



bushfire&natural  
**HAZARDS**CRC

# SCIENTIFIC DIVERSITY, SCIENTIFIC UNCERTAINTY AND BUSHFIRE AND FLOOD RISK MITIGATION

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An Australian Government Initiative



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INSTITUTE FOR  
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# PROJECT TEAM – RESEARCHERS

## Cluster lead researcher

**Prof Steve Dovers**, Fenner School of Environment and Society, ANU

## Project researchers

**Dr Jessica Weir**, University of Western Sydney

**Principal Investigator**, to be appointed

**Dr Christine Hansen**, University of Gothenburg, Sweden

**Assoc Prof Tara McGee**, University of Alberta, Canada

**Assoc Prof Michael Eburn**, Law School and Fenner, ANU

**Prof Stephen Dovers**, Fenner, ANU

**Prof John Handmer**, RMIT University

# THE PROJECT TEAM – END USERS

## Cluster lead end user

**John Schauble**

Office of the Fire Services Commissioner, Vic

## Project end users

**Samantha Ward**, Attorney-General's Department, C'th

**Clare Speechley**, Department of Premier and Cabinet, SA

**Ed Pikusa**, Fire and Emergency Services Commission, SA

**Chris Irvine**, State Emergency Service, Tas

**Don Cranwell**, Metropolitan Fire Service, SA

**Patrick Schell**, Rural Fire Service, NSW

# PROBLEM STATEMENT

- New public policy positions for bushfire and flood risk rely on best practice scientific evidence, however scientific studies are fragmented, highly specialised, constantly evolving, and span diverse disciplinary approaches.
- Further, scientific evidence is used in relation to other sources of knowledge – professional expertise, local knowledge, community memory, law, politics and so on – and thus is subject to competing interpretations, public mistrust and dismissal.

## FOR EXAMPLE

- Building standards
- Flood maps
- Flood gauges and warning messages

# OBJECTIVES

Across the PPRR spectrum in southeast Australia:

- 1) To investigate the diversity and uncertainty of bushfire and flood science, and its contribution to risk mitigation policy and planning;
- 2) To explore how diverse individuals use and understand scientific evidence and other knowledges in their bushfire and flood risk mitigation roles; and,
- 3) To analyse how this interaction produces particular kinds of opportunities and challenges in the policy, practice, law and governance of bushfire and flood risk mitigation.

# **METHODOLOGY**

Qualitative social science research

# **METHODS**

Scenario exercises

Theoretical tools

Analysis of law, policy and inquiry documents

## MAJOR OUTCOMES EXPECTED

A deeper understanding of recent challenging issues at the science-policy-practice interface, so as to:

- 1) Support industry to better articulate and defend decisions to the community, media, inquiries and others
- 2) Support industry to better frame information and advice for how both scientists and professionals communicate



**THANK YOU**

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