



Neighbour Day Challenge 2019

A VICSES, CFA & Red Cross collaboration



the power of humanity



Background

The Neighbour Day Challenge 2019

The Partnership: Victoria State Emergency Service (VICSES), Country Fire Authority (CFA) and Australian Red Cross are committed to building the capacity of communities to prepare for emergencies. The agencies recognise the importance of cross-agency partnerships to build sector collaboration and provide greater value for the communities they serve.

The Research: Dr Daniel Aldrich's findings from recent global disasters suggest that communities who had strong social networks and connections had better outcomes when it came to overall resilience and the ability to recover in emergencies.

The Opportunity: Relationships Australia has coordinated Neighbour Day since 2003 as an annual celebration of community. It encourages people to connect with those who live in their neighbourhood and build more connected communities - where people take time to look out for one another.

Campaign Objectives

- Showcase the link between strong relationships with neighbours and emergency management outcomes



- Provide a fun, practical opportunity for members of VICSES, CFA and Red Cross working in community safety and community preparedness to walk-the-talk and connect with their neighbours.

Methods

The Neighbour Day Challenge 2019 was built on the premise that proactive engagement with neighbours leads to more enduring connections and higher social capital which results in better community response during and after emergencies. By leveraging off an existing corporate partnership to provide some member incentives, and through the use of a coordinated social media competition, the three agencies invited and encouraged members of their agencies (staff and volunteers) to connect with their neighbours on Neighbour Day.

VICSES, CFA and Red Cross provided templates for social media, and calling cards for members to use in the lead up to the event:



Results & Evaluation

The Neighbour Day Challenge resulted in lots of VICSES, CFA and Red Cross members coming together with their neighbours for a cup of tea, a drop in or a barbeque.



"We all come [from] different walks of life. We are all different ages. We all have different back stories. What we are: Neighbours! ...Neighbour Day 2019 was a wonderful opportunity to share a bit about what I do within the SES and engage with my neighbours on what to do if they need help."
- Tash Drake



"Today we went for a walk. 3 mornings a week we walk or ride our bikes to the shops. Best neighbours for 26 years"
- Adele Webster



"Neighbour Day afternoon tea at my apartment block on St Kilda Rd. It was a lovely friendly event where new connections were made. We'll be doing it again!"
- Cath Szen



"CF Row Fitzroy, Neighbour Day Challenge"
- Christian-Paul Stenta

A comprehensive process and outcome evaluation of the Neighbour Day Challenge 2019 is underway to assess both the feasibility of the intervention and whether it may contribute to building social capital. This is incorporating a longitudinal participant survey, analytics on the social media and post-activity workshops.

The findings will inform future enhancements to the intervention and approaches to support better member engagement.