
- Avoid exposing the child to reminders of the trauma, where possible.
- Expect that the child may temporarily regress (go backwards) in their behaviour or become 'clingy' and dependent. Don't panic if this occurs – it is one of the child's ways of trying to cope with what they have been through.
- Take time out to recharge yourself.

When to seek help

The first and second year of a child's life has lots of ups and downs. Development may slow down for a while and then move forward again. It can sometimes be difficult to work out if this is just one of those times or whether something more serious is happening.

It may help to seek professional advice if:

- The baby or toddler is slipping backwards in development
- Development slows down, especially if this occurs following a traumatic event or major disruption in the family and household
- You feel that the trauma has got in the way of knowing your baby, developing close, loving feelings and feeling connected to them – it is important to seek help to get this bonding process back on track
- You have been separated from the baby or toddler at the time of danger or during its aftermath
- You or other carers are emotionally unwell with stress, grief, anxiety, exhaustion or depression – this can have a serious effect on the baby or toddler
- Your family has lost their home and community.

There is increasing evidence to suggest that the younger a child, the more serious the posttraumatic problems. Actively seeking help and advice is important.

If at any time you are worried about your mental health or the mental health of a loved one, call Lifeline **13 11 14**.

Where to get help

- Lifeline **13 11 14**
- Your doctor
- Your maternal and child health nurse
- Your local community health centre
- Your local Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service – many of these now have
- specialised services for young babies and toddlers
- Paediatrician or Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist – your doctor can refer you

Things to remember

- Babies and toddlers are directly affected by trauma.
- They are also affected if their mother, father or main caregiver is suffering consequences of the trauma.
- If their home and routine becomes unsettled or disrupted as a result of the trauma, babies and toddlers are also vulnerable.
- You can help your baby or toddler recover by providing support to rebuild a safe, calm and nurturing home.

This fact sheet is provided for education and information purposes only. Information about a therapy, service, product or treatment does not imply endorsement and is not intended to replace advice from your doctor or other registered health professional. Content has been prepared for Victorian residents and wider Australian audiences, and was accurate at the time of publication. Readers should note that, over time, currency and completeness of the information may change. All users are urged to always seek advice from a registered health care professional for diagnosis and answers to their medical questions.

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The feedback form below was used early in the recovery process to ascertain how community members preferred to be communicated with, what elements they valued most in their communities and how they would like to participate in helping to achieve their longer-term recovery priorities.

TASMANIAN BUSHFIRE RECOVERY

HAVE YOUR SAY

YOUR COMMUNITY
YOUR PRIORITIES

The comments you provide in this survey will help us to identify the priorities and common aspirations of your community so funding can be appropriately allocated to the issues that matter most.

This survey is open to all members of fire-affected communities
PLEASE PROVIDE COMMENTS BY 28 MARCH 2013

Over the coming weeks and months, there will be a variety of opportunities for you to help plan and participate in the long-term recovery of your community.

What is the best way to keep you informed?

- ☐ Community meetings
- ☐ SMS alerts
- ☐ Radio
- ☐ Email
- ☐ Word of mouth
- ☐ Other:
- ☐ Noticeboards
- ☐ Internet
- ☐ Post
- ☐ Newspaper
- ☐ Newsletter
- ☐ Twitter

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Postal Address: _____

_____

Email: _____

Age: U18 ☐ 18-35 ☐ 36-50 ☐ 51-65 ☐ Over 65 ☐

Tasmanian Government

Which fire-affected community are you connected to?

What three things do you value most about your community?

1.
2.
3.

What three things would you most like to see restored, developed or improved in your community?

1.
2.
3.

How would you like to be involved in the process?

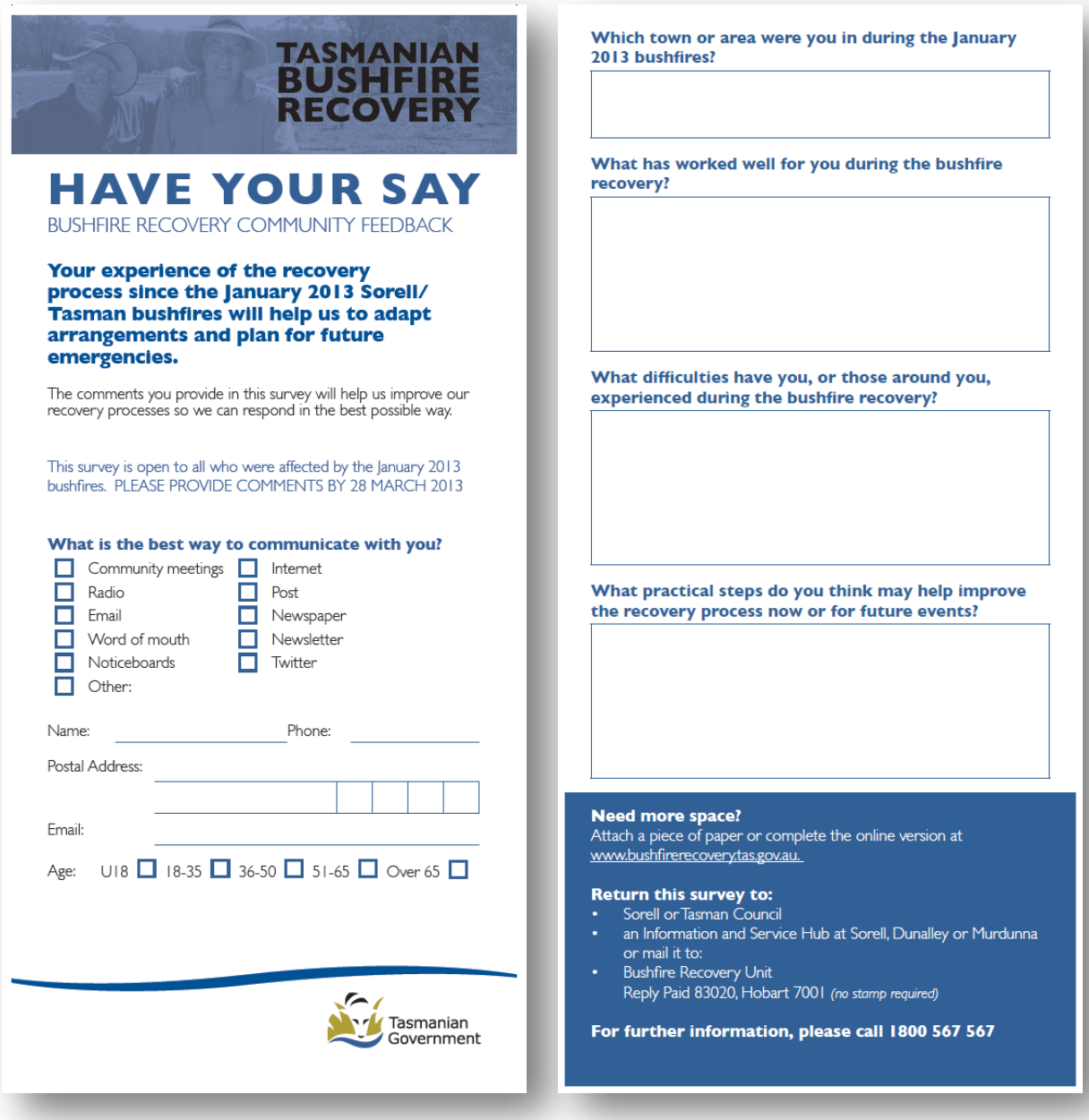
Need more space?
Attach a piece of paper or complete the online version at www.bushfirerecovery.tas.gov.au.

Return this survey to:

- Sorell or Tasman Council
- an Information and Service Hub at Sorell, Dunalley or Murdunna or mail it to:
- Bushfire Recovery Unit
  Reply Paid 83020, Hobart 7001 *(no stamp required)*

For further information, please call 1800 567 567

Similarly, this feedback form helped the Government to understand during early days of the recovery what was working well and to identify some of the difficulties that were faced during this period. It also allowed the community to suggest solutions to resolve some of those issues.



TASMANIAN BUSHFIRE RECOVERY

HAVE YOUR SAY

BUSHFIRE RECOVERY COMMUNITY FEEDBACK

Your experience of the recovery process since the January 2013 Sorell/ Tasman bushfires will help us to adapt arrangements and plan for future emergencies.

The comments you provide in this survey will help us improve our recovery processes so we can respond in the best possible way.

This survey is open to all who were affected by the January 2013 bushfires. PLEASE PROVIDE COMMENTS BY 28 MARCH 2013

What is the best way to communicate with you?

- ☐ Community meetings
- ☐ Radio
- ☐ Email
- ☐ Word of mouth
- ☐ Noticeboards
- ☐ Other:
- ☐ Internet
- ☐ Post
- ☐ Newspaper
- ☐ Newsletter
- ☐ Twitter

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Postal Address: _____

Email: _____

Age: U18 ☐ 18-35 ☐ 36-50 ☐ 51-65 ☐ Over 65 ☐

Tasmanian Government

Which town or area were you in during the January 2013 bushfires?

What has worked well for you during the bushfire recovery?

What difficulties have you, or those around you, experienced during the bushfire recovery?

What practical steps do you think may help improve the recovery process now or for future events?

Need more space?
Attach a piece of paper or complete the online version at www.bushfirerecoverytas.gov.au.

Return this survey to:

- Sorell or Tasman Council
- an Information and Service Hub at Sorell, Dunalley or Murdunna or mail it to:
- Bushfire Recovery Unit
  Reply Paid 83020, Hobart 7001 *(no stamp required)*

For further information, please call 1800 567 567

Similarly, this final feedback form was provided to the community 10 months after the fires, to help ascertain the elements of the recovery that worked well for the community. This process was completed before the anniversary of the fires to provide valuable information to the Government, but also to help raise awareness to affected community members that the transition to long-term recovery was in process, with the Government slowly withdrawing its presence from the local area.

TASMANIAN BUSHFIRE RECOVERY

HAVE YOUR SAY

HELP US REVIEW OUR RECOVERY PROCESSES

COMMUNITY FEEDBACK

Your experience of the recovery process since the January 2013 bushfires will help us plan for recovery from future emergencies.

The comments you provide in this survey will help us review our recovery processes so we can respond to future events in the best possible way.

PLEASE PROVIDE COMMENTS BY 30 NOVEMBER 2013

This survey is open to all who were directly or indirectly affected by the January 2013 bushfires. In particular, we want to receive your comments about the recovery processes that followed the initial emergency, in the days and months after roads were reopened and people were able to return to their properties.

So that we can link your comments with future planning, please help us with the following details:

Was your home destroyed? Yes ☐ No ☐

Was any part of your property damaged? Yes ☐ No ☐

Was your shack destroyed or damaged? Yes ☐ No ☐

Did a family member/friend lose their home? Yes ☐ No ☐

Was your local community affected? Yes ☐ No ☐

Gender: Male ☐ Female ☐

Age: U18 ☐ 18-35 ☐ 36-50 ☐ 51-65 ☐ Over 65 ☐

Which fire-affected communities do you live or spend time in?

Tasmanian Government

What things stand out as working really well in the recovery process after the fires?

1

2

3

Are there recovery activities that could have been done better?

1

2

3

What can you suggest should be included to help in future recovery programs in Tasmania?

1

2

3

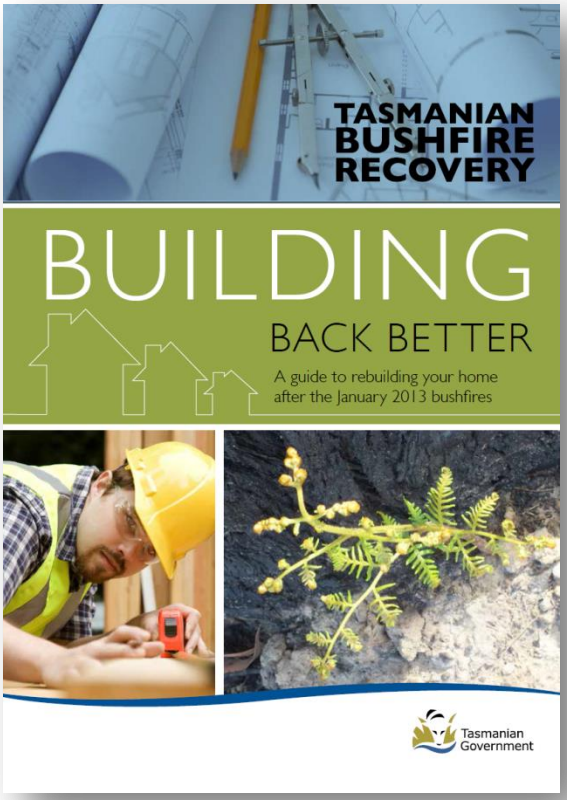
Need more space to tell us why?
Attach a piece of paper or complete the online version at www.bushfirerecovery.tas.gov.au

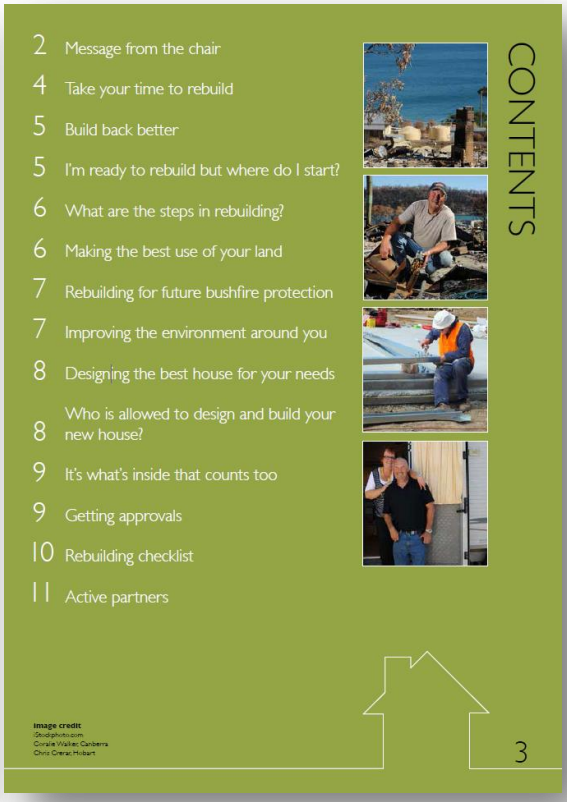
Return this survey to:

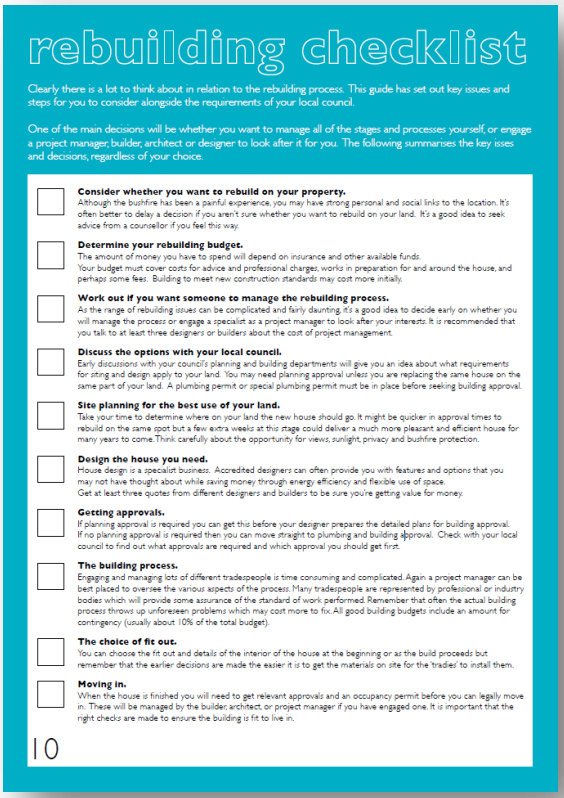
- The Dunalley Information and Service Hub (the DISH)
- Sorell, Tasman or Central Highlands Council
- Bushfire Recovery Unit
  Reply Paid 83020, Hobart 7001 (no stamp required)
- Call us on **1800 567 567** to complete the survey over the phone

For further information, please call 1800 567 567

The *Building Back Better* guide was designed to help those who had lost their homes with the basic steps of the rebuilding process. As shown by the table of contents, this guide outlines things such as how to make the most of the land, design and approval processes. It included useful checklists and contact points, with the hope of making the task of rebuilding less daunting. The full document can be found at www.bushfirerecovery.tas.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0011/193781/Building_Back_Better_Guide.pdf.







The checklist below covers the items used in the Dunalley Information and Service Hub, which was the recovery centre located in the heart of the January 2013 bushfire-affected area in Tasmania's south.

Recovery Centre Inventory checklist

Front of house (eg display stands etc)

- ☐ display stands
- ☐ information / communication boards (whiteboards, pin boards etc)
- ☐ signage
- ☐ staff ID
- ☐ telephone(s), phone book
- ☐ computers - public & private use
- ☐ maps
- ☐ registers - visitor log, booking of meeting spaces, phone tree etc. (folder)
- ☐ contact lists - public use eg. local trades & services / internal use [NO ACRONYMS]
- ☐ photocopier / printer / scanner
- ☐ laminator
- ☐ assorted mobile phone chargers - public use
- ☐ stationery - hole punch, stapler etc.
- ☐ children's activity packs / books / toys
- ☐ radio / CD player
- ☐ lockable cabinet / drawer
- ☐ counter / desk(s)
- ☐ chairs
- ☐ tissues
- ☐ opening hours signage
- ☐ calendar / artwork
- ☐ disabled access
- ☐ water cooler
- ☐ rubbish bin

Office equipment (eg photocopier / printers etc)

- ☐ photocopier / printer / scanner
- ☐ laminator
- ☐ guillotine
- ☐ lockable filing cabinets
- ☐ telephones / mobiles
- ☐ laptops / desktops
- ☐ shredder / security bin
- ☐ access to Information Computer Technology (ICT) support
- ☐ access to departmental drives and internet
- ☐ whiteboards, pin boards etc.
- ☐ chairs and desks
- ☐ video / teleconference equipment
- ☐ vacuum cleaner
- ☐ heaters
- ☐ power boards, extension cords
- ☐ electronic whiteboard / smart board

(cont)

(cont)

Stationery

- ☐ printer /copier paper - assorted sizes
- ☐ notepads, post-it notes (assorted sizes & colours)
- ☐ diaries
- ☐ ballpoint pens, whiteboard markers, highlighters, pencils (assorted colours)
- ☐ pen / pencil holders
- ☐ folders, files
- ☐ hole punch, stapler
- ☐ bluetac, drawing pins
- ☐ document trays
- ☐ rulers
- ☐ scissors

Meeting spaces

- ☐ casual table & chairs
- ☐ comfortable couch
- ☐ children's activity packs / books / toys
- ☐ rug
- ☐ artwork
- ☐ tissues
- ☐ vacant / in use signage

Kitchen

- ☐ antiseptic hand rub
- ☐ tea towels
- ☐ urn, kettle
- ☐ mugs, tea cups, saucers, glasses, plastic cups & plates
- ☐ crockery - assorted sizes
- ☐ cutlery
- ☐ knives - cutting
- ☐ disposable plates and cutlery
- ☐ coffee machine / plungers
- ☐ storage containers
- ☐ hot plates and oven
- ☐ microwave
- ☐ fridge / freezer
- ☐ oven trays
- ☐ cutting boards
- ☐ rubbish bin / recycling?
- ☐ water jugs
- ☐ tea pot, strainer
- ☐ paper towel
- ☐ glad wrap, alfoil, rubbish bags
- ☐ cleaning cloths, spray, dishwashing liquid
- ☐ serviettes
- ☐ broom
- ☐ mop and bucket
- ☐ dustpan set
- ☐ dishwasher

(cont)

(cont)

Bathroom

- ☐ toilet rolls
- ☐ paper towel
- ☐ hand wash
- ☐ antiseptic hand rub
- ☐ sunblock
- ☐ mirror
- ☐ air freshner
- ☐ toilet brush
- ☐ rubbish / sanitary bins
- ☐ sanitary items
- ☐ sign for door

Storage areas

- ☐ consumables
- ☐ office supplies
- ☐ kitchen supplies
- ☐ cleaning supplies
- ☐ boxes
- ☐ safe
- ☐ lockable filing cabinets
- ☐ donations?

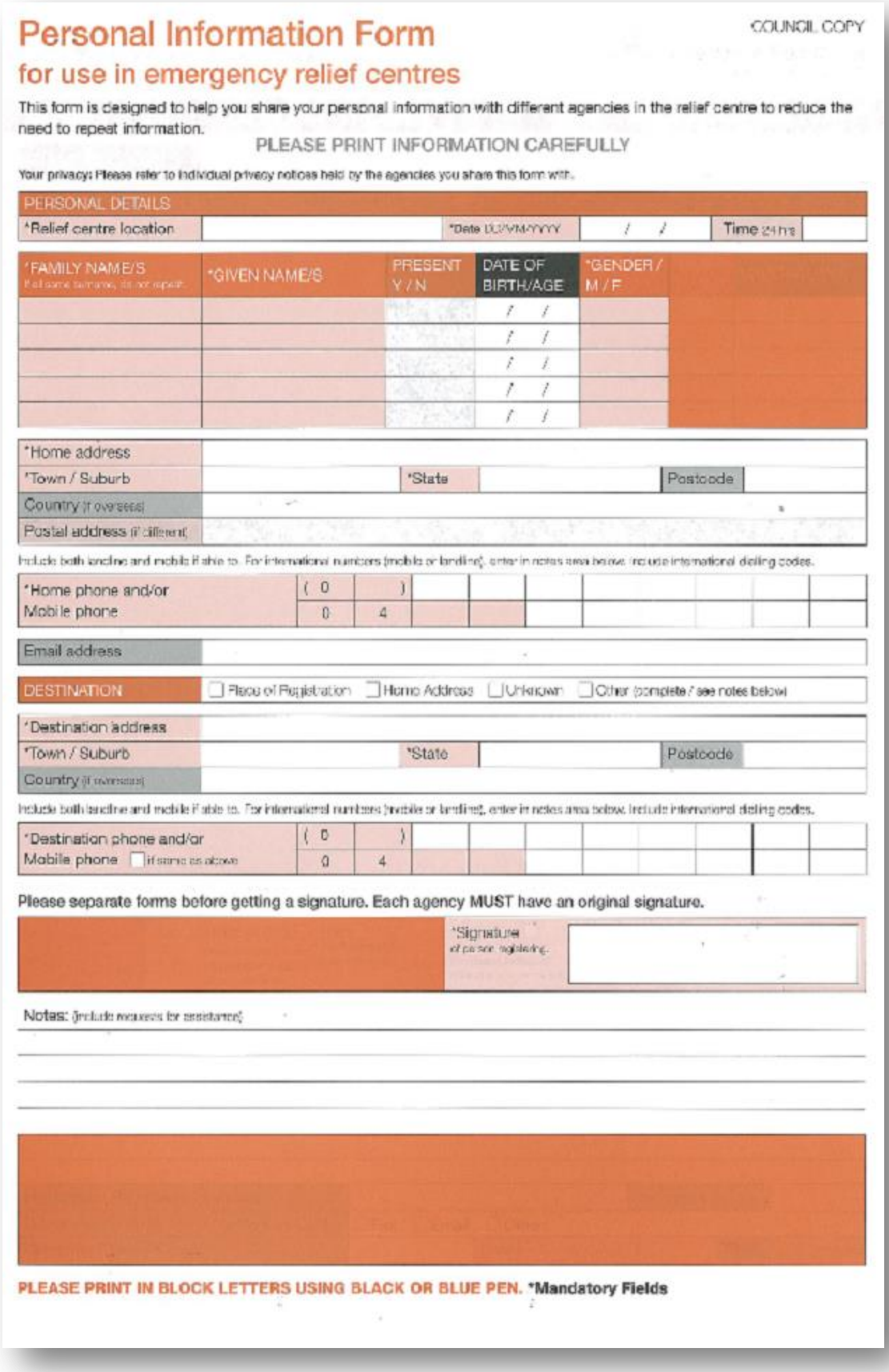
Consumables (eg drinking water, teabags etc)

- ☐ drinking water
- ☐ tea - leaves, bags (incl. herbal)
- ☐ milk - full, skinny, soy
- ☐ coffee - instant & plunger
- ☐ milo, hot chocolate
- ☐ sugar
- ☐ tomato sauce
- ☐ butter
- ☐ serviettes
- ☐ paper towel
- ☐ toilet rolls
- ☐ cleaning products
- ☐ biscuits
- ☐ tissues

Communal space

- ☐ comfortable seating, couch, bean bags etc.
- ☐ coffee table, side tables
- ☐ rugs
- ☐ children's activity packs / books / toys
- ☐ children's table & chairs
- ☐ stackable chairs
- ☐ radio / CD - selection of
- ☐ TV / DVD - selection of
- ☐ artwork
- ☐ bookcase
- ☐ rubbish bin

The form below is an example of a carbon copy registration form that could provide single registration of basic information to be used for multiple recovery partners (source: *Gippsland Emergency Relief Centre Standard Operating Procedures*).



Personal Information Form

COUNCIL COPY

for use in emergency relief centres

This form is designed to help you share your personal information with different agencies in the relief centre to reduce the need to repeat information.

PLEASE PRINT INFORMATION CAREFULLY

Your privacy: Please refer to individual privacy notices held by the agencies you share this form with.

PERSONAL DETAILS

*Relief centre location		*Date DD/MM/YYYY	/ /	Time 24 hrs	

*FAMILY NAME/S (Full name surname, do not abbreviate)	*GIVEN NAME/S	PRESENT Y / N	DATE OF BIRTH/AGE	*GENDER / M / F
			/ /	
			/ /	
			/ /	
			/ /	
			/ /	

*Home address			
*Town / Suburb		*State	Postcode
Country (if overseas)			
Postal address (if different)			

Include both landline and mobile if able to. For international numbers (mobile or landline), enter in notes area below, include international dialling codes.

*Home phone and/or	(	0	)								
Mobile phone	0	4									

Email address	

DESTINATION ☐ Place of Registration ☐ Home Address ☐ Unknown ☐ Other (complete / see notes below)

*Destination address			
*Town / Suburb		*State	Postcode
Country (if overseas)			

Include both landline and mobile if able to. For international numbers (mobile or landline), enter in notes area below, include international dialling codes.

*Destination phone and/or	(	0	)								
Mobile phone ☐ if same as above	0	4									

Please separate forms before getting a signature. Each agency MUST have an original signature.

	*Signature (of person registering)

Notes: (include reasons for assistance)

PLEASE PRINT IN BLOCK LETTERS USING BLACK OR BLUE PEN. *Mandatory Fields

PHONE
1800 567 567

EMAIL
recovery@dpac.tas.gov.au

ONLINE
bushfirerecovery.tas.gov.au

SORELL INFORMATION AND SERVICE HUB
Shop 4, 31 Cole Street, Sorell
(Access via Station Lane)

DUNALLEY INFORMATION AND SERVICE HUB
160 Arthur Highway, Dunalley
(the old Post Office)

MURDUNNA INFORMATION AND SERVICE HUB
Arthur Highway, Murdunna
(Murdunna Playground)

TASMANIAN BUSHFIRE RECOVERY

Fact Sheet Clean Up Process

The Government has contracted Hazell Bros to clean up fire affected properties. This service is provided free of charge and will not be deducted from your insurance policy.

The clean-up contract covers any destroyed structures (houses, sheds, garages and outbuildings), as well as any cars, caravans or boats that may have been destroyed on the property.

For health and safety reasons, it is preferred that property owners do not remove and dispose of material themselves.

Before the clean-up

- You need to register your property for clean-up by calling **1800 567 567**. A representative of the Bushfire Recovery Unit will then contact you and explain the clean-up process.

If you are insured	If you are not insured
The Bushfire Recovery Unit will promptly contact your insurer and provide them with a consent form, a map and photos of the affected property and any other necessary information. Your insurance company will contact you and work through the consent form. The consent form is returned to the Bushfire Recovery Unit.	A representative of the Bushfire Recovery Unit will provide you with a consent form and will go through this with you in person or over the phone (if you are out of the state).

- The consent form is sent to Hazell Bros to allow the clean-up to commence. ***Work cannot commence on insured properties until the consent form has been returned to the Bushfire Recovery Unit by the insurance company.***
- It is important that you identify on the consent form if you specifically want Hazell Bros to leave anything on your land. No demolition or removal of material will be carried out without the consent of property owners.
- Hazell Bros will contact you a couple of days before the clean-up to advise you of a starting time for your property.

Last updated: 5 February 2013 1:49 PM

Tasmanian Government

During the clean-up

- Clearing a property can be a complex task as many are contaminated with asbestos or other hazardous materials. It requires the use of highly specialised equipment and highly trained crews. Because of these complexities, it can take up to a couple of days to clean up a property. However, Hazell Bros are undertaking the majority of clean-ups in a single day.
- For your own safety you will not be allowed to be on site during the Hazell Bros clean up because the work will involve heavy equipment and there is the potential for the disturbance of hazardous material such as asbestos. You will be able to watch the clean-up from a safe distance.
- Hazell Bros will remove all destroyed structures, burnt or damaged material (including cars and caravans) and contaminated soils up to 100 millimetres. Unless you specifically exclude them, footings and underground elements or structures, septic tanks and waste treatment units will also be removed. All excavated areas will be reinstated and local contractors will be brought in to replace topsoil on properties once the clean-up is complete.
- Hazell Bros will also remove destroyed fencing if it is in close proximity to the destroyed structure.
- As well as Hazell Bros conducting the clean-up free of charge, small businesses, primary producers and the not-for-profit sector may be eligible for up to $25,000 in Clean-Up and Assistance grants for the removal of debris, including fencing and further restoration.
- Receiving assistance via the Hazell Bros clean-up does not exclude eligible applicants from accessing these Clean-Up and Assistance Grants.
- If Hazell Bros are unable to remove destroyed fencing on your property and you aren't eligible for the Clean-Up and Assistance funding, please contact your local council which will provide assistance on a case by case basis.

After the clean-up

- You will be contacted by a representative from Hazell Bros when the work has been completed and it is safe for you to return to your property.

More information and help

If you are registered with the Bushfire Recovery Unit for the clean-up and have signed a consent form for work to proceed, you can call Hazell Bros' dedicated number to find out when work is scheduled on your property: **0439 367 192** (during business hours).

Further information is available from the Bushfire Recovery Unit, either in person at the Information and Services Hubs in Sorell, Dunalley and Murdunna or by calling **1800 567 567**.

PHONE
1800 567 567

EMAIL
recovery@dpac.tas.gov.au

ONLINE
bushfirerecovery.tas.gov.au

SORELL INFORMATION AND SERVICE HUB
Shop 4, 31 Cole Street, Sorell
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Arthur Highway, Murdunna
(Murdunna Playground)

TASMANIAN BUSHFIRE RECOVERY

Last updated: 5 February 2013 1:49 PM

Tasmanian BUSHFIRES JANUARY 2013

Tasmanian Government

Clean-up Referral Form

Caller Details

Caller's Name: _____

Property Owner (same as caller: YES / NO) If NO: _____

Property Details

Property Type: Residence / Place of Business / Other

Address of Property: _____

Contact Details

Who to contact: Caller / Property Owner

Phone (___) _____

Mobile Phone (_____) _____

Email _____@_____

Preferred time of day for contact:

Before 10am / 10am to noon / noon to 2pm / 2pm to 4 pm/ after 4pm / other_____

Caller Advised:

- ☐ Someone from the Bushfire Recovery Unit will be in touch within 48 hours.
- ☐ The ash and dust on the property may be contaminated so please await contact to arrange safe clean-up
- ☐ Clean-up will not proceed without property owner's consent

Tasmanian BUSHFIRES
JANUARY 2013

Tasmanian Government

Deed made at on 2013

I/We _____
(Insert name, and if a company also insert ACN)

Owner(s) ☐ Tenant ☐

Of the property at _____
(Insert address)

Registration No_____

Hazell Brothers Property ID_____

I/We are authorised to enter into this deed and authorise the Tasmanian Government ('government') to arrange for the clean-up and removal of hazardous and other materials from the property (including demolition).

I/We **consent** to the government clean-up contractor (its subcontractors, agents and employees) entering the property for the purposes of the clean-up and removal of hazardous and other materials and to carry out the clean-up, demolition and other relevant activities on the property ('the activities'). I understand that I cannot be on any part of the property during the clean-up, designated by the clean-up contractor, to allow it to carry out the activities.

I/We **release** the government and all its agents, including the clean-up contractor (its subcontractors, agents and employees), from all claims, costs, losses, damages and liabilities airing out of or in connection with the clean-up, demolition and other relevant activities on the property including any claims, costs losses, damages and liabilities arising out of the accidental removal of personal or other materials at the property.

I/We **agree** Schedule 1 details the scope of matters to be addressed in the clean-up, removal and demolition activities to be performed on the property.

I/We **advise** the government the person(s) listed in Schedule 2 may have an interest in the property (whether a right to occupy the property, to possessions on the property or otherwise) and may not be covered by this consent.

Executed as a deed poll in favour of the government of Tasmania, its agents and its clean-up contractors.

(for signing by an individual)

Signature_____

Signed by_____

Signature of witness _____

Name of witness in full _____

(Company name if executing on behalf of a company)

(for signing by *company*)

Signed in accordance with section 127(1) of the Corporations Act 2001:

Signature

Print name and position held_____

TASMANIAN BUSHFIRE APPEAL 2013

DISTRIBUTION COMMITTEE

Terms of Reference

Governance

The Australian Red Cross Society (Red Cross) has launched an appeal called the Tasmanian Bushfires 2013 Appeal (Appeal). This Appeal has the following Appeal Intent *"Funds raised through the Tasmanian Bushfires 2013 Appeal will be used to assist individuals, families and communities directly affected by the January 2013 Tasmanian bushfires. Australian Red Cross will not deduct any funds from public donations for appeal or administration costs. Should the funds raised exceed the amount required, Australian Red Cross will use any excess funds to assist in future disasters in Australia. All interest earned on donations will be invested back into the appeal. The funds raised will be distributed through an independent committee which will involve community input."*

1. The Appeal is an Australian Disaster Relief Fund (ADRF) by virtue of the Red Cross status as a public benevolent Institution endorsed by the Australian Tax Office (ATO) in accordance with tax legislation.

2. The Tasmanian Bushfire Appeal 2013 Distribution Committee (Committee) is jointly appointed by the Tasmanian Government and Red Cross, and sets criteria for the disbursement of funds consistent with taxation law, taking full account of the Appeal Intent and the purposes of Red Cross as a public benevolent institution.

3. All costs to Red Cross arising from the appeal and all costs of disbursement to beneficiaries from the Appeal funds will be met by the Tasmanian Government

Composition

4. The Committee will comprise members appointed jointly by Red Cross and the Tasmanian Government, including;

   i Australian Red Cross;

   ii a senior representative of the Tasmanian Government; and

   iii representatives of the affected Local government areas (e.g. Mayors); and

   iv other representatives such as distinguished Tasmanians, Australian Government representatives, affected residents, as agreed between Red Cross and the Tasmanian Government

5. Each member of the Committee may nominate an alternate from time to time to attend meetings in lieu of the member. An alternate must be a senior person from the member's organisation.

6. The Tasmanian Government and Red Cross may, by agreement, from time to time, change the members of the Committee.

7. The Bushfire Recovery Unit will provide a Secretariat for the Committee. The Secretariat will, as required, convene a senior officers group, including representatives from Red Cross, Tasmanian Government, affected Local Government areas, and any other relevant agencies, to ensure consistency and avoid duplication of relief activities.

Purpose, Role and Functions

8. The Committee has been established to oversee the operations related to the distribution of Appeal Funds.

9. The role of the Committee is to set rules and criteria for the making of payments from the Appeal funds, subject to:

   (a) the Appeal Intent ,

   (b) the purposes of Red Cross as a public benevolent institution, and

   (c) any legislation governing use of the funds raised by the Appeal and the status of the Appeal.

   The Committee will guide, account for, and report on the disbursement of funds from the Appeal Funds.

10. The rules and criteria for assistance will be confirmed by the Committee at its earliest convenience. In developing the criteria the Committee should have regard to the following Guidelines:

    Ensure all funding is used consistent with the stated Appeal Intent: *"Funds raised through the Tasmanian Bushfires 2013 Appeal will be used to assist individuals, families and communities directly affected by the January 2013 Tasmanian bushfires. Australian Red Cross will not deduct any funds from public donations for appeal or administration costs. Should the funds raised exceed the amount required, Australian Red Cross will use any excess funds to assist in future disasters in Australia. All interest earned on donations will be invested back into the appeal. The funds raised will be distributed through an* independent *committee which will involve community input."*

    Consider how other Local, State and Commonwealth disaster relief funds and other support are targeted, and complement but not duplicate that support:

    i. Ensure all disbursements are made in accordance with the taxation law, including the purposes of Red Cross as a public benevolent institution;
    ii. Consider an appropriate balance between disbursements to individuals, families and communities;
    iii. Ensure that appropriate disbursements are anticipated and made to meet urgent and immediate needs; short-term needs,; medium-term needs, and long-term needs;
    iv. Ensure there is rapid disbursement of emergency payments;
    v. Ensure the criteria take account of the extent of loss suffered by individuals, families and communities;
    vi. Ensure there is appropriate community involvement in decision-making where funds are used to assist communities; and
    vii. Ensure that systems are in place so that no recipient of funds gains an undue financial advantage from donated money.

11. The Committee will be supported by and work with the Tasmanian Government and the affected Municipal authorities to ensure that disbursement methods are effective, swift, flexible and responsive.

12. The Committee will consider as appropriate the disbursement of funds through the Tasmanian Government, local government or other organisations using any method which it deems appropriate.

13. The Committee may consult the Australian Tax Office (ATO) in relation to the allocation of monies from the Appeal funds, so as to ensure that, where possible and appropriate, advice is obtained from the ATO about maintaining Red Cross' endorsement as a deductible gift recipient and its status as a public benevolent institution and, for recipients, so far as practicable, ensuring the appropriate tax status of types of gifts from the Appeal funds.

Resolutions and Meetings

14. The Committee may conduct meetings and make decisions in the manner it thinks fit, however, it will endeavour to do so by consensus. Any disputed resolutions that may prejudice the legal rights or obligations of Red Cross or the Tasmanian Government, must be supported by their representatives on the Committee.

Delegation

15. The Committee may delegate any of its functions and power to a sub-committee constituted by, as a minimum:
    i. the Chair or his or her nominee; and
    ii. the representative of Red Cross; or
    iii. in relation to detailed implementation matters, to an implementation group of nominated officers of the Tasmanian Government, relevant Local Governments and of the Red Cross. The exercise of delegated powers by a sub-committee or an implementation group must be by consensus and may be subject to any limitations or requirements of the Committee.

Reporting

16. Red Cross may, from time to time, direct the Committee to provide to it, reports and other information as specified in the direction.

17. The Committee will provide an initial 3 month public report and subsequent reports at 6 and 12 monthly milestones or as otherwise agreed by the Committee or directed by Red Cross.

Probity

18. Red Cross will appoint an independent auditor for all appeal monies received by it in the Appeal and will make this audit available to the Committee.

General

19. In addition to the above reports, when directed by Red Cross, the Committee will produce a final overall report of its activities and the disbursement of the Appeal funds.

20. The Committee will oversee the winding up of the Appeal in consultation with the Premier of Tasmania or her delegate, and will endeavour to ensure that any funds remaining in the Appeal at this time are fully disbursed in accordance with the Appeal Intent, the purpose of Red Cross as a public benevolent institution, and the status of the Appeal as an ADRF.

21. These Terms of Reference may, from time to time, be amended by written agreement between Red Cross and the Tasmanian Government.

Dated 23 January 2013

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TASMANIAN BUSHFIRE RECOVERY

Fact Sheet

Red Cross Bushfire Appeal
Destroyed Homes Grant

Am I eligible?

The Tasmanian Bushfire Appeal Distribution Committee has determined criteria for the **Destroyed Homes Grant**. You are eligible grant if you are the owner/ occupier whose residence has been destroyed as a result of the 2013 Tasmanian bushfires. The residence must have been your principal place of residence.

The grant is to assist those who have lost their homes to be rehoused and to assist in replacing household contents.

The Tasmanian Bushfire Appeal Distribution Committee has been working with local government and the Tasmanian Bushfire Recovery Unit to identify and confirm all destroyed properties.

Tenants are not eligible for this grant, but may be eligible for the **Tenant Contents Grant.**

What assistance is available?

Under the criteria set by the Committee, all owner/ occupiers who lost their home as a result of the 2013 Tasmanian bushfires are eligible for a grant of $10,000.

How do I claim?

You will be contacted by the Bushfire Recovery Unit who will assess your eligibility for the grant.

Before the grant is released, applicants will need to provide evidence of their identity, such as a drivers licence or birth certificate. They will also need to certify that the residence was the primary place of residence destroyed by the 2013 Tasmanian bushfires.

What information do I need to provide?

If you have already registered and received a payment under the first round distribution of the Red Cross Bushfire Appeal, you will need to provide evidence of your identity and proof of primary address.

Any applicant found to provide information of a fraudulent nature may be liable for prosecution and will be required to repay the grant.

How will the money be made available to me?

If you are eligible for the **Destroyed Homes Grant** and have registered for the grant by calling the Bushfire Recovery Unit, you can collect the payment from your local Council or the Murdunna Information and Service Hub during business hours. It takes 24 hours for the grant to be processed, so please wait one full day after registering before collecting your payment.

For further information

For further information or advice about this grant, please call the Bushfire Recovery Unit hotline on **1800 567 567** or via e-mail at recovery@dpac.tas.gov.au.

Advice on other grants is available at all Service Tasmania shops or online at www.bushfirerecovery.tas.gov.au.

Last updated: 18 February 2013 3:05 PM

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TASMANIAN BUSHFIRE RECOVERY

Fact Sheet

Red Cross Bushfire Appeal
Tenant Contents Grant (including boarders)

Am I eligible?

The Tasmanian Bushfire Appeal Distribution Committee has determined criteria for the **Tenant Contents Grant** if you are a tenant whose primary place of residence was destroyed as a result of the 2013 Tasmanian bushfires.

This grant is to assist tenants to replace their contents where their property was destroyed.

What assistance is available?

Under the criteria set by the committee, you are eligible for the grant payment you will receive a lump sum of $5,000.

Only one payment will be made for each property. Payments will be made to you by cheque.

What if the property was a shared household?

In these instances the grant will be split evenly across household members.

Before the grant is released, applicants will need to provide evidence of their identity, such as a drivers licence or birth certificate, and certify that they are only claiming on their own behalf and have identified all other members of the shared household.

What assistance is available for boarders?

For those people who rented a single room in a property, rather than the whole residence, assistance is available.

A $5,000 grant is available to boarders who rented a room in a property that was destroyed in the bushfires. This is payable per individual/couple, regardless of the number of people occupying a room. The property must have been the boarders' principal place of residence.

The committee has decided that to be eligible, individuals must be independent boarders and not an immediate family member of the landlord - this includes children, parents and grandparents.

How do I claim?

If you have already registered and received a payment under the first round distribution of the Red Cross Bushfire Appeal, you will be contacted by the Bushfire Recovery Unit who will assess your eligibility for the grant.

What information do I need to provide?

You will need to provide evidence of your identity and proof of address.

Any applicant found to provide information of a fraudulent nature may be liable for prosecution and will be required to repay the grant.

How will the money be made available to me?

If you are eligible for the **Tenant Contents Grant** and have registered for the grant by calling the Bushfire Recovery Unit, you can collect the payment from your local Council or the Murdunna Information and Service Hub during business hours. It takes 24 hours for the grant to be processed, so please wait one full day after registering before collecting your payment.

For further information

For further information or advice on this payment, please contact the Bushfire Recovery Unit **1800 567 567** or via e-mail on recovery@dpac.tas.gov.au.

Advice on other grants is available at all Service Tasmania shops or online at: www.bushfirerecovery.tas.gov.au.

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TASMANIAN BUSHFIRE RECOVERY

Fact Sheet

Replacement of Household Items Grant: *Information for applicants*

Purpose of this grant

This grant is to assist with the replacement of essential household items damaged or destroyed in the January 2013 bushfires.

Grants are made available on the basis of need and are not a replacement for insurance or compensation for losses.

Who is eligible to apply?

Those individuals or households whose principal place of residence is uninhabitable or severely damaged as a result of the bushfires and have suffered loss or damage to household items are eligible to apply.

How do I lodge my claim?

In order to lodge your claim form, you will need to make an appointment with an assessor.

Please phone Housing Tasmania on 1800 808 340

Is there an income or assets test?

Yes. All applications will be assessed according to an income and asset test in the table below. If you do not satisfy the income and asset test, you will not be eligible for the grant. The asset test excludes a principal place of residence and any superannuation that is inaccessible.

Am I still eligible for assistance if I have insurance?

Yes. However, grants will only be considered in cases where insurance does not cover costs of up to $8,875 or where there is no insurance.

If you have insurance for your home or household contents, you must lodge a claim against your policy with respect to any loss or damage you have suffered. When submitting your application for this grant, you must provide full insurance details, including policy numbers.

You must also certify if you are ineligible to claim insurance, that insurance has been refused or that the insurance will not cover all of the costs.

Note: Claims can be lodged before the outcome of insurance claims are known. You must, however, advise the Department of Health and Human Services as soon as the outcome of your insurance claim has been decided.

How much can be paid?

$5,800 (plus $950 per household member up to $8,875) can be paid for the replacement of household items.

Status	Weekly Income	Asset Test
Single/Sole Resident	$583	$35,000
Two principal residents (either couple or shared housing)	$1,010	$35,000
Single with one Dependant Child	$1,010	$35,000
Each Additional Child Add	$34	N/A

Last updated: 13 February 2013 10:41 AM

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TASMANIAN BUSHFIRE RECOVERY

Stage 4 Part B Red Cross Appeal – Ongoing Financial Hardship

Your Questions Answered – Eligibility Criteria

Why doesn't everyone affected by the bushfires receive assistance under this stage?

Under tax laws, any money raised by a fund that's tax deductible – like the Red Cross Appeal – must be donated to a "charitable need". So in distributing the appeal funds, the independent Tasmanian Bushfire Appeal Distribution Committee has used a formula to judge an applicant's "charitable need".

How do you define "charitable need"?

"Charitable need" is defined in law by the Commonwealth Government. For people to be in charitable need they don't have to necessarily be destitute or in poverty, but they must require assistance to obtain a "modest standard of living".

The ability for a person or family to return themselves to a modest standard of living is what we describe as a person's "capacity to recover".

How do you define a "modest standard of living"?

The Appeal Distribution Committee has agreed on a formula that is designed to return bushfire-affected applicants to a modest standard of living. It recognises certain factors such as age, family size and income in determining your capacity to recover.

The Committee received advice from the Master Builders Association on the cost of rebuilding a standard, modest home. The formula allows for a $190,000 1-2 bedroom home, plus $30,000 for each extra person/bedroom. It also includes a judgement on how much you need for contents to reach a modest standard of living (set at $50,000 for 1-2 people, with an additional $5,000 for each additional person or $15,000 for dependant adults).

Two other factors have also been taken into account. The Committee looked at applicants' assets to see if they had capacity to reach the target amount required for a modest standard of living. Committee members also considered applicants' income and liabilities, determining that 50% of their income above a minimum threshold was available to them to support repayments on a loan.

That minimum threshold has been set at $45,500 a year for a single person, and $78,700 for a couple (allowing an extra $1,800 for each child).

If you lost income as a direct result of the fires (which impacts on your level of hardship and your capacity to recover), that is also taken into account. For example, if you earned $70,000 a year before the fires, and now earn $30,000 a year as a direct result of the bushfires, the Committee looked at what was needed to return you from $30,000 to the minimum threshold of $45,500.

It's important to recognise that under the legislation the fund is only able to help people return to a modest standard of living, not their pre-bushfire standard of living.

I'm nearing retirement age. I can't take out a loan at this stage of my life. Has this been considered?

When deciding on the formula, the Committee recognised that people over 60 years of age should not have to obtain a loan to reach a modest standard of living. Age is taken into account because older people have less capacity to borrow and people should be able to have assets available for their own security to start preparing for retirement.

When determining the amount of assistance payable the formula considers your age and allows for a growing allocation of assets to be quarantined when considering your capacity to recover. This allows people to maintain responsible reserves – a "nest egg" – to support their retirement.

In other words, the closer you are to 60 years of age, the more you are able to have in reserve as assets and still receive assistance.

TASMANIAN BUSHFIRE
APPEAL DISTRIBUTION COMMITTEE

I lost my home which was worth $600,000, but with this assistance I can only afford to build a $300,000 house. How is that fair?

It's important to remember that under the legislation, charitable funds do not compensate for what people have lost, but can help them with what they need. They aim to return you to a modest standard of living. That standard is determined by the size of your family; factors such as income, assets, and liabilities; your level of hardship; and your capacity to recover.

This doesn't seem like an equitable distribution of the donated money…Why didn't you just distribute it evenly, like $8,000 per applicant?

The formula is designed to close the gap between your current circumstances and what's needed for a modest standard of living. It's equitable because all applicants are assessed with the same criteria, the same formula, and receive the same percentage of assistance based on need.

Providing an equal amount of money to every applicant ignores the complexity of the variety of circumstances that people find themselves in. It also fails to consider hardship.

How much money is available to be distributed for ongoing financial hardship?

A total of 294 applications were received for funding under Stage 4. About $1.84 million has been handed out under Part A of Stage 4 ($1.17 million for immediate financial assistance relating to bills and urgent repairs; $275,816 for vegetation clearance; $267,437 for temporary accommodation; and $125,850 for temporary relocation costs). About $1.43 million was available for ongoing financial hardship under Stage 4, Part B, for which 219 applications were received.

In addition, $810,000 was distributed under Stage 1 ($3,000 for every adult and $1,000 for every child who lost their primary residence; maximum per household of $10,000); $1,219,998 was distributed under Stage 2 ($10,000 to owners and $5,000 to tenants whose primary residence was totally destroyed); $422,843 was distributed under Stage 3 ($5,000 for owners whose primary residence or external structures on site had been damaged).

To summarise, a couple with two children who lost their home in the bushfires would already have received $23,000 under the earlier stages of the Appeal distribution.

In addition, $400,000 has been allocated to support beyondblue's Child and Bushfire Disaster Response program; $300,000 to a revegetation project managed by the Dunalley Tasman Neighbourhood House; and almost $600,000 has been retained to support community-based recovery projects over the next 12 months, to be managed by the Affected Area Recovery Committees.

Are there any other ways I can get help?

Yes. The Bushfire Recovery Unit is helping to link requests for assistance with a range of service clubs and other non-government organisations who arranged appeals. This will ensure that people or projects that may not be eligible for support under the Red Cross Bushfire Appeal don't fall through the cracks.

This is done in a coordinated way through the Monetary Donations Subcommittee of the Bushfire Social Recovery Reference Group, which is a forum for organisations to share information to coordinate service delivery and consider ways to collectively resolve issues that may arise. For more information, please call the Bushfire Recovery Unit on **1800 567 567**.

There is also over $500,000 of the Red Cross Appeal that's been set aside to meet longer term needs in bushfire-affected communities that may not yet be apparent.

I've been struggling since the bushfires, and this funding round has added to my stress. What can I do?

There are experienced social workers available at the Dunalley Information Service Hub (DISH), in the old Dunalley Post Office, who can help you with personal support and counselling, as well as assistance with practical daily tasks. They can help point you in the right direction if you need other information or support, and will visit you at home or phone you if you wish. This is free and, of course, confidential. You can call the DISH on **6253 5575**.

Fire affected residents can also access free financial counselling by contacting the Financial Planning Association of Australia Pro Bono Service on

1300 626 393.

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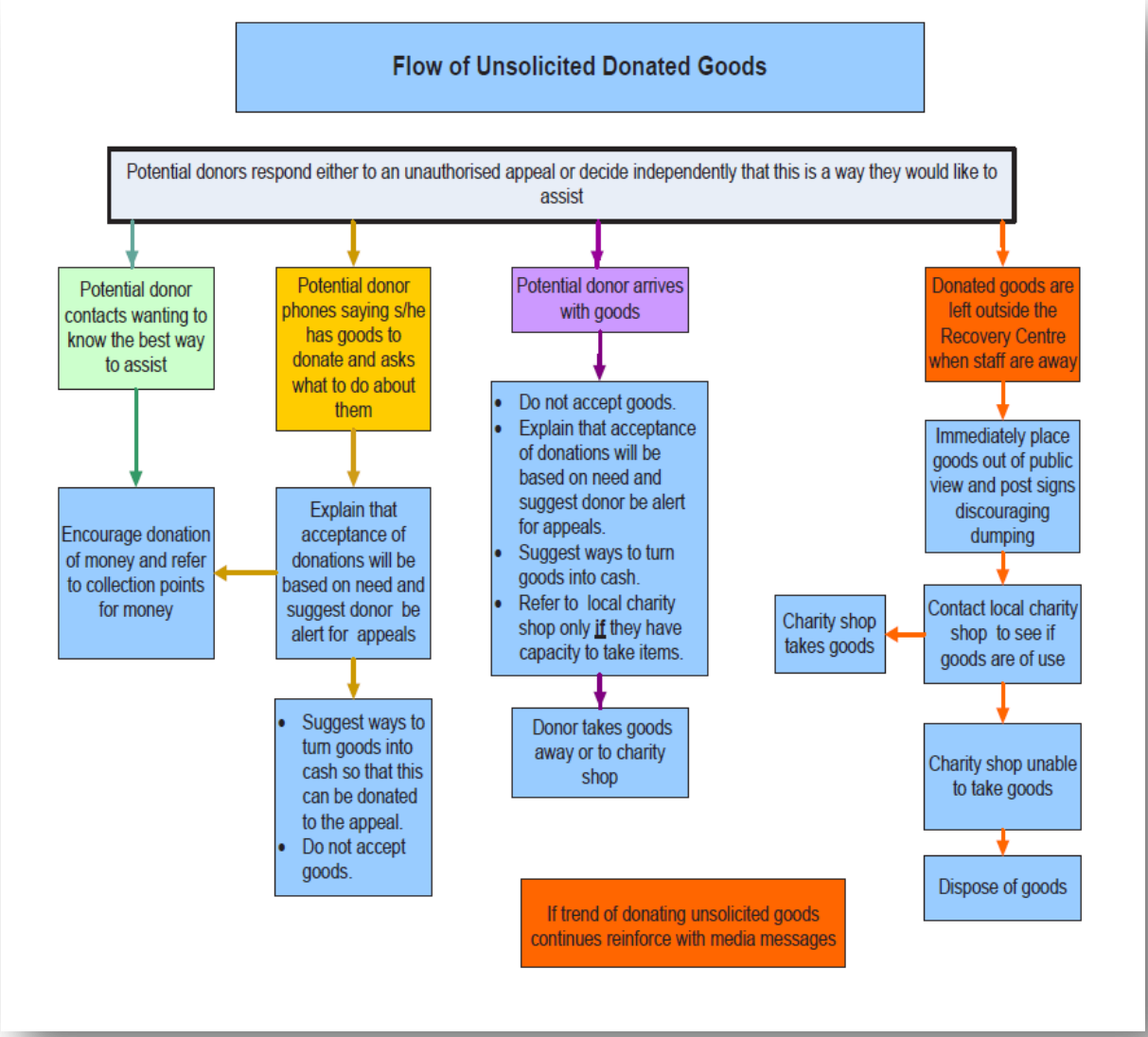
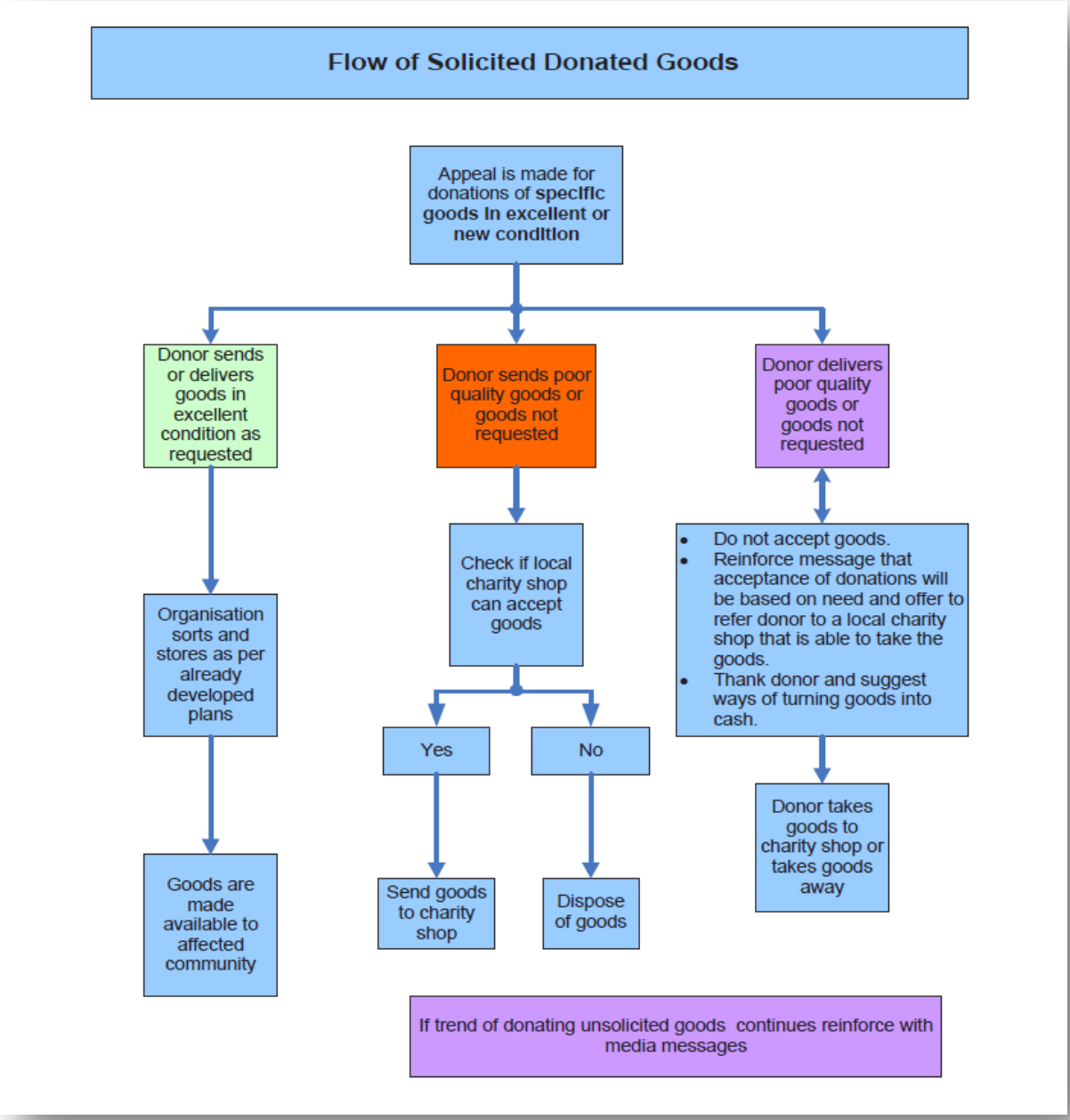
A flowchart from the *National Guidelines for Managing Donated Goods* that shows the pathway for managing unsolicited donated goods, and a sample list of possible needs of disaster-affected people.

The national guidelines can be found at:
http://www.dcsi.sa.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0004/1894/national-guidelines-for-managing-donated-goods.pdf.





Possible needs of Disaster-Affected People

Needs in first days

Essential items

- somewhere to sleep
- a system of accessing medicines (e.g. not able to get without a prescription, and pharmacies are sometime unsure what to do)
- bottled water/water supplies
- food (including infant food)
- pet food
- baby hygiene items such as nappies, wipes, creams

- first aid items
- battery-operated torches and radios, and batteries
- portable toilets
- generators and fuel.

Personal items

- bedding;
- personal hygiene items such as comb, toothbrush, toothpaste, washer, towel, soap, tissues, toilet paper, feminine hygiene products;
- night wear, change of underwear (new), change of clothes (new or in excellent condition);
- cash;
- petrol for car/transport;
- mobile phone and charger (access to internet and email could service a similar purpose) to enable family/friends to communicate;
- toys;
- accommodation for pets;
- essential information packages including what to do, access to grants, how to tackle clean-up (eg what personal protective equipment to use, where to get help);
- basic stationery supplies (eg writing paper, pens, envelopes, stamps) and a folder for keeping important documents.

Needs in first weeks

Essential items

- groceries;
- bottled water for drinking plus other water (for washing etc) in large quantities;
- portable gas stove or a power source (eg generator);
- skips, somewhere to place rubbish; and
- work boots, clothes and gloves.

Personal items

- bags/cases;
- children's and teenagers' entertainment items;
- furniture (new or good quality second-hand);
- prepared nutritious meals (to remind people to eat, as often they do not feel hungry until food is placed in front of them);
- basic kitchen items;
- linen (new or good quality second-hand);
- new pillows;
- lockable storage (eg shipping container, shed);
- plastic storage boxes or other storage equipment;
- schoolbooks/school clothes;
- phone and internet access;
- washing machine;
- tarpaulins;
- rags; and

- vouchers for massage (to assist sore backs, muscles after heavy work, relieve stress).

Needs in first months

Essential items

- household items such as fridges, washing machines
- kitchen tools (eg new saucepans, frying pans, cutlery, plates, cups)
- additional skips for rubbish removal.

Personal items

- good clothes for school/university/work
- sewing kits
- recipe books
- tools, including gardening equipment.

Needs in first year

Personal needs

- plants and fruit trees (people nurture these until ready to move into new homes, and they can be a symbol of new life and moving forward).

Community needs

- community functions;
- community projects such as community halls, sporting equipment and facilities, children's playgrounds, community buses;
- telecommunication tower maintenance and repairs;
- mitigation activities (eg cleaning drains, culverts);
- project management services;
- memorials.

Specific needs on farm properties

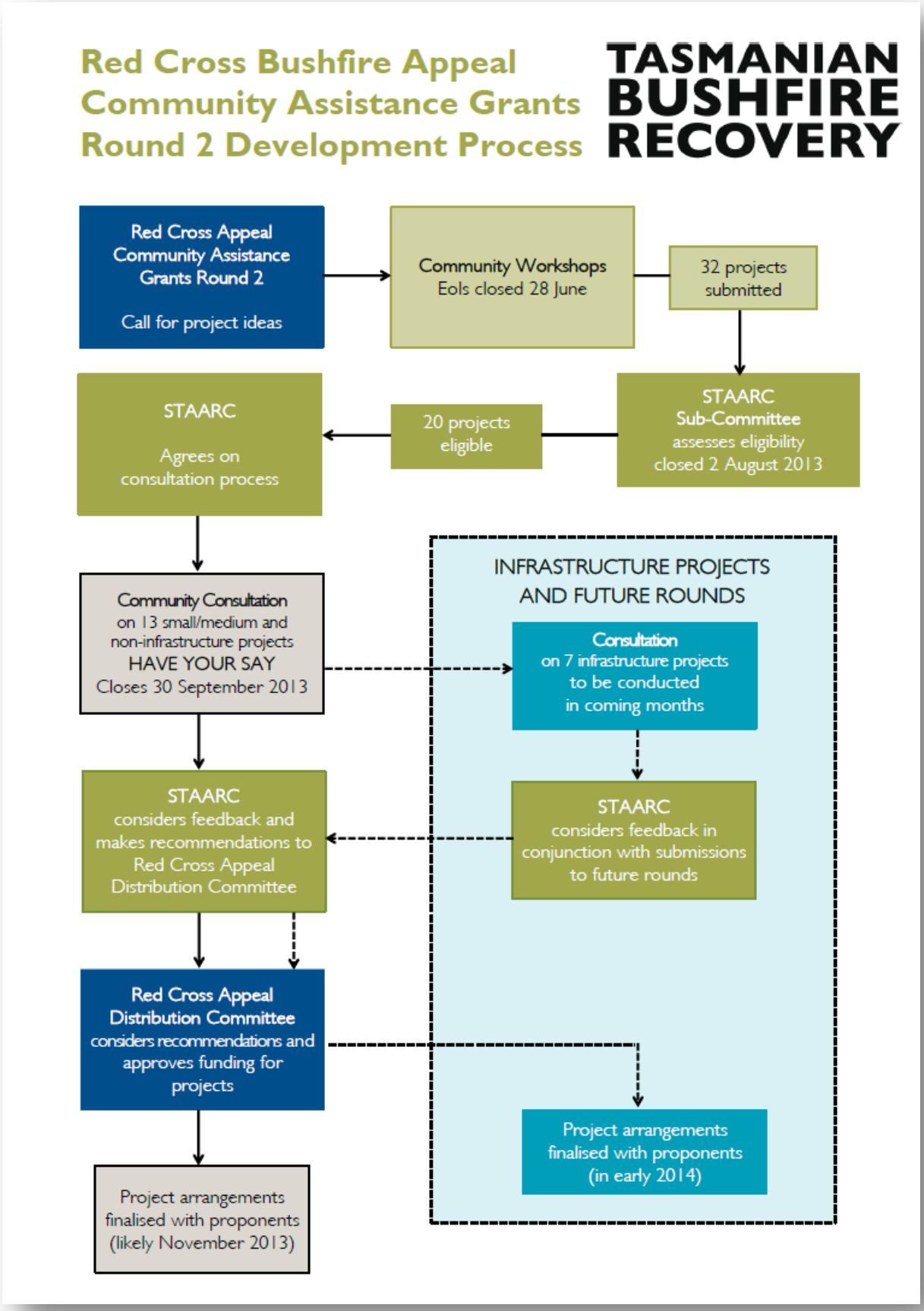
Essential

- medication, treatment, food, water for stock
- agistment for animals and immediate safe place.

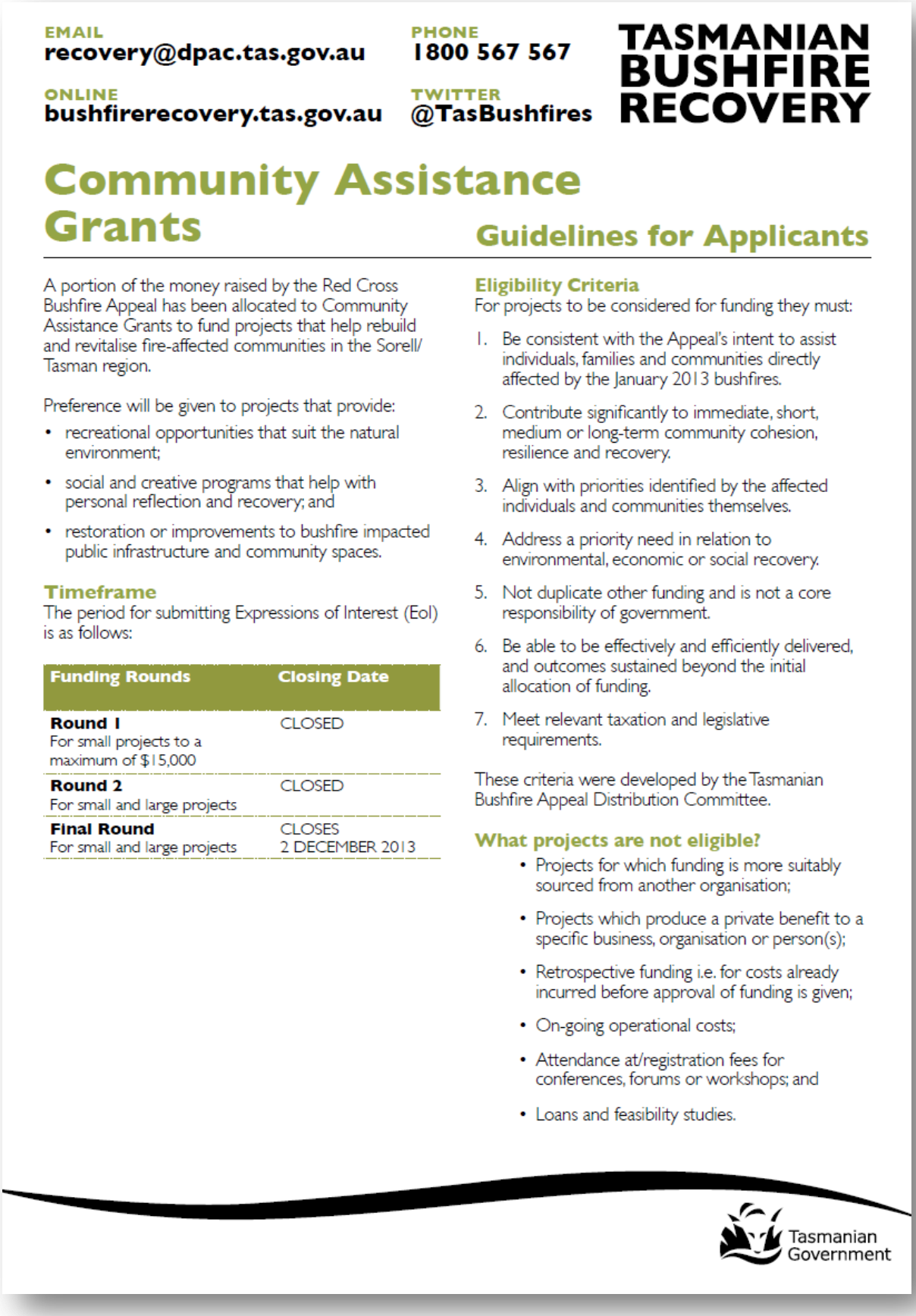
Ongoing needs

- extra food for volunteers cleaning-up farm/fencing;
- large water tanks with water delivered and new piping;
- supplies such as fencing posts, wire etc;
- shipping containers or lockable storage.

A flowchart of the Community Assistance Grants process for Round 2 of the program.



Guidelines for applicants, clearly articulating the criteria and constraints of the program.



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TASMANIAN BUSHFIRE RECOVERY

Community Assistance Grants

Guidelines for Applicants

A portion of the money raised by the Red Cross Bushfire Appeal has been allocated to Community Assistance Grants to fund projects that help rebuild and revitalise fire-affected communities in the Sorell/ Tasman region.

Preference will be given to projects that provide:

- recreational opportunities that suit the natural environment;
- social and creative programs that help with personal reflection and recovery; and
- restoration or improvements to bushfire impacted public infrastructure and community spaces.

Timeframe

The period for submitting Expressions of Interest (EoI) is as follows:

Funding Rounds	Closing Date
Round 1 For small projects to a maximum of $15,000	CLOSED
Round 2 For small and large projects	CLOSED
Final Round For small and large projects	CLOSES 2 DECEMBER 2013

Eligibility Criteria

For projects to be considered for funding they must:

1. Be consistent with the Appeal's intent to assist individuals, families and communities directly affected by the January 2013 bushfires.
2. Contribute significantly to immediate, short, medium or long-term community cohesion, resilience and recovery.
3. Align with priorities identified by the affected individuals and communities themselves.
4. Address a priority need in relation to environmental, economic or social recovery.
5. Not duplicate other funding and is not a core responsibility of government.
6. Be able to be effectively and efficiently delivered, and outcomes sustained beyond the initial allocation of funding.
7. Meet relevant taxation and legislative requirements.

These criteria were developed by the Tasmanian Bushfire Appeal Distribution Committee.

What projects are not eligible?

- Projects for which funding is more suitably sourced from another organisation;
- Projects which produce a private benefit to a specific business, organisation or person(s);
- Retrospective funding i.e. for costs already incurred before approval of funding is given;
- On-going operational costs;
- Attendance at/registration fees for conferences, forums or workshops; and
- Loans and feasibility studies.

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How to submit your expression of interest

You will need to fill out an EoI form which can be found at www.bushfirerecovery.tas.gov.au.

How do I find out what the community priorities are?

There is a series of activities taking place in the Sorell and Tasman local government areas to engage with the community and determine what the community priorities are. For more information on how to have your say through this process, phone one of the listed contact people.

Who can apply for Community Assistance Grants Funding?

Anyone can submit an EoI but only legally constituted organisations can receive grant funding.

These include:

- An incorporated Association
- An incorporated Cooperative
- A company – proprietary company or public company incorporated under the Corporations Act 2001
- An Aboriginal Corporation
- An organisation established by legislation

Organisations and individuals that do not meet the above criteria may have their project supported by an organisation which does meet the criteria.

Organisations fulfilling the above criteria must also be able to demonstrate that they:

- are financially viable; and
- have the capacity to successfully manage and administer their proposed project on time and within budget.

I/my group is not incorporated. Can we apply for funding?

Individuals, not-for-profit organisations or community groups who are not incorporated may apply but must be sponsored (auspiced) by an incorporated organisation.

If funding for the project goes ahead, the sponsoring organisation must confirm that it will accept the legal and financial requirements to auspice the grant.

What happens if I have an idea for a project but am not able to deliver it?

We are interested in hearing about ideas and encourage individuals, community groups and organisations to collaborate to develop and deliver projects together.

Several workshops have already been held for the Dunalley, Copping, Forcett, Connellys Marsh and Murdunna communities as well as for interest groups.

If you would like to arrange an information session or workshop for your interest group, please let us know.

What about projects that require Council approval or that involve infrastructure construction?

Part of the process of developing EoIs will involve discussions with the relevant decision-makers, including councils. These issues will be worked through during project development.

A project may be considered acceptable, but the final location or scale may need to be determined through another process - for example through the development of the Dunalley Structure Plan.

Can joint applications be submitted?

Yes, partnerships between organisations to deliver joint initiatives are strongly encouraged.

If you are applying with another organisation, and you are successful in funding, you will need to ensure that roles and responsibilities for the project are agreed and that the organisation takes full legal and financial responsibility for the management of any funding.

Can my organisation apply for more than one project?

Yes, if it can demonstrate the capacity to manage more than one project.

How detailed does the budget need to be?

It is not expected that your EoI has a fully costed budget. However, approximate costs are needed to help with the decision-making process.

How are projects chosen?

The Sorell Tasman Affected Area Recovery Committee (STAARC) was set up to help the community to lead its own recovery and will make recommendations to the Tasmanian Bushfire Appeal Distribution Committee to fund suitable projects based on the community's input.

The STAARC is co-chaired by the Sorell Mayor, Kerry Vincent and Tasman Mayor, Jan Barwick, and includes representatives from the community, local government and the Tasmanian Government.

EoIs for each round are assessed by the Community Projects Advisory Sub-Committee of STAARC for eligibility. The Sub-Committee is made up of a community panel which includes Kerry Vincent, Geoff Martin, Kathy Spaulding, Bob Millington, Caroline Bignell and John Harkin from the Bushfire Recovery Unit.

Summaries of eligible projects ideas will be given to the Sorell Tasman communities for their feedback. This process aims to ensure that projects recommended for funding address community priorities.

Following the consultation process, STAARC will make recommendations to the Tasmanian Bushfire Appeal Distribution Committee who will authorise the funding arrangements.

Implementation of recommended projects is expected to take some time, and may depend on other processes that are running at the same time. For example, some projects may not be able to proceed until the Dunalley Structure Plan has been finalised.

All applicants will be advised of progress with assessment and decisions.

When does the next funding round close?

Some larger infrastructure projects submitted in Round 2 will be considered in conjunction with submissions to the Final Round.

The Final Round of the Community Assistance Grants closes on 2 December 2013.

We encourage you to submit your ideas as soon as possible, or talk to one of the contact people listed below to discuss project ideas, hold workshops for your community group, or help you complete your EoI form.

Expression of Interest forms can be found at www.bushfirerecovery.tas.gov.au

Contacts

For further information, please call:

John Harkin	0409 365 067
Sakura Oddie	0438 204 604

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The feedback collected for the Community Assitance Grants Round 2 formed the basis of the Final Round communication. The most commonly used words in the feedback forms were used to create a wordcloud that illustrated the popularity of ideas raised for the program.

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Community Assistance Grants Final Round

Closes 2 December 2013

Your Community: Your Priorities

Thank you to all who gave feedback on the larger projects which were put forward to Round 2 of the Community Assistance Grants or provided ideas for additional projects. The ideas displayed below represent community priorities based on your feedback. The bigger the words, the stronger the preference for the idea!

We have received Community Assistance Grant submissions for the following project ideas. These will go out for consultation in December - January:

Dunalley Skate Park **Dunalley Playgrounds** **Dunalley Foreshore Walk** **Nubeena Evacuation Centre**
Murdunna Foreshore Walk **Blue Hills Sporting Shooters Club** **Dunalley Tennis Courts**

This leaves many of the ideas still open to be developed into Expressions of Interest.

Your Community: Your chance to get involved!

The final round of the Community Assistance Grants closes on **2 December 2013**. This is your final chance to submit an Expression of Interest for a project that you think will help in your community's recovery.

Find out how you can get involved by dropping in to the Dunalley Information and Service Hub (DISH) and pick up a copy of the *Guidelines for Applicants* and *Expression of Interest Form*; go to www.bushfirerecovery.tas.gov.au to download everything you need; or phone **John Harkin** on **0409 365 067** or **Sakura Oddie** on **0438 204 604** to discuss your options or get help to develop an Expression of Interest.

Final Round feedback was collected using the form below, also available in online form (Survey Monkey).

EMAIL
recovery@dpac.tas.gov.au

PHONE
1800 567 567

ONLINE
bushfirerecovery.tas.gov.au

TWITTER
@TasBushfires

TASMANIAN BUSHFIRE RECOVERY

Community Assistance Grant Final Round

Public feedback on eligible projects

HAVE YOUR SAY

Your Community. Your Priorities.

The Tasmanian Red Cross Bushfire Appeal Community Assistance Grant funds projects that will help people affected by the fires to recover and revitalise their communities.

The attached feedback form summarises 12 projects that are eligible for grants. We would like you to read about the projects and rate them, to tell us if you think they are a good idea.

Of these 12 projects, seven have been carried forward from Round 2, and five submissions were recently assessed as eligible for funding.

If you want more detail on the projects, our website www.bushfirerecovery.tas.gov.au.

Next Steps

Your feedback will help the Sorell Tasman Affected Area Recovery Committee (STAARC) to decide which projects to recommend to the independent Tasmanian Bushfire Appeal Distribution Committee.

Implementation of endorsed projects is expected to take some time and may depend on other processes.

To have your say, please return this form to:

- Dunalley Information and Service Hub
  160 Arthur Highway Dunalley
- Sorell or Tasman Council
- by email to recovery@dpac.tas.gov.au
- by post to:
  Community Assistance Grants
  Bushfire Recovery Unit
  Reply Paid 83020
  HOBART TAS 7001
  (no stamp required)

OR
complete the online survey at:
www.bushfirerecovery.tas.gov.au

OR
Call us to complete the feedback form over the phone, on 1800 567 567

For further information, please contact
John Harkin 0409 365 067
Sakura Oddie 0438 204 604

ALL FEEDBACK MUST BE RECEIVED BY 31 JANUARY 2014

Community Assistance Grant Final Round

HAVE YOUR SAY Your Community. Your priorities.

Public feedback on eligible projects

IMPORTANT: In order to have your say, you must complete the *required information in the following section. The reason we ask for this information is so that we know that all communities within the fire-affected areas are represented.

*Required *Which fire-affected communities are you connected to? .....

*Name ..... *Address .....

Phone..... .....

Email..... *Age group U18 ☐ 18-35 ☐ 36-50 ☐ 51-65 ☐ Over 65 ☐

Have your say* and show us on a scale of 1 to 5 whether you think these projects are a good idea

1 = "not at all" through to 5 = "great idea"

*Please note that we are not asking you to rank these projects against each other. We are seeking your views on each project on their own merit.

Community projects		Grant sought	Is this a good idea? (not at all) (great idea)
Dunalley Skate Park Applicant: Danielle McBride	After talking with 10 – 17 year olds from the area regarding their social recovery, many believe that there is nothing fun for them to do without substantial travel. The skate park project would affect the Dunalley area positively as it would give the children an opportunity to exercise, become more social with other kids around the area and minimise the risk of kids riding on the streets.	$35,000	1 ---- 2 ---- 3 ---- 4 ---- 5
Nubeena Evacuation Centre Applicant: Lions Club of Tasman Inc.	This project aims to complete the facilities in the Civic Centre at Nubeena which was used during the January bushfires as an evacuation centre. This unfinished building requires internal walls, doors, power and lighting. The project will also ensure fire regulations are addressed and provide evacuation equipment for future emergency use.	$56,000	1 ---- 2 ---- 3 ---- 4 ---- 5

Community Assistance Grant Final Round

HAVE YOUR SAY Your Community. Your priorities.

Public feedback on eligible projects

Community projects		Grant sought	Is this a good idea? (not at all) (great idea)
Rebuild and development of the Blue Hills Sporting Shooters Club Applicant: Blue Hills Sporting Shooters Club	The aim of this project is to rebuild and recreate a recreational opportunity for people of all levels of physical ability; promote shooting and archery as a safe and equitable sporting discipline and to stage National, State, Club and Interclub competitions. Junior development, including safe handling and storage, is a high priority with almost all households in the rural setting owning a firearm. The Shooters Club suffered significant fire damage and covers 18 disciplines each month.	$109,000	1 ---- 2 ---- 3 ---- 4 ---- 5
Dunalley Tennis Courts Applicant: Roger Garth	This project proposes the building of two "super grass" tennis courts at the Golf Club, to improve opportunities for sporting participation, enhance the sporting base and viability of the Golf Club, and foster community spirit.	$110,000	1 ---- 2 ---- 3 ---- 4 ---- 5
Murdjunna Foreshore Walkway Applicant: Murdunna Bushfire Recovery Group	The foreshore walkway is the key component in the coordinated development of the Murdunna Pedestrian Precinct. The walkway would provide 1. Safety - a safe walking zone for community members including school children, families with bikes and prams and older residents; 2. Environmental recovery - contribute substantially to the environmental enhancement of the foreshore along the bay, traversing an area on the margin of tidal wetlands that support a wide range of bird species; and 3. Coordinated development of the Murdunna Pedestrian Precinct, benefiting residents and visitors.	$194,850	1 ---- 2 ---- 3 ---- 4 ---- 5
Dunalley Foreshore Path Applicant: Jaybena Bryant Rose and Gillian Biscoe	A foreshore path with walking, cycling, wheelchair and walker access, to provide a safe and socially inclusive place of tranquility and beauty for the community and visitors. Also included will be small off-path fishing areas, rest areas, safety fencing where needed and redesigned / revitalised picnic and parking areas. It will provide social and physical exercise benefits, along with economic benefits to small businesses in the area.	$550,000+	1 ---- 2 ---- 3 ---- 4 ---- 5
Dunalley Playgrounds & Walkways Applicant: Jane Spaulding	To link the business end of Dunalley via a scenic foreshore walk to the upper waterfront and jetty area, incorporating plantings for beautification of the area. Children's playgrounds to be established and/or upgraded at both ends of the walking track.	uncosted	1 ---- 2 ---- 3 ---- 4 ---- 5

Community Assistance Grant Final Round

HAVE YOUR SAY Your Community. Your priorities.

Public feedback on eligible projects

Community projects		Grant sought	Is this a good idea? (not at all) (great idea)
Out of the Ashes Photography and Art Exhibition Applicant: Janice Sutton	Community members will be aware of the success of the Out of the Ashes Photography & Art Exhibition and Out on a Limb's successful application to tour the exhibition statewide with Tasmanian Regional Arts in 2014. However due to recent funding cuts to TRA the tour was cancelled. Out on a Limb (OOAL) has since secured additional venues: Rosny Schoolhouse Gallery in March and Kingborough Council in April as part of a statewide tour. In order to make this wonderful tour a reality we require a small amount of additional funding. The exhibition highlights our community's momentous journey, it resilience, strength and dignity and captures precious moments in the recovery process. It is an inspiring exhibition, beautiful framed and sensitively considered. OOAL is a not for profit organisation run by volunteers.	$5,000	1 ---- 2 ---- 3 ---- 4 ---- 5
Dunalley Community Hall Kitchen Appliances and Goods Applicant: Judy Young	The Dunalley Community Hall perished in the January 2013 bushfires and will be rebuilt sometime in the near future. The Dunalley Community Hall has been an important meeting place for groups and residents for 114 years. It is envisaged once the hall has been rebuilt this will be the case for at least another century. This proposal is to provide Dunalley and surrounding communities' access to commercial grade kitchen facilities which will support and enhance activities that are held in the Community Hall. This will also assist in the long term recovery of community, connecting people through sharing food.	$26,044	1 ---- 2 ---- 3 ---- 4 ---- 5

Community Assistance Grant Final Round

HAVE YOUR SAY Your Community. Your priorities.

Public feedback on eligible projects

Do you have further comments to make about any of these project ideas?

Need more room? Please attach more pages.

Visit our website www.bushfirerecovery.tas.gov.au for more information about the Community Assistance Grant process, or call 1800 567 567.

This analysis, based on the community feedback to the Community Assistance Grants Final Round, was provided to the Red Cross Appeal Distribution Committee. Table 1 shows the level of support given to each project and the preferences of the various settlements in the region, and Chart 1 provides a graphic overview of overall support.

2013 Tasmanian Bushfire Appeal Community Assistance Grants - Final Round

Community support for eligible project proposals

Table 1. Support by area

Key: highest — Red: Proportion of respondents showing non-support with scores of 1-2; highest — Green: Proportion of respondents showing support with scores of 3-5

Project	Dunalley*		Murdunna		Tasman Peninsula*		Copping*		Forcett*		Other*		All	
Number of respondents	(n=40)		(n=75		(n=20)		(n=29)		(n=35)		(n=21)		(N=220)	
% of total respondents	18%		34%		9%		13%		16%		10%		100%	
$35,000 Dunalley Skate Park	9	31	13	62	2	18	16	13	22	13	8	13	70	150
	23%	78%	17%	83%	10%	90%	55%	45%	63%	37%	38%	62%	32%	68%
$56,000 Nubeena Evacuation Centre	20	20	33	42	3	17	14	15	17	18	9	12	96	124
	50%	50%	44%	56%	15%	85%	48%	52%	49%	51%	43%	57%	44%	56%
$109,000 Blue Hills Sporting Shooters Club	20	20	52	23	11	9	14	15	16	19	10	11	123	97
	50%	50%	69%	31%	55%	45%	48%	52%	46%	54%	48%	52%	56%	44%
$110,000 Dunalley Tennis Courts	9	31	26	49	4	16	14	15	23	12	9	12	85	135
	23%	78%	35%	65%	20%	80%	48%	52%	66%	34%	43%	57%	39%	61%
$194,850 Murdunna Foreshore Walkway	11	29	0	75	3	17	19	10	27	8	6	15	66	154
	28%	73%	0%	100%	15%	85%	66%	34%	77%	23%	29%	71%	30%	70%
$550,000+ Dunalley Foreshore Path	10	30	25	50	6	14	20	9	27	8	9	12	97	123
	25%	75%	33%	67%	30%	70%	69%	31%	77%	23%	43%	57%	44%	56%
? Dunalley Playgrounds and Walkways	10	30	24	51	7	13	18	11	20	15	6	15	85	135
	25%	75%	32%	68%	35%	65%	62%	38%	57%	43%	29%	71%	39%	61%
$15,000 Dunalley Fit	9	31	32	43	5	15	8	21	18	17	11	10	83	137
	23%	78%	43%	57%	25%	75%	28%	72%	51%	49%	52%	48%	38%	62%
$27,000 Taranna Diesel Generator	18	22	38	37	1	19	12	17	18	17	11	10	98	122
	45%	55%	51%	49%	5%	95%	41%	59%	51%	49%	52%	48%	45%	55%
$200,000 Imlay Street Park Redevelopment	5	35	19	56	4	16	16	13	19	16	12	9	75	145
	13%	88%	25%	75%	20%	80%	55%	45%	54%	46%	57%	43%	34%	66%
$5,000 Out of the Ashes Art Exhibition	18	22	27	48	5	15	21	8	28	7	11	10	110	110
	45%	55%	36%	64%	25%	75%	72%	28%	80%	20%	52%	48%	50%	50%
$26,044 Dunalley Community Hall Kitchen	3	37	13	62	3	17	16	13	17	18	8	13	60	160
	8%	93%	17%	83%	15%	85%	55%	45%	49%	51%	38%	62%	27%	73%

***Data has been grouped in the following way:**

Dunalley - includes Connellys Marsh and Boomer Bay

Tasman Peninsula - includes Eagle Hawk Neck, Port Arthur, Taranna, Koonya, Nubeena, White Beach and Sloping Main

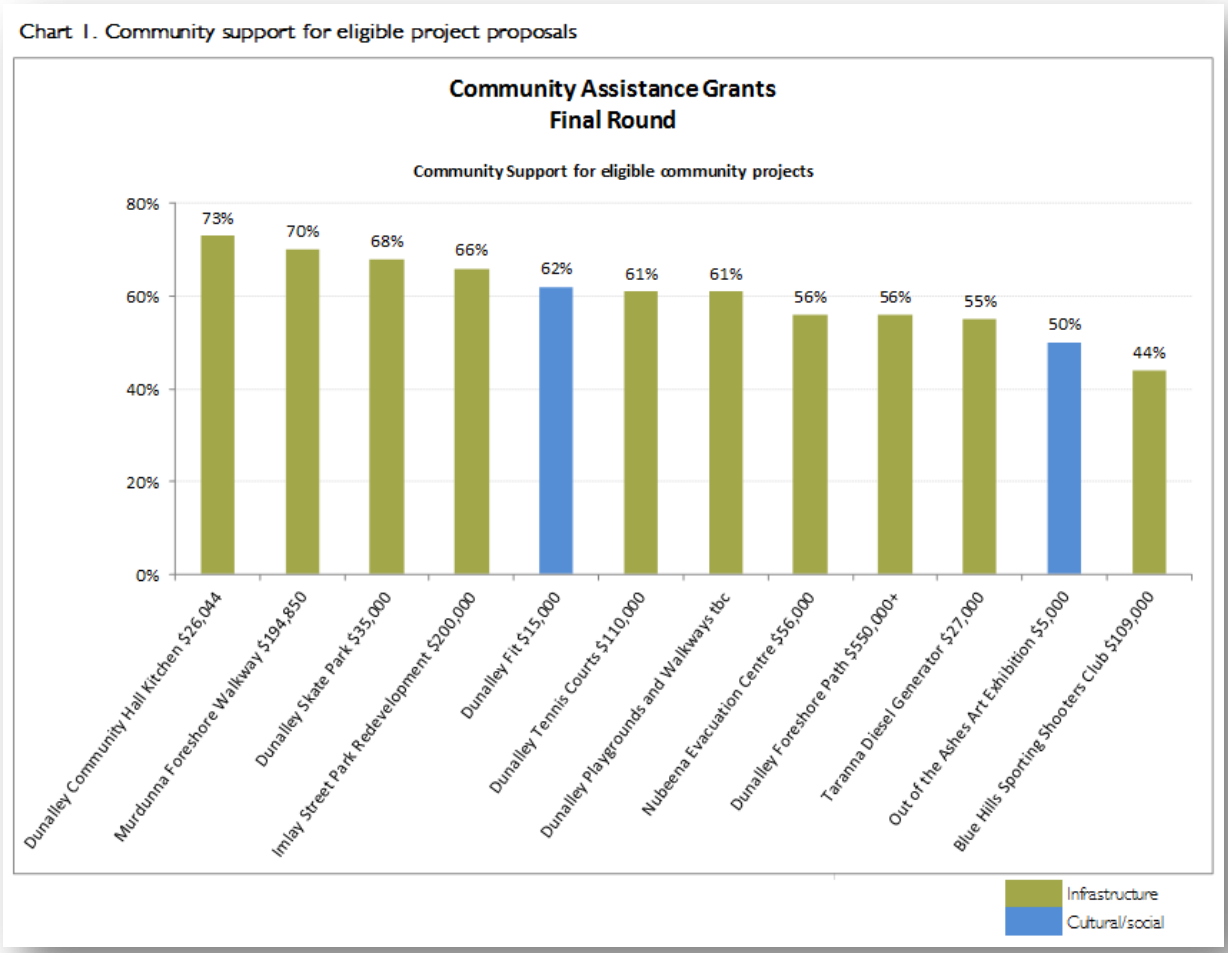
Copping - includes Copping, Bream Creek, Marion Bay, Kellevie and Nugent

Forcett - includes Sorell, Forcett, Dodges Ferry, Primrose Sands, Carlton River,

Other - all other areas outside Sorell and Tasman municipalities

	Dunalley*		Murdunna		Tasman		Copping*		Forcett*		Other*		All	
Average overall support by area for community projects	30%	70%	34%	66%	23%	78%	54%	46%	60%	40%	44%	56%	40%	60%

Chart 1. Community support for eligible project proposals



The collection of projects that were endorsed for funding by the Red Cross Appeal Distribution Committee for the three community grant rounds. More information about these projects can be found in Appendix Five of the *Transition to Long-Term Recovery Report*. .

Community Projects endorsed for funding	Approved funds
1. Upgrade of the Belchers Tier transmission tower	$ 100,310
2. Refurbishment of the Ellendale Community Hall	$ 50,000
3. Community noticeboard at Westerway	$ 935
4. Symbols of Bushfire Recovery	$ 14,300
5. Native Wildlife Nestboxes	$ 8,200
6. Murdunna on the Water	$ 15,000
7. Mobile BBQ / Event Facilities	$ 6,800
8. Youth Involvement Program	$ 12,500
9. Upgrade Pedestrian Access from Sommers Bay Road to Sommers Bay Jetty	$ 15,000
10. Sounds Rivulet Footbridge	$ 15,000
11. Sommers Bay Road Car Park – Landscape & Footpaths	$ 15,000
12. Basketball Slab and Hoop	$ 9,900
13. Grave Island Foreshore Day Use	$ 14,500
14. Community Bush Dance	$ 7,380
15. Copping community care cool room facilities	$ 13,500
16. Community Water Storage for Emergency Fire Fighting	$ 15,000
17. Dunalley Sports Ground	$ 15,000
18. Restoration of Pedestrian Access to Connellys Beach from Beach Road	$ 15,300
19. Eaglehawk Neck Community Hall Upgrade	$ 23,423
20. Construction of multi-purpose pavilion at Bream Creek Show Grounds	$ 23,780
21. Dunalley School Community Kitchen	$ 40,000
22. Pedestrian Access from Connellys Marsh Road to the Shore Line	$ 48,000
23. WILDFIRE	$ 36,200
24. Dunalley Fit	$ 15,000
25. Nubeena Evacuation Centre	$ 56,000
26. Dunalley Tennis Courts	$ 30,000
27. Murdunna Foreshore Walkway	$ 194,850
28. Dunalley Parks, Playgrounds and Pathways	$ 988,000

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TASMANIAN BUSHFIRE RECOVERY

Fact Sheet

Farmers' Winter Assistance Package Update

What assistance is available and what is the current situation?

Farmers in bushfire-affected areas are being further supported with a package of assistance totalling $510,000.

The package includes:

- An additional $200,000 to purchase materials to **repair** fences damaged or destroyed. The Tasmanian Farmers and Graziers Association will distribute the funds as an extension to the previous program which provided $100,000.
- The Tasmania Prison Service is providing two supervised crews to assist farmers with the labour needed to fix fences.
- The Lions Club is buying tools for the work, which will be kept as a 'tool library' and used to assist other communities recover from disaster.
- $30,000 is provided by Rotary Tasmania and Bendigo Bank for a second round of **re-seeding**. About 10 tonnes of seed have been purchased with a blend of grasses specifically selected for durability and quality of feed. This will also assist with soil erosion control in the worst-affected areas.
- $50,000 is provided by Rotary Tasmania to **supply stock feed**. Dry feed and supplements will be provided to farmers who are in short term need. The amount of fodder available is limited, but it is recognised that this is a critical need at this time of the year.
- $80,000 is provided by the State Government to NRM South for **farm recovery planning and rehabilitation**. NRM South has been working with fire-affected primary producers, providing property management assistance. Local facilitators are identifying priorities for environmental restoration, including erosion control, habitat protection and creation of biodiverse windbreaks and other strategic plantings.

A Farm Field Day is being planned for late September to provide case study examples and practical guidance.

The State Government is providing up to $20,000 to the TFGA to support the administration of the program.

Am I eligible?

Any farmer impacted by fires this year will be eligible but the TFGA will work with farmers on what the priority needs are. If you're unsure whether you're eligible, please contact the TFGA.

How do I access this assistance?

The Coordinator of the assistance package is John Behrens, who can be contacted on **0419 590 322**. The TFGA's phone number is **6332 1800** and NRM South's phone number is **0447 556 740**.

August 2013

TASMANIAN BUSHFIRE RECOVERY

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TASMANIAN BUSHFIRE RECOVERY

Fact Sheet: *Bushfire Recovery Review*

The Bushfire Recovery Taskforce is seeking feedback on its coordination of the January 2013 bushfire recovery efforts.

The Taskforce invites input from members of the community who were directly and indirectly affected by the bushfires. It is also seeking comments from organisations who have been involved with recovery processes.

The aim of the review is to better understand which processes worked well and which things could be done differently so we can respond to future emergencies in the best possible way.

Community feedback

Residents of the Sorell, Tasman, Central Highlands and Bicheno municipalities are invited to provide comments about their experience of the recovery process since the January 2013 bushfires.

In particular, the Taskforce is interested in receiving feedback about recovery processes that followed the initial emergency, in the days and months after roads were reopened and people were able to return to their properties.

The survey is voluntary and open to all who were directly or indirectly affected by the bushfires. Respondents will not be identified in any way.

Members of fire-affected communities are encouraged to complete the survey either:

- online at www.bushfirerecovery.tas.gov.au/review;
- via a feedback form available at the Sorell, Tasman or Central Highlands Council offices or the Dunalley Information and Service Hub; or
- over the phone by calling 1800 567 56.

The survey will close 30 November 2013.

A number of randomly selected residents will also be invited to provide feedback via a telephone survey which will be conducted in early November.

Stakeholder feedback

Service providers and other organisations who have been involved in the 2013 bushfire recovery are invited to provide feedback on the short and medium-term planning and coordination of the social, infrastructure, economic and environmental recovery for fire-affected communities.

Specifically, feedback is being sought from stakeholders on the following areas:

- Governance
- Communication
- Support for individuals, family and the community
- Engaging the community in decisions that affect them
- Restoration of homes, businesses and community infrastructure
- Helping the economy to rebound
- Environmental recovery

As the recovery program has been comprehensive, individuals and organisations are invited to provide as little or as much feedback as they wish, in one or more areas covered by the review.

The stakeholder survey can be completed:

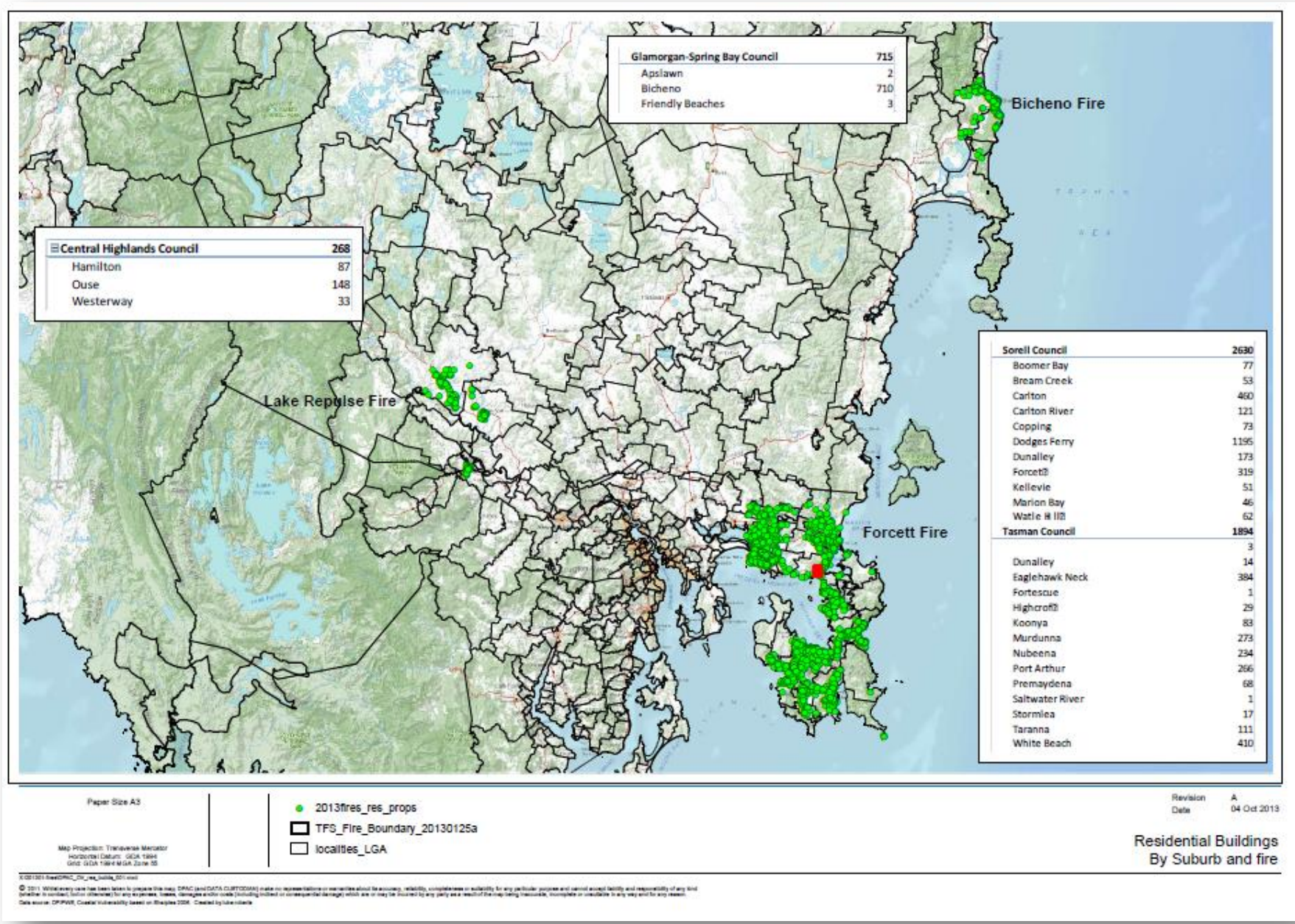
- online at www.bushfirerecovery.tas.gov.au/review;
- by downloading a feedback form and returning it to recovery@dpac.tas.gov.au; or
- over the phone or via face to face interview. Please call 1800 567 567 to arrange.

Surveys close 30 November 2013. The review will continue to explore issues throughout December based on initial feedback received via the surveys.

Findings will aid planning and coordination of future recovery programs and help inform the Taskforce's report to Government *Transition to Long Term Recovery* which will be published early in 2014.

Tasmanian Government

This map was used for the random selection of a representative sample for the Community Survey.



The survey instrument used by EMRS for the community feedback process.

Appendix A – The Questionnaire

Good afternoon/ evening,

My name is ..... from EMRS, an independent Tasmanian research company calling on behalf of The Bushfire Recovery Taskforce. Today we are asking residents and former residents of the fire-affected areas about their experience in the recovery of their communities following the January 2013 Tasmanian bushfires.

This is your chance to have your say. By answering the questions in this survey, you will be helping the Taskforce to plan for future recovery processes.

The questions are not about the initial emergency response – that is the evacuation or the week following the fires. The survey is about the recovery processes that followed the initial emergency, in the days and months after roads were reopened and people were able to return to their properties.

You will not be identified in any way as part of this research with all personal details removed from the data collected.

Could you spare 5 minutes to answer some questions?

(IF YES) Thank you for your co-operation to assist us in this important project.

SECTION A – DEMOGRAPHICS

A. To make sure we get a good representation of the population, may I firstly ask you a couple of questions about yourself?	**1. Male** **2. Female**
B. Are you aged... **READ OUT**	**1. 18 to 35 years** **2. 36 to 50 years** **3. 51 to 65 years** **4. Over 65 years** **5. Declined to answer – DO NOT READ OUT**
C. Did you own or live in a property in a fire-affected area at the time of the January 2013 bushfires? **IF YES – Were you...**	**1. A home owner** **2. A shack owner– GO TO Q3** **3. Renting** **4. Something else (specify)** **5. None of the above – TERMINATE WITH THANKS**

SECTION B – FIRE AFFECTED CATEGORY

1. Was your home destroyed?	**1. Yes – GO TO Q5** **2. No**
2. Was any part of your property damaged?	**1. Yes – GO TO Q5** **2. No – GO TO Q4a**
3. Was your shack destroyed or damaged?	**1. Yes – GO TO Q5** **2. No**
4a. Did a family member or friend lose their home?	**1. Yes** **2. No**
4b. Was your local community affected? **IF 'NO' TO Q4a & 4b TERMINATE WITH THANKS**	**1. Yes** **2. No**

SECTION C – RECOVERY PROCESS

The following questions are about the recovery processes following the initial emergency. **Q5. What are three things that stand out as working really well in the recovery process after the fires, and why?** **IF UNSURE PROMPT WITH: This may include things in the areas of communication, home restoration, environmental aspects or community related activities.**	**RECORD COMMENTS IN DETAIL**
Q6. What are three things that could have been done better in the recovery process after the fires, and how? **IF UNSURE PROMPT WITH: This may include things in the areas of communication, home restoration, environmental aspects or community related activities.**	**RECORD COMMENTS IN DETAIL**
Q7. What can you suggest should be included to help in future recovery programs in Tasmania? **IF UNSURE PROMPT WITH: This may include things in the areas of communication, home restoration, environmental aspects or community related activities.**	**RECORD COMMENTS IN DETAIL**

Thank you for helping us with the survey. Your comments are greatly appreciated and will assist in planning for future recovery programs. If you would like to provide further comments about any of the items discussed in the survey or other recovery process related matters, please call 1800 567 567 during business hours.

Just to remind you that my name is ……. from the research firm, EMRS, and we are conducting this survey on behalf of The Bushfire Recovery Taskforce.

EMRS is bound by national privacy legislation that respects the rights of all respondents. If you have any questions about this survey, please ring my supervisor on (03) 6211 1222.

Acronyms and Abbreviations

AARC	Affected Area Recovery Committee
Act	Emergency Management Act
AGDRP	Australian Government Disaster Recovery Payment
Appeal	Red Cross Tasmania Bushfire 2013 Appeal
BRRG	Bushfire Rebuilding Reference Group
BSRRG	Bushfire Social Recovery Reference Group
CHAARC	Central Highlands Affected Area Recovery Committee
DEDTA	Department of Economic Development, Tourism and Arts
DHHS	Department of Health and Human Services
DIER	Department of Infrastructure, Energy and Resources
DoE	Department of Education
DoJ	Department of Justice
DPAC	Department of Premier and Cabinet
DPEM	Department of Police and Emergency Services
DPIPWE	Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and Environment
MARC	Multi-Agency Recovery Committee
MISS	Major Incident Support System
NDRRA	Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements
NGO	Non-Government Organisation
Plan	State Recovery Plan
SES	State Emergency Service
SRO	Southern Regional Office
STAARC	Sorell Tasman Affected Area Recovery Committee
STERG	Sorell Tasman Economic Recovery Group
Taskforce	Bushfire Recovery Taskforce
TEMP	Tasmanian Emergency Management Plan
TFGA	Tasmanian Farmers & Graziers Association
ToR	Terms of Reference
TFS	Tasmania Fire Service
TRRA	Tasmanian Relief and Recovery Arrangements
Unit	Bushfire Recovery Unit

Department of Premier and Cabinet
Bushfire Recovery Unit

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