



October Business Breakfast

Friday 25th October - 7am to 9am, Hills Hub, Emerald



Speakers

Claude Cullino – Emerald Village Assoc. Resilience Committee

The work been undertaken in getting faster responses for power & telecommunications

Klaus Brodeck – Captain Emerald Fire Brigade
Bushfire planning for business

Stewart Matulis – Emergency Mgmt Cardinia Council
Business preparation, Council's assistance post event, overview of roles & responsibilities

Fiona Sewell – Emerald & Surrounds Emergency Recovery Group
Working with the community & business in getting back to normal

Rachelle Miechelson – Emerald & Cockatoo Emergency Support Team
ECEST role in recovery

EDRA breakfast meeting

25th October 2024

Claude Cullino

Emerald Village Association

Committee Member &
Former Chair of the Resilience Working Group



Resilience Group

Background

Following the storms in 2021 and again the February Storm Event this year, the EVA convened a series of meetings which led to the formation of a Resilience Action Group which held its first meeting on 17 April 2024.

The Group are from the Hills communities of Emerald, Cockatoo, Gembrook, Macclesfield and Upper Beaconsfield.

As an overview, the Hills Area is a High-Risk Area but of great beauty, significant character and significant value. Road access is generally poor and limited..

While these values are generally understood by the Emergency Response Agencies, the Responsible Authorities accountable for the Assets, such as roads, electricity network and telecommunications, seem to not appreciate the deficiencies and lack management practices to properly deliver on the expectations of the local community.

The Hills Area is an International destination, yet the Executives responsible for prioritising Recovery of failed Assets, prioritise on commercial returns and population density.



Resilience Group

The **EVA & the Resilience Group** are primarily focused on advocacy and today I'd like to let you know what we have been doing since April this year.

Our first priority after forming was to provide a narrative.

The Narrative:

The storms of June 2021 and February 2024 have demonstrated that the Hills Communities need to bear responsibilities and be proactive. The issues are common across our Ranges communities of some 100,000 people.

We need to advocate collaboratively and show that we are proactive, prepared to listen and when we have the facts, to act and to advocate for Resilient infrastructure. But above all that we are prepared as a community, our households and families know what to do in an Emergency situation.

Our audience are Politicians, Senior Public Servants and Private Sector Executive and Managers.



Resilience Group

From those initial meetings the Group formulated a ten-point Objective Plan.

Within that we set ourselves a series of Actions.

A spreadsheet can be shared with you should you be interested.

The purpose of the Group being to identify what Actions or Policies are necessary to ensure we are:

1. “A Resilient Community “, and
2. That the Assets servicing our community are Resilient.

We formed the view that the Hills area, being:

Difficult Terrain and Low Population Density is regularly placed last in the queue for Recovery Action or for upgrading of infrastructure.

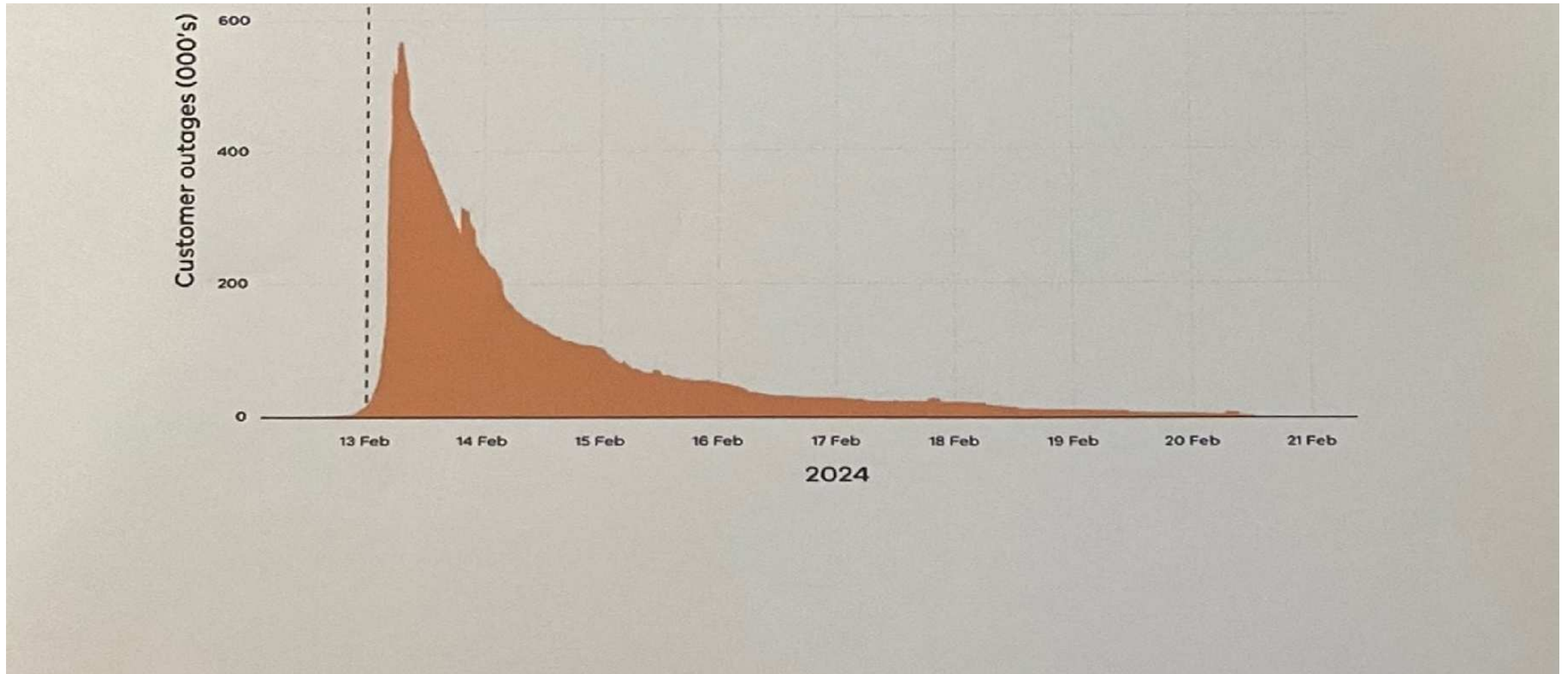


Resilience Group

We prepared a submission to the DEECA Outage Review Panel

- *The submission outlined our concerns and the threats to the Hills communities.*
- *We identified that the area is a significant international destination*
- *We stressed that the area adds significant value to Melbourne and the State.*
- *We highlighted the beauty of the area, the environmental values but that the region was a high-risk area and identified in all the Emergency Management Plans.*
- *We included our 10 Objectives and Actions to share our concerns at the overall poor response in the Recovery Process.*
- *We identified the lack of Resilience in the existing Power and Communications infrastructure.*
- *We present **technical paper arguing for undergrounding** strategic sections of the power network to improve performance and resilience.*

Recovery - Cost & Response Profile by AusNet to the Feb 2024 Storm Event





Resilience Group

- We reviewed the **Draft Outage Review Panel Report** in July and submitted our views.
- We prepared a Research Paper: Exploring vulnerability in the community and issues around the development of vulnerable persons register.
This Paper was submitted with our critique of the Panel's draft report.
- The Final **Outage Review Panel Report** was released in September 2024.
- The engagement process and explanation of what the Panel heard and responded to is excellent.
- The Consultation process was impressive.



Resilience Group

- The Panel Recommendations are profound and deal with .
 - Transmission network and Response
 - Planning and Coordination
 - Planning for People at Risk
 - Telecommunications and other essential Service Business continuity planning
 - Regulatory Settings and Support to Customers
 - Communications with Customers and Community
 - Impact Assessment and make-safe Actions.
 - Restoration Planning, prioritisation and operations
 - Mutual aid between Distribution Businesses and other organisations
 - Temporary generation for Key Community assets
 - Recovery after the Emergency.



Resilience Group

The Group lodged an Expression of Interest for Grants from AusNet

1. HILLS REGION Community Based Risk & Values Assessment for Emerald, Avonsleigh, Cockatoo, Upper Beaconsfield, Gembrook and Macclesfield.

Declined

2. EMERALD & GEMBROOK Neighborhood Grid Storage Plan -
STAGE 1 to ensure business continuity and maintenance of community function by maintaining all essential services in the township.

Declined

Application can be made for Funding via the Victoria 100 Neighborhood Batteries Scheme.

3. **Hills Resilience Kits \$24,500.**
Accepted



Resilience Group

Other Advocacy Activities:

1 The EVA has also presented to the Victorian Parliament's Enquiry in Improving the P&E Act on delivering Resilient Infrastructure. Trevor is attempting to have Emerald as a Case Study.

2 Councillor Candidates were requested to establish a "Resilience "Policy within their first year in office and to ensure that the Actions recommended in the policy be funded within their 4-year term in office. All three candidates committed to this at a public meeting of "Meeting the Candidates".

Other Developments

1 AusNet has announced that it is establishing "quick generator connection points "Work on this project is scheduled for 21-24 October. in Emerald and Cockatoo.

2 EVA is negotiating with Council Officers to establish a specific project to have back up power for the whole of the "Worrell Reserve" complex that includes the Hills Hub and Library. There is already a Solar Panel/Battery/Generator at the Pavilion.



Resilience Group

Draft EDPR document for 2026-2031.

AusNet **Developments con'd**

AusNet has released a community engagement process.

The proposal is that this document will be finalized & Submitted by January 31, 2026.

The proposal will affect customer tariff costs.

The Investment Planned for those 5 years are:

- Ongoing Network augmentation -\$67M;
- Proactive Fuse Replacement - \$46M;
- Economically justified replacement Program targeting highest Risk - \$13M;
- Proactive Replacement of SWER lines - \$58M; Early Fault detection Devices - \$8M.

EVA will need to Review, Respond and continue to Advocate on behalf of the community.



Resilience Group

Happy to answer any questions

Bushfire Planning for Businesses



cfa.vic.gov.au



Bushfire Plan: Before and During summer

It is important that you and your staff are ready for summer.

Your plan should list actions you will do:

- property preparation
- regular maintenance during summer
- staff roles and responsibilities
- equipment checks

Each actions will have its own frequency and timing to consider.

Tasman Bushfire Bushfire Plan

Bushfire plan actions

Before summer

Plan what actions you will do and when. For example you might complete the actions below on a particular day, week or month before summer.

Property maintenance	To be completed	Done
Clear leaves from gutters		<input type="checkbox"/>
Cut grass to less than 10cm		<input type="checkbox"/>
Clean up around the property		<input type="checkbox"/>
Move wood piles away from buildings		<input type="checkbox"/>
Prune trees and shrubs		<input type="checkbox"/>
		<input type="checkbox"/>
		<input type="checkbox"/>

Staff preparation	To be completed	Done
Communicate the bushfire plan to all staff		<input type="checkbox"/>
Staff to complete Bushfire Safety for Workers training. Visit www.cfs.vic.gov.au/workers to access		<input type="checkbox"/>
VicEmergency App – download and create watch zones		<input type="checkbox"/>
Review and update bushfire plan		<input type="checkbox"/>
		<input type="checkbox"/>

More actions	To be completed	Done
		<input type="checkbox"/>
		<input type="checkbox"/>
		<input type="checkbox"/>
		<input type="checkbox"/>
		<input type="checkbox"/>

6 December 2025

Tasman Bushfire Bushfire Plan

Bushfire plan actions

During summer

Some actions you need to do regularly during summer. Include these actions below into your business's regular daily, weekly, fortnightly or monthly tasks.

Regular maintenance	To be completed
Fire Danger Rating Signage	Daily
Cleaning up vegetation around the property	

Staff preparation	To be completed
Bushfire plan tested	
Conduct regular bushfire plan briefings with all staff (discuss roles and responsibilities)	

Equipment checks to be conducted if relevant to your business location	To be completed
Generator	
Pumps	
Hoses	
Communications eg radios	

More actions	To be completed

7

Fire Danger Ratings

Your plan should include actions to take according to the daily fire danger rating.

Fire Danger Ratings tell us how dangerous a fire could be if one started.

There are four Fire Danger Rating levels;

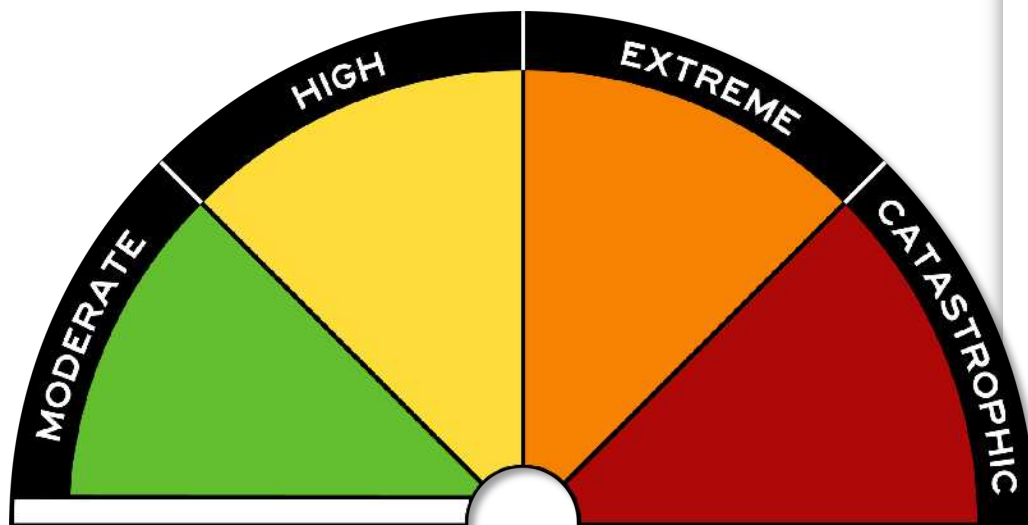
- **Moderate**
- **High**
- **Extreme**
- **Catastrophic**

No rating is the white section, this means if a fire occurs there will be limited threat to the community



Bushfire Plan: Fire Danger Ratings

Your **bushfire plan** should list what you will do at your business when each of the fire danger rating levels are issued?



Bushfire plan: Fire Danger Rating

Our Fire Weather District:

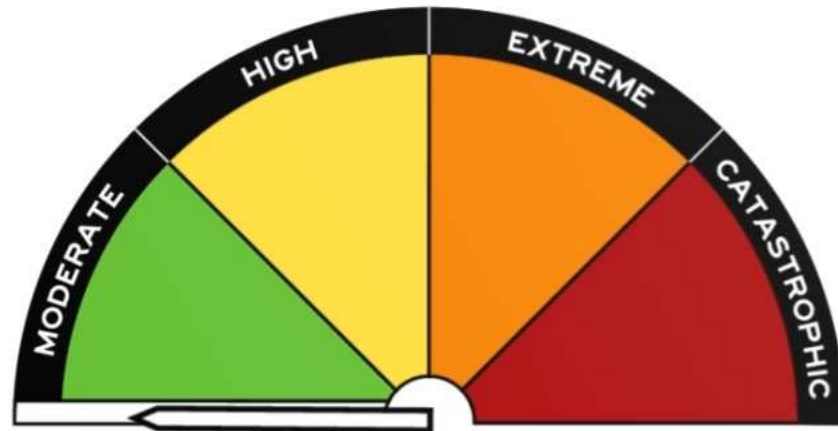


What is the Fire Danger Rating for today:
www.cfa.vic.gov.au/fcr

What actions can you do at your business to help you and your visitors at each rating level.
Fill in the sections below, print and display in your office/business.

	What action will be done?	Who is responsible?
NO RATING		
MODERATE Plan and Prepare		
HIGH Be ready to act		
EXTREME Take action now		
CATASTROPHIC Leave bushfire risk areas		

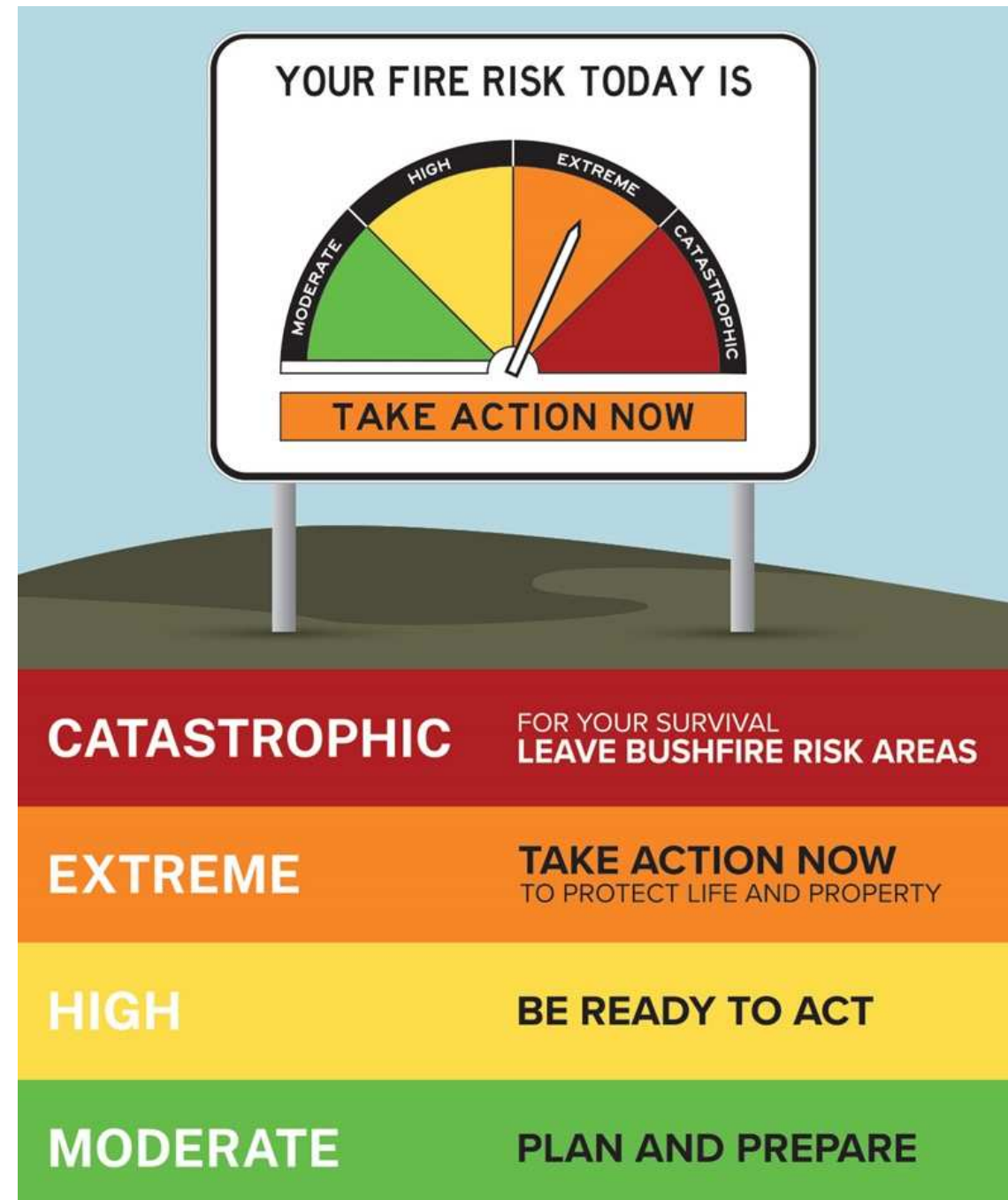
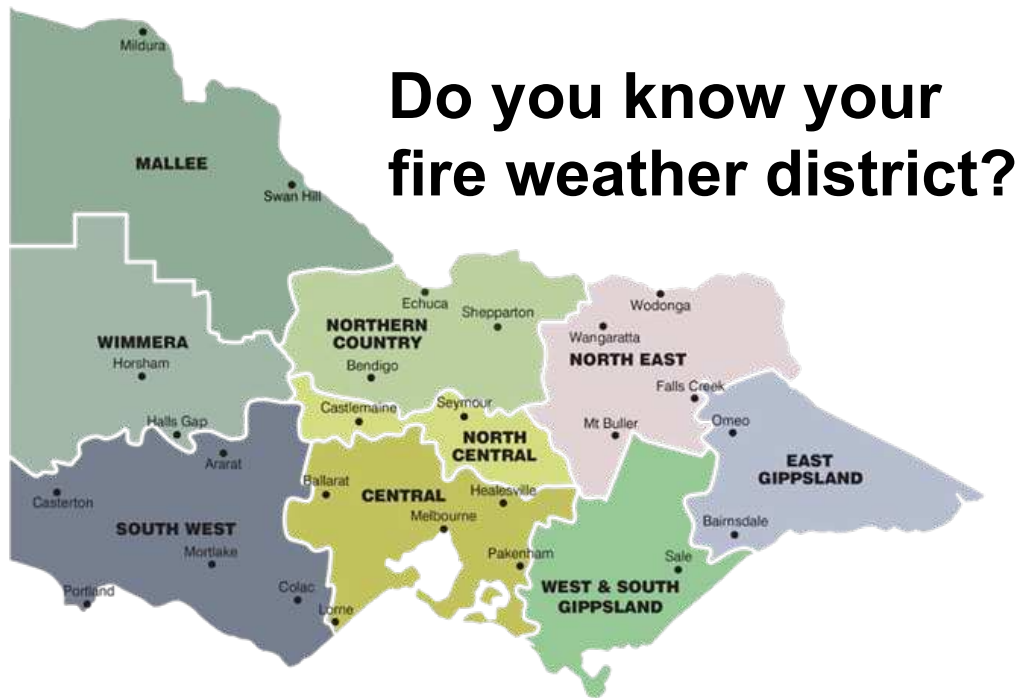
YOUR FIRE RISK TODAY IS



Fire Danger Ratings

Each rating has an action statement to help the community know what to do

The higher the rating the more dangerous the conditions.



Resources to help communicate to customers

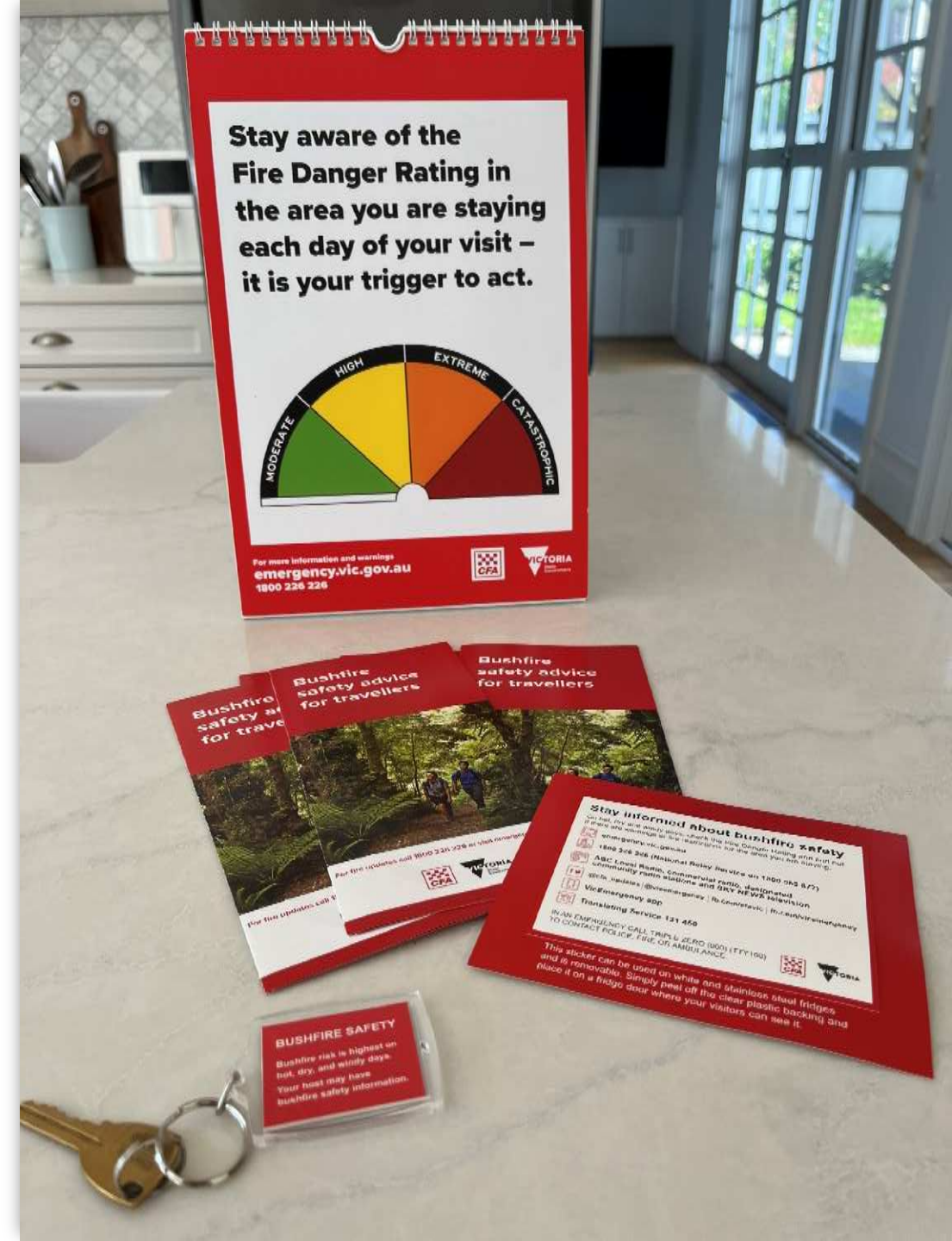
The Tourism & Events Industry website brings together key Victorian tourism industry information in the one place.

Order fire focused resources for your business in the bushfire safety section.



tourism.vic.gov.au/bushfiresafety

The CFA website has bushfire information in different languages, your local CFA office can assist with more options to help communicate and promote bushfire safety.



How do Total fire bans affect your business

It is important that your business and visitors are aware of what you can or can't do on days of Total fire ban.

There are activities you cannot perform, and severe penalties apply.

The CFA website has information to help understand the rules and your local CFA District office to discuss what resources you can use to explain Total Fire Ban rules to your visitors.



Can I or can't I? To report a fire **DIAL 000**

Can I have a barbecue, light a camp fire or light a fire for warmth or comfort?

During Fire Danger Period

On Total Fire Ban Days

I run a meal preparation business (eg catering), or am a community charity/club/fundraising or similar organisation. Can I set and light a fire to grate a barbecue, or on hotplates at my functions?

During Fire Danger Period

On Total Fire Ban Days

THE FIRE INSURANCE AUTHORITY **CFA**

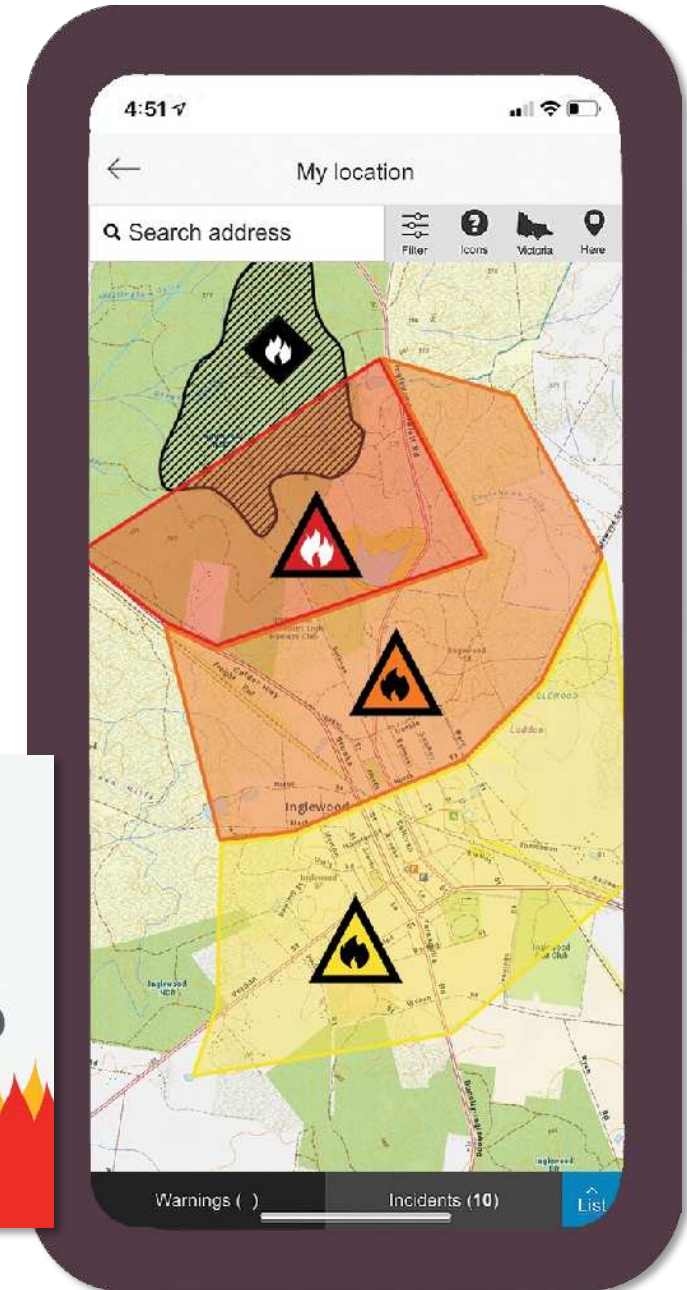


When there is a fire




Understanding fire warnings is an important part of your bushfire plan.

The **VicEmergency App** will notify you when there is an incident in your watch zone.

It is important that you stay informed to alerts in your area.



What do warning messages mean?

	What does it mean?	What should you do
Advice 	An Incident is occurring or has occurred in the area.	Access information and monitor conditions.
Watch & Act 	An emergency is developing nearby	You need to take action now to protect yourself and others.
Emergency Warning 	You will be impacted	You are in imminent danger and need to take action now.
Prepare to Evacuate/ Evacuate immediately	An evacuation is recommended or procedures are in place to evacuate	When an evacuation is in place, follow the instructions contained in the warning message

Bushfire Plan: Fire Warnings

Always follow the advice of warnings immediately.

Stay informed.

Keep listening for more information in case the situation changes.

What other actions can you do at your business to help you and your visitors when a warning is issued?



Bushfire plan: Fire Warnings



Are there any warnings in our area today:
www.emergency.vic.gov.au

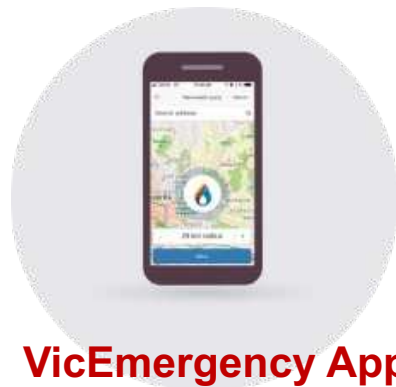
Always follow the advice of warnings immediately. Stay informed. Keep listening for more information in case the situation changes.

What other actions can you do at your business to help you and your visitors when a warning is issued. Fill in the sections below, print and display in your office/business.

	What action will be done?	Who is responsible?
Advice		
Watch and Act		
Emergency Warning		
Evacuation		

Local emergency contacts	
In an emergency	Call 000
Emergency Radio Station	
Visitor Information Centre	
Local Council	
Parks Victoria	www.parks.vic.gov.au Call 13 19 93
Local Tourism Association	

Sources of information



Talking to your customers

It is important that guests remain alert to their location and fire risk but not alarmed.

Providing clear and useful fire safety information from accredited sources ensures your guests make informed decisions.

Get the conversation started

- Do you know the fire danger rating today?
- With the weather expected today maybe there are some alternative places to visit in our region.



Preparing yourself and employees for bushfire

CFA's free, online e-learning module: **Bushfire Safety for workers** is for workers who work in a bushfire risk area or might travel through bushfire risk areas to get to and from work.

The module will take 45mins - 1 hour to complete and participants will learn;

- about the risks while travelling
- how to be prepared
- how to stay safe on the road
- how to survive and stay safe

Visit **cfa.vic.gov.au/workers** to access the training.



Find more information



cfa.vic.gov.au/tourism



tourism.vic.gov.au/bushfiresafety

Images have been supplied courtesy of Visit Victoria



Cardinia Shire Council

Emergency Planning for Business

25 October 2024

Stewart Matulis – Coordinator EM



- 7 Years at Cardinia Shire Council
- Worked as part of Bunyip Bushfire 2019, Storms 2021, Storms 2024
- CFA Volunteer 20 years and Captain

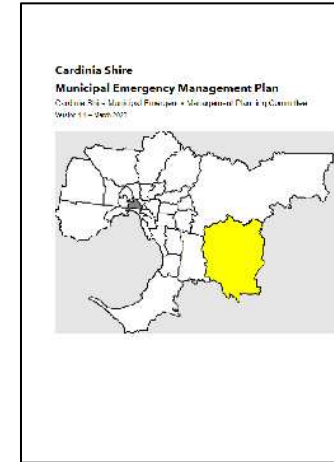
Council's Role during Emergencies

If an emergency affects residents in Cardinia Shire, Council has an important role in:

- coordinating Council resources to support emergency agencies
- supporting communication to communities
- setting up and staffing emergency relief centres
- conducting Municipal Secondary Impact Assessment and supporting the recovery of affected residents
- supporting and coordinating ongoing recovery activities in the community.

Council's Role to prepare community for emergencies

- Lead Municipal level agency planning including creation of the MEMP.
- Advocate to government/agencies for infrastructure/risk mitigations.
- Support community preparedness and resilience building.



Business/Farms during an Emergency

- Majority of all government effort is focused on personal and community needs.
- Expectation of Government, is for the most part that Businesses are prepared and self-sufficient during emergencies/recoveries.
- Significant support is only usually offered in exceptional circumstances.

Business Continuity Planning



1 KNOW YOUR RISKS

Identify the disasters that your business might face. If you're new to the area, it's really important to understand how you might be at risk so you can know what to expect.
















Potential disruption	Is this a risk for my business?	The risk rating is:	Do I have a plan already in place? (Yes / No)	Will this affect immediate earnings? (Yes / No)
Buildings				
No access to business premises	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Damage to business premises	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Fault with utilities (water, gas, sewerage)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Major power outage	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Stock and equipment				
Loss of stock	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Loss of key equipment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Data and information				
No access to phone networks	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
No access to Internet	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Loss of data or key documents	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
People				
Loss of key staff due to illness or skills shortage	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Owner affected by health or personal issues	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Legal issues	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Loss of suppliers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Loss of customers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Loss of customers' access to business via phone/online	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Major building works, need closures or other local issues	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Loss of reputation (if business is not spontaneous within a few days of the disaster)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Environmental				
Business is near a river	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
It is near a beach or coastline	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Business near the coast	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

2 PLAN NOW FOR WHAT YOU WILL DO

Sit down with your staff and use this step to **make an emergency action plan** so that everyone knows what needs to be done and by whom if a disaster strikes.

Business Continuity Templates

- | | |
|--|--|
| 2.1  Emergency Essentials Kit | 2.8  Plan an alternative operation location |
| 2.2  Plan how you will move stock, equipment and fixtures | 2.9  Plan an alternative supply chain |
| 2.3  Protect your property | 2.10  Plan methods to maintain customer relations |
| 2.4  Develop a finance plan | 2.11  Plan for how you will safeguard all other critical business areas |
| 2.5  Develop an insurance plan | 2.12  Train staff for business continuity |
| 2.6  Prepare your emergency plan | 2.13  Conduct general premises maintenance |
| 2.7  Back up data to the Cloud | |



There are some really practical and easy actions you can take now to prepare your business and plan for business continuity.

5. DISASTER-SPECIFIC CHECKLISTS

Bushfire preparation checklist

Use this checklist, along with your Business Continuity Plan to prepare your business for a bushfire.

It is important to understand the bushfire risk to your business and to prepare your business, your property and your employees.

Employers have a duty of care to employees and visitors when they are on your property or undertaking a service provided by your business. Use this checklist to help assess whether you are adequately prepared for a bushfire. See the NSW Bushfire Service (NSWBS) website for further information: nswbushfire.nsw.gov.au

Know your risk

- Do you know your risk? Consider what a bushfire risk is to your business.

Make a Bushfire Survival Plan

There are 4 main steps to making a Bushfire Survival Plan for your business:

- 1. Discuss:** Talk with your employees about what you will do if a bushfire threatens your business.
 - 2. Prepare:** Prepare your property and get it ready for bushfire season. See the top five actions to make your property safer below.
 - 3. Know:** If there is a fire in your area, know the Bushfire Alert Levels.
 - 4. Keep:** Keep all the bushfire information, numbers, websites and the smartphone app handy.
- Head to mybushfire.com.au for a step-by-step guide to making a bushfire survival plan.
- Think about your insurance needs in relation to fire and make sure your chosen policy provides an appropriate level of cover for your business and that you understand any requirements. Remember that rebuilding in a bushfire-prone area can be expensive.
 - Have a plan about what to do when animals and pets.
 - Follow the plan (read quickly & if needed, print out) (4-6 to pages 54-56).

Where will you go?

Where will you take?

Do you know where your nearest fireproof room is?

Do you know where your nearest fireproof room is?

Do you know where your nearest fireproof room is?

continued over >

Storm preparation checklist

Use this checklist, along with your Business Continuity Plan, to prepare your business for storms and severe weather.

Storms can bring strong winds, heavy rainfall and hail. Strong winds and hail may damage your property and assets, and heavy rainfall can cause flooding, or flash flooding, which may result in road closures and staff absences. Use this checklist to prepare your business and plan for disruptions due to storms and severe weather. See the NSW State Emergency Service (SES) website for further flood information: nswses.nsw.gov.au. To view all current NSW storm and flood warnings visit the Bureau of Meteorology website: bom.gov.au

General

- Consider whether storms are a risk to your business. For further information on storms, contact NSW SES or check the Bureau of Meteorology website.
- Include risk mitigation strategies for storm in your Business Continuity Plan.
- Check your insurance policy to see if it covers flood damage. See the NSW SES website for further information: nswses.nsw.gov.au
- Think about your insurance needs in relation to storms and make sure your chosen policy provides an appropriate level of cover for your business and that you understand any requirements.

Prepare your business and property

- Do general maintenance around your business premises and store items appropriately:
 - get your roof checked to make sure it is in good condition, and repair any damage
 - trim tree branches overhanging your roof. Check with your local council first to see if you require any permits or consents
 - repair any windows, loose fittings and weathering timbers
 - clear or secure any loose items that could cause damage if blown around in high winds (e.g. outdoor furniture, garden furniture, etc.)
 - clear gutters, downpipes and roof to prevent water penetration during a storm
 - store hazardous materials in a watertight container in a secure room

- If you live in a flood-prone area, consider making changes to your business property to protect against flood. See the Flood Preparation Checklist for more information.

- Ensure you have enough stock on hand to supply your business and customers in the event of severe weather damage.

Prepare for power outages

- Check that your evacuation plan includes instructions to turn off electricity in the event of a storm. Avoid using landline phones in the event of a storm.
- Ensure you and any key staff know how to manually operate electronic doors to your business or garage.
- Keep a contact number for your energy retailer or distributor in an accessible location. For more information, see page 76. Call this number if you have an electrical fault or notice sparks from nearby powerlines.
- Consider portable power supplies for your business in the event of an outage. Note that portable generators should be used with extreme caution and back-up generators should not be plugged into your switchboard.

Emergency

- In an emergency help in storm, call the NSW SES on 132 500. In life-threatening emergencies call Triple Zero (000).
- Emergency facilities are available at all emergency services centres and police stations.
- Keep yourself, your staff and guests updated by checking the Bureau of Meteorology website bom.gov.au

4 BE AWARE

If a disaster does strike, knowing where to look for reliable, up-to-date disaster information could help save you vital time.
Connect with key information sources now to receive regular alerts.



5 LOOK OUT FOR EACH OTHER

Neighbouring businesses can be one of the best sources of information and help before, during and after a disaster.

Develop connections with local businesses and commit to helping one another.

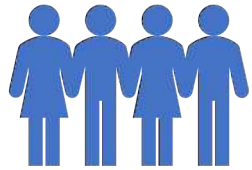
LIST THREE NEIGHBOURING BUSINESSES THAT WILL HELP YOU IF THEY ARE ABLE AND THAT YOU WILL HELP IN AN EMERGENCY IF YOU ARE ABLE:

Contact name	Business/organisation	Phone number & email
1.		
2.		
3.		

Summary

- Businesses need to be prepared and self-sufficient.
- Limited support from Government during emergencies – especially the first 3 days.
- Having a Business Continuity Plan is essential
- This can be a simple or complex process depending on your situation. Best thing is just start.

Questions?



Business & Community Recovery

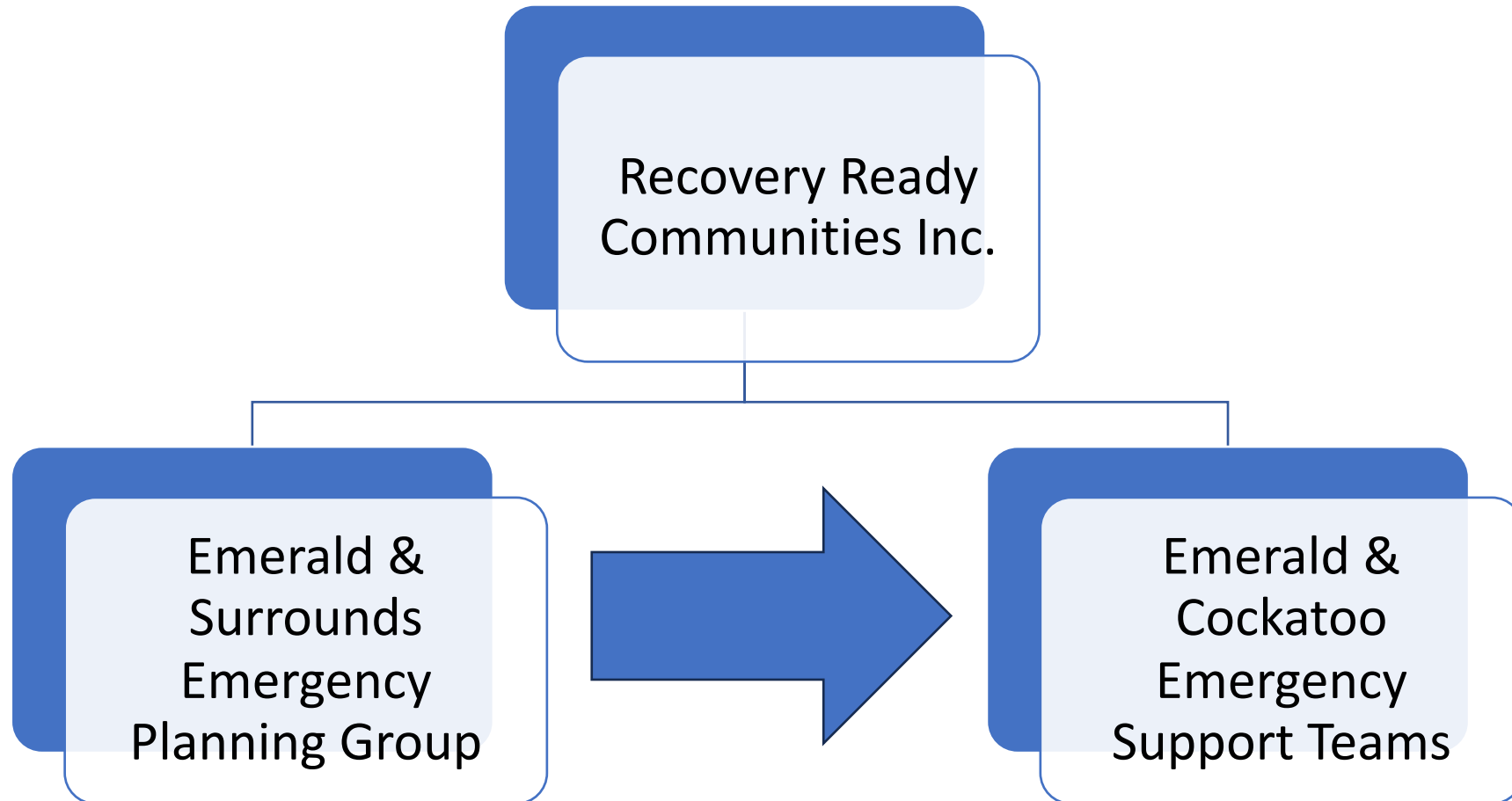


Fiona Sewell

Recovery Ready Communities Inc. Operations Manager

Chair of The Emerald & Surrounds Emergency Planning
Group

Community Led Emergency Planning & Action



Events Differ.

Fundamental
Needs Don't.

Urgently restoring Access/Egress, Critical Utilities & Infrastructure, Medical Services, Schools/Childcare and Local Business, will always mitigate the short- and long-term psycho-social damage to communities, families and individuals.

Regardless of:

The type of disaster

The landscape in which the event has occurred

“There were also leaders in our communities prior to the disaster and it was important not to forget or ignore them. Local ‘economic’ and business leaders are also an important aspect to the recovery process” .

Lessons Learned by Community Recovery Committees - 2009 Victorian Bushfires

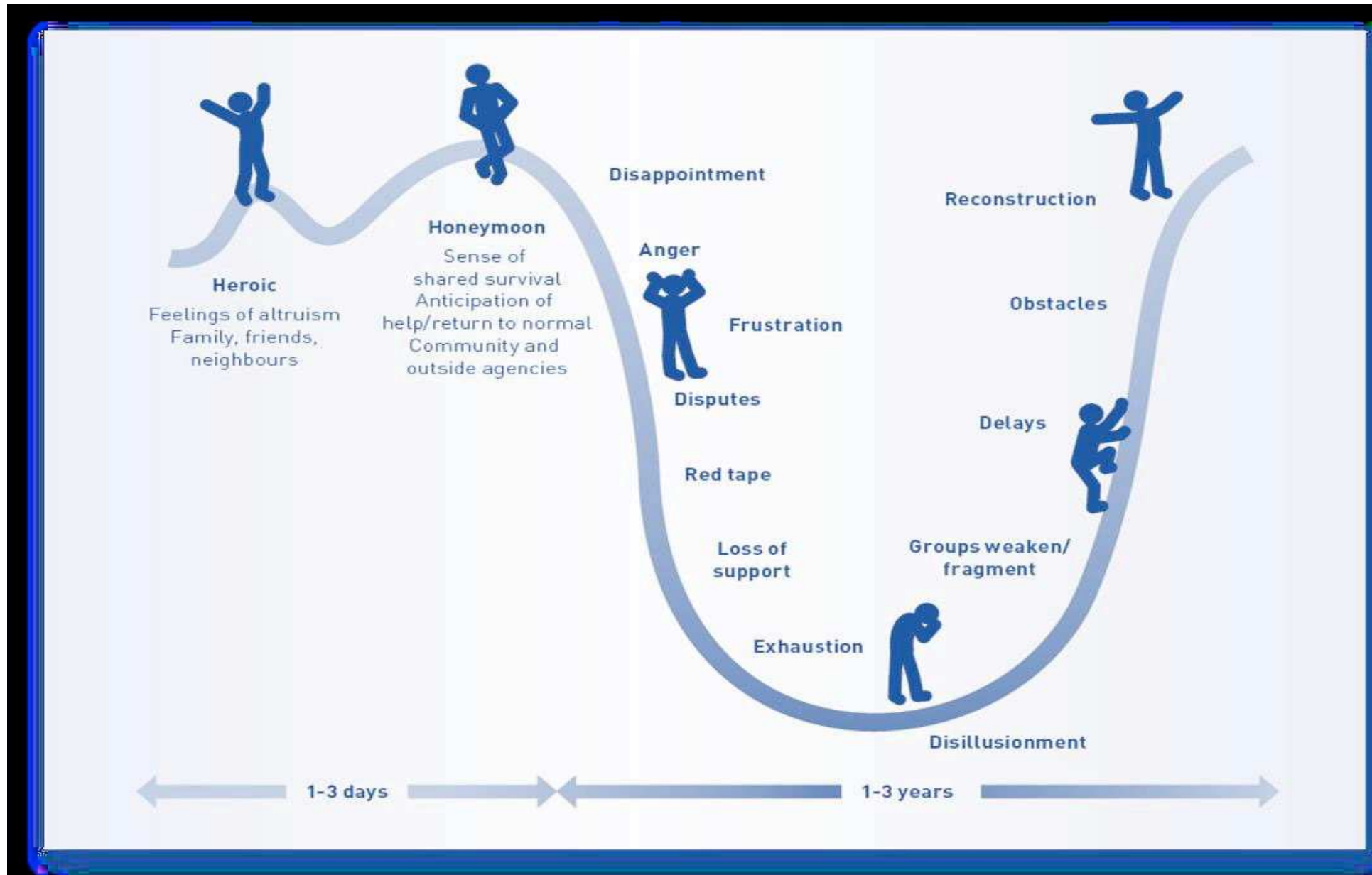
We can't
do this
without
each other

You are our basis of normality, our safe place
when we are having “normal” bad day

Restoring you, Restores us: and this mitigates
the full potential of poor recovery outcomes for
both business and community

You will be our trusted faces when were
inundated with strangers who come to help

You are, and will be, trusted conduits for
accurate information. Where do you get
information from?



Adapted from Cohen and Ahearn 1980 and DeWolfe 2000. Source: AIDR *Handbook 2 – Community Recovery*, 2018

Kindness is Complicated



2009 Blaze Aid is born. By 2011 over 47% of Fencing Contractors in Fire Affected Areas have either lost their businesses or had to find other sources of income.

Christmas Day 2015: The Skenes Creek Fire on the Great Ocean Rd occurs. By 2016 local Septic Tank services and Plumbers have been significantly impacted.

Unfettered Influx of donated supplies and spontaneous volunteers vs effective and timely broader communication to potential donations/volunteers: This can be pre-planned.

How can you collaborate with each other, and decision makers, to stay strong?
Logical mutuality & pre-planned collaboration

Taking care of the
“Business of People”

\$1 Prevention = \$10 of
Recovery.

Consider how you and
your staff can learn how
to “Choose your
Trauma” and how to
build/cost this into
business viability

Troubling shooting

- Customers may be reactive due to trauma
- Your staff may be traumatized, but feel they have to “cope” because of work commitments, and this can lead to much more serious damage for them in the future
- Attending work in conflict to their personal emergency plans may place you in a difficult position legally.
- Community may expect you are not impacted

Building CAPABILITY & CAPACITY

- Psych first aid training & developing personal emotional safety planning for self care for you and your staff
- Consider developing emergency plans together so that everyone understands what is going on for your staff and you when planning for emergency conditions
- Learn where you can access accurate timely information

Planning to Strengths

Develop a draft post event communication strategy:

Let us know if/when you're open for business

Tell us you need our help

Remind us that your products/services are still important

Become a knowledgeable contact for emergency and recovery information

"Community Connectors" in the UK doubled return business for some participating reps & also reduced hospital ED presentations by > 37%

Consider developing a comprehensive district business recovery plan

Proactively identify local business needs to ensure you are planned for

Planning resources

- <https://business.gov.au/planning/business-plans/develop-an-emergency-management-plan>
- <https://business.gov.au/risk-management/emergency-management/what-to-do-in-an-emergency>
- <https://knowledge.aidr.org.au/media/5455/toolkit-community-recovery-further-resources.pdf>
- <https://knowledge.aidr.org.au/media/5457/toolkit-community-recovery-case-studies.pdf> specifically case studies 7,8,9,10



Emerald & Cockatoo Emergency Support Team

- Our history and purpose
- Who are we?
- What we **do**
- What we **don't**
- Building community resilience



History and purpose

- **History**

- Evolved from EEPG (now ESEPG) – strategic coordinated local recovery planning
- ECEST is the **operational** element of the strategy
- Under the Recovery Ready Communities Inc umbrella with ESEPG

- **Purpose**

- to meet the need **when** and **where** it counts – local, immediate capability and capacity for relief activities (72 hours to 14 days)
- Key trained local leaders informing transition to recovery
 - short term (weeks to months)
 - long term (months to years)

Who are we?

- The locals who help the locals. Residents (inc business owners) from Emerald, Cockatoo, Avonsleigh and soon to be Gembrook
- Activate in the immediate aftermath of emergency/disaster that has significant local impact (fire, storm, prolonged essential service outage etc)
- Strong relationships with local emergency services (CFA, SES, VicPol, AV) and CSC, YRC. Activate based on identified local need in consultation with relevant local agencies



What we DO

First

- Active listening to identify needs – bring calm to the chaos – go to the people
- Personal support (familiar and trusted presence, connection to community), basic first aid, psychological first aid, initial food and drinking water, animal care
- Initial/immediate information and community updates
- Promote verified and official information sources once available
- Refer/connect affected persons to local services and agencies
- Liaise with local emergency services, councils and agencies to meet needs **when & where it counts** – local knowledge informing decision-making and prioritising further afield

Next

- Help community to pre-think recovery
- Effective handover to external agencies after the initial period
- Key local leaders informing advocacy and recovery strategies and activities

What we DON'T

- Promote unofficial or unverified information
- Therapy or counselling services
- Formal childcare
- Catering beyond basic needs
- Housing support
- Cash or crisis payments
- Medical or veterinary treatment
- Property clean ups
- Lend equipment
- Whilst we have PL and PI insurance for our members – we never give professional advice unless qualified – we provide personal support and refer on to official sources and qualified providers




Trained, capable and competent

- **Mandatory**
 - WWCC, Police Check, First Aid (inc CPR), PFA or MHFA
- **Additional skills and experience in our current team**
 - Strong community relationships and connections
 - Food handling
 - Traffic Control
 - Chainsaw operations (for our own safety and mobility)
 - Safe use of generators
 - Logistics and towing of small trailers
 - Radio communications
 - Animal welfare
 - All walks of life - nursing, retail, horticulture, safety, catering, event management, disaster relief, engineering, executive leadership, psychology, marketing & communications, education, and more



Building Community Resilience

- Personal responsibility
 - whilst we plan to activate when needed, our members personal safety plans **always** come first, thus the community should not plan to stay based on the idea we will be there support them after an event
- Next Steps
 - Find out more or EOI to become a member:
 - E: cockatooest@outlook.com
 - M: 0403 049 428
 -  www.facebook.com/emeraldcockatooest

