OUT OF UNIFORM:
building community resilience through non-traditional emergency volunteering

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WHY RESEARCH NON-TRADITIONAL VOLUNTEERING?
RESEARCH QUESTIONS

• How does non-traditional volunteering contribute to community resilience throughout the phases of EM?

• How can the EM sector support non-traditional volunteering?

• What models or approaches will enable EM agencies to maximise opportunities for engaging non-traditional volunteers, while minimising risks?
RESEARCH TEAM

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Assoc Professor Michael Eburn
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Resources: Approx 1.4 FTE, in-kind + students
END USERS

- Robert Dugdale, Country Fire Authority (Lead)
- Peter Jeffrey, Queensland Fire and Emergency Services
- Georgina Goodrich, Department for Communities and Social Inclusion
- John Richardson, Australian Red Cross
- Julie Molloy, Volunteering Queensland
- Karen Roberts, Department of Fire and Emergency Services, Western Australia
- Kristine Wendtman, New South Wales Rural Fire Service
- Paul Davis, Emergency Management Victoria
- Adelaide Cooper, State Emergency Service, South Australia
- Kathleen Iacurto, New South Wales State Emergency Service
- Ron Weston, ACT Emergency Services Agency
ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES

- Identify **pros and cons** of engaging non-traditional volunteers in EM.

- Provide **guidance for end users** on engaging non-traditional volunteers and volunteering organisations.

- Provide **guidance for non-traditional volunteers** on engaging with EM organisations.

- Develop **new approaches and models** for engaging non-traditional volunteers and volunteering organisations in EM.

- Assess the **legal implications** of alternative approaches and models.

Credit: Jock McNeish, Strategic Images
## RESEARCH DESIGN AND PROGRESS

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Progress</th>
<th>Time frame</th>
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<tr>
<td>1. Literature reviews</td>
<td><strong>Review 1</strong> - Informal volunteerism in disasters</td>
<td>Completed</td>
<td>Year 1</td>
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<td><strong>Review 2</strong> - Trends in Australian emergency volunteering</td>
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<td>2013-2014</td>
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<td>2. Case studies</td>
<td><strong>Primary studies</strong></td>
<td>1&amp;2 completed</td>
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<td>2. Community-led recovery - COGA</td>
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<td>Year 3</td>
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<td>4. Faith-based volunteering - Pinery fire</td>
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<td><strong>Affiliated studies</strong></td>
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<td>• BlazeAid, Digital volunteering - Cyclone Pam</td>
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<td><strong>Student projects</strong></td>
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<td>• VGI in preparedness (Haworth),</td>
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<td>• Community-led recovery (Jennings)</td>
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<td>3. Evaluation of alternative</td>
<td><strong>Briefing paper (June)</strong></td>
<td>Briefing paper &amp;</td>
<td>Year 3</td>
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<td>engagement strategies</td>
<td><strong>SWOT workshops (October)</strong></td>
<td>workshop planning</td>
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<td>in-progress</td>
<td>Year 4</td>
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<td>2015-2016</td>
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LITERATURE REVIEWS

- Cross-pollination of volunteerism and disaster research.
- Impact of wider social, institutional and organisational landscapes.
- Brings larger body of research to bare on sector challenges and dynamics.

- Citizen response is inevitable.
- Citizens often more attune to what is happening on the ground, draw on local networks and resources, more responsive to local needs.
- Not just ‘spontaneous’.
- Barriers: OHS, legal liability, culture of emergency management.
CASE STUDY: COMMUNITY ON GROUND ASSISTANCE

- Community-initiated project to assist people to rebuild after Black Sat.
- Holistic approach; focused on client needs; culture of safety and care.
- Challenged by relationships with official agencies, also issues of local people participating in own recovery.
- Highlights need to provide support (e.g. understanding contractual obligations; govt. processes; project management).
- Important to recognise that participants may be affected themselves, or become affected, and require assistance.
CASE STUDY: PINERY FIRE

- 82,600 ha burnt, 96 houses and 546 sheds and outbuildings destroyed + vehicle, machinery, livestock and crop losses.

- Faith-based community and volunteer groups active in relief and recovery efforts.

- Semi-structured interviews to examine:
  - How and why faith-based groups became involved;
  - Activities they undertook;
  - Costs and funding;
  - Relationships and interactions with other organisations;
  - Risks and liabilities;
  - How assistance was received.
CASE STUDY: BE READY WARRANDYTE

- ‘Proof of concept’ of community-based emergency management in Australia
- Conditions for effective collective co-production of public value
- Roles and contributions of emergency management representatives
- A ‘community-led planning’ movement, EMV CBEM framework imminent

Credit: Jock McNeish, Strategic Images
CASE STUDY: EV-CREW

- **Centralised co-ordination** of spontaneous volunteers
  - Expanding and formalising role of volunteering peak bodies
  - Factors necessary for model to **work well for** ALL stakeholders
  - How to **integrate** with existing EM plans
  - **Sustainability, capacity-building**
- **Important secondary outcomes**
  - Potential to **open doors on wider range** of emergency volunteering

Credit: Volunteering Queensland
ENGAGEMENT AND UTILISATION

- End user communication
  - 5 newsletters, 2-3 annual stakeholder workshops, 2 teleconferences, 3 BNHCRC RAFs
- Numerous stakeholder group presentations
- 6 research conference events
- Policy application
- Community and NGO engagement
- SWOT workshops to develop a strategic decision support tool

Credit: Yoke Berry, Emergency Volunteers Project, UoW
EVALUATION OF ALTERNATIVE ENGAGEMENT MODELS

1) **Process:** engage stakeholders in a SWOT analysis of alternative strategies for engaging with non-traditional volunteers.
   a) Briefing paper utilising case studies - June
   b) Workshops - October

2) **Aim:** produce a strategic decision support tool that identifies pros and cons associated with alternative strategies for multiple stakeholders

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**SWOT ANALYSIS**

- **S** - Strengths
- **W** - Weaknesses
- **O** - Opportunities
- **T** - Threats

ULTILISATION OPTIONS/PATHWAYS

- SWOT framework and strategy development
  - potential to feed into and/or design, test process to apply SWOT framework

- Non-academic communication products
  - E.g. short videos, policy briefs, infographics, information statements, social media campaign

- Guidance notes
  - inform and guide key players on specific issues
  - E.g. incident controllers, community groups, media spokespeople

- Operational procedures, plans
  - E.g. AIIMS
OUTPUTS TO DATE – ARTICLES AND REPORTS

Journal articles


Reports

- Whittaker J, Handmer J, Mclennan BJ. Informal volunteerism in emergencies and disasters: a literature review. 2015, Bushfire and Natural Hazards CRC: Melbourne, Australia.
OUTPUTS TO DATE – CONFERENCES

Published conference papers

- McLennan, B, Whittaker, J, Handmer, J. The future of non-traditional emergency volunteering: What will it look like and how can it work? In 'Research proceedings from the 2015 Bushfire and Natural Hazards CRC & AFAC conference. Adelaide'. M Rumsewicz, Editor. 2015, Bushfire and Natural Hazards CRC.


Selected conference presentations


- McLennan, B, Molloy, J. The changing landscape of disaster volunteering and an innovative response from Queensland. National Volunteering Conference. 6-8 April, 2016, Canberra.


THANK YOU