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Project Title: Community-led recovery in the context of emergencies and disaster: a case study of community resilience in the 2013 Tasmanian Bushfire

Commencement Date: August 2014

PHD PROGRESS REPORT 2015

In the 2013 Forcett Tasmanian bushfire, the roads into the fire affected zone were closed for a number of days, effectively causing a 'gap' in time between the emergency and the official recovery response. As first responders, the local residents demonstrated their ability to self-organise and carry out roles, and utilise local knowledge and resources in order to protect and care for others and their livelihoods.

The focus of the research is the community-led approach of disaster recovery. A case study approach was chosen based on the nature of the phenomena, the real life context it occurred in, and the desire to explore 'what took place'.

Over the last few months, I have invested my time in reviewing the literature developing the methodology and submitting my Human Research Ethics application for approval. Upon the successful completion of my first milestone review, I will commence my fieldwork in Tasmania.

The literature reviewed at this stage of my research has highlighted a need for this type of research, with a powerful narrative to suggest there is need for a more flexible approach to disaster management that allows those affected by disaster to participate in a way that is meaningful and respectful of their experience. There is the potential to learn from the achievements of residents, recognise the different approaches and processes, and endorse community resilience and recovery.