



## Local community and emergency organisational connectedness as an indicator of disaster resilience

Assoc Prof Valerie Ingham

ADRC  
September 2018, Perth  
Perth Convention Centre



# Disaster & Community Resilience Research Group



**Our purpose:** To highlight issues concerning local disaster preparation and support for local leaders before, during and after a disaster.



# Current projects

---

- ❖ *Community Leaders in the Blue Mountains*
- ❖ *The 'hidden' cost of natural disaster: Helping local community organisations identify their contribution and prioritise activities.*
- ❖ *Organisational connectedness as a measure of a community's disaster resilience*



# Measures of resilience



# Theoretical Framework

---





# Research Method

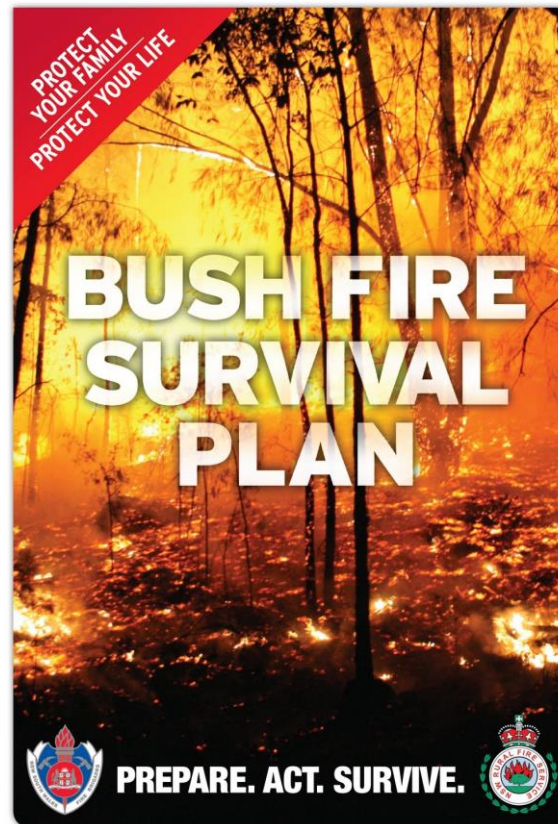
The participants included:

- neighbourhood centre managers
- manager of a peak body for NGO's
- school principal
- community development people from different organisations



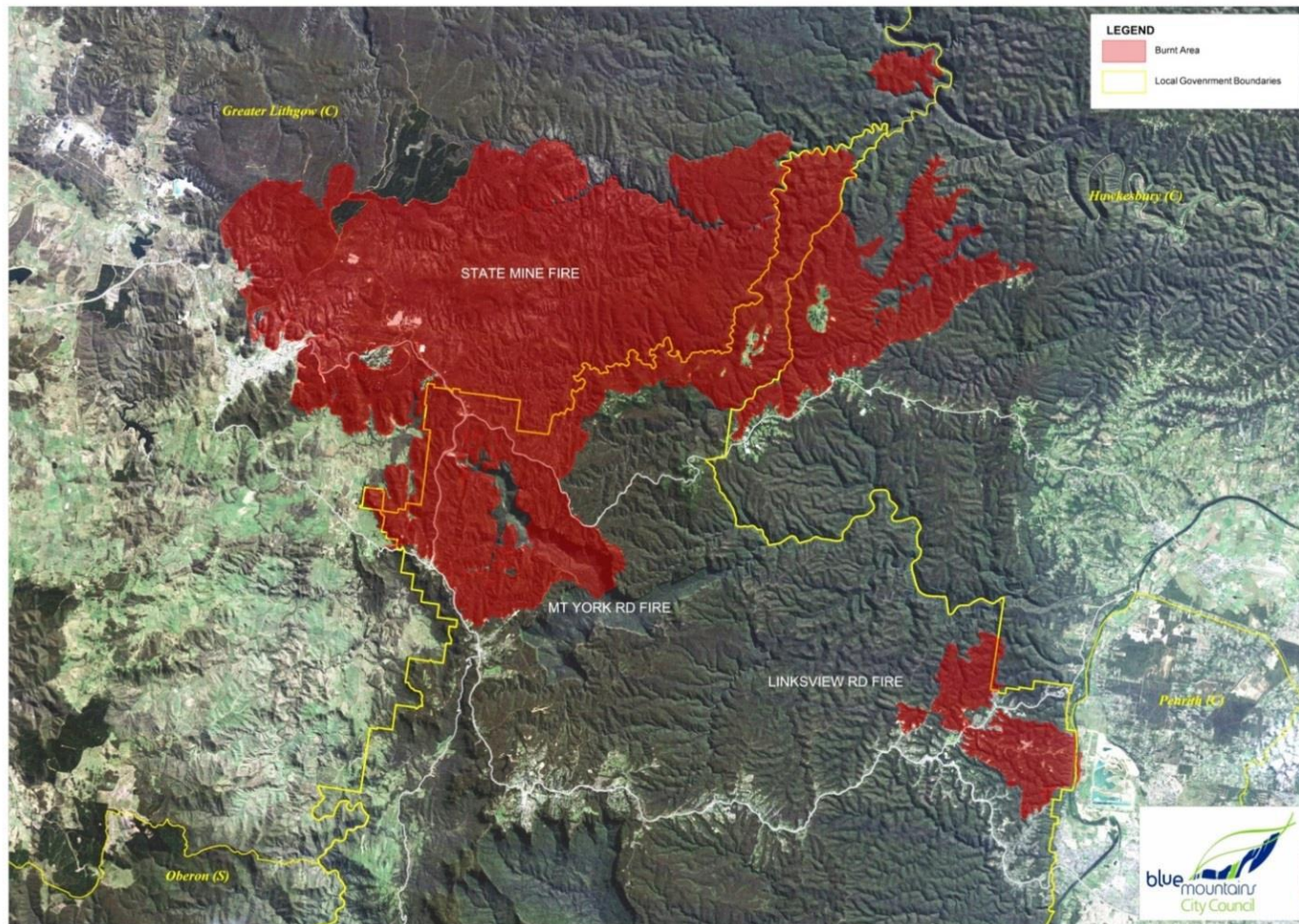
# Before the fires: planning & preparation

---





# During the fires: 17<sup>TH</sup> October 2013



# Linksview Road Fire



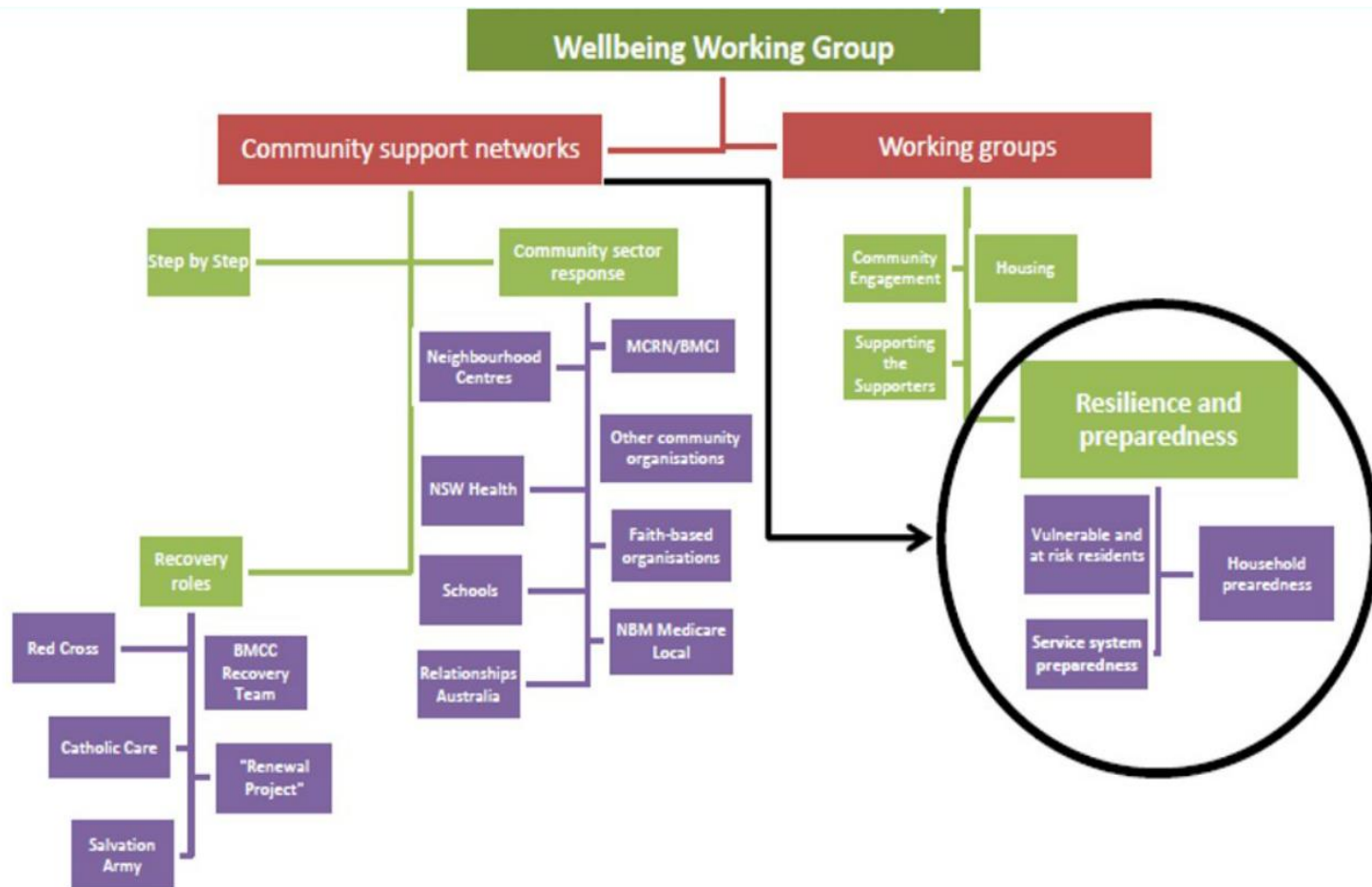
- Fire in the lower mountains caused by wind toppling a tree onto electricity wires
- Over 200 homes were lost and a further 100 damaged
- State-led recovery operations lasted 5 months, before handover to the Blue Mountains City Council



For community leaders the experience was devastating



# After the fires







### **Resilience & Preparedness Group:**

- community sector;
- emergency services;
- DWS;
- government agencies;
- CSU evaluation team



# What organisational connectedness can achieve



- Combined disaster and preparedness expos
- Collaborative delivery of household preparedness programs
- United calendar to display everyone's proposed activities provides a united front for the community and avoids doubling up
- Collaborative approach to funding applications and research initiatives
- Preparedness is now seen as core business for the community services

# Three learning points

---

- the participation of local community leaders in all phases of disaster management should be reflected in practice as well as in policy
- don't wait for a disaster to strengthen the connections between local community and emergency organisations
- incorporate building resilience into your core mission, not a tack-on for the fire season

# Thank you for listening!



## Contact

Val Ingham

[vingham@csu.edu.au](mailto:vingham@csu.edu.au)