

A photograph of a residential street that has been completely flooded. The water is murky and reaches the level of the houses in the background. In the foreground, there is a concrete curb and a wooden fence. A yellow diamond-shaped sign with a black arrow pointing right is visible on the left side of the road. The text is overlaid in red on the center of the image.

Sharing responsibility for disaster  
resilience:  
What are the obligations of the  
community?

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# Objectives

*To identify community obligations and discuss a range of policy options to encourage shared responsibility*

- We will discuss:
  - National Strategy for Disaster Resilience
  - Shared responsibility
  - Community
  - Policy choices



# NSDR – what does it say?

*There is a need for a new focus on **shared responsibility**; one where **political leaders, governments, business and community leaders, and the not-for-profit sector** all adopt **increased or improved emergency management and advisory roles, and contribute to achieving integrated and coordinated disaster resilience.***

*In turn, **communities, individuals and households** need to take **greater responsibility for their own safety and act on information, advice and other cues provided before, during and after a disaster.***

# Shared Responsibility

**The share of specific obligations placed on different actors within a society**



- Promotes self-reliance
- Lessens burdens on emergency services
- Reverses patterns of short-term thinking
- Diverts investment into long-term risk reduction and resilience
- Promote proactive responses



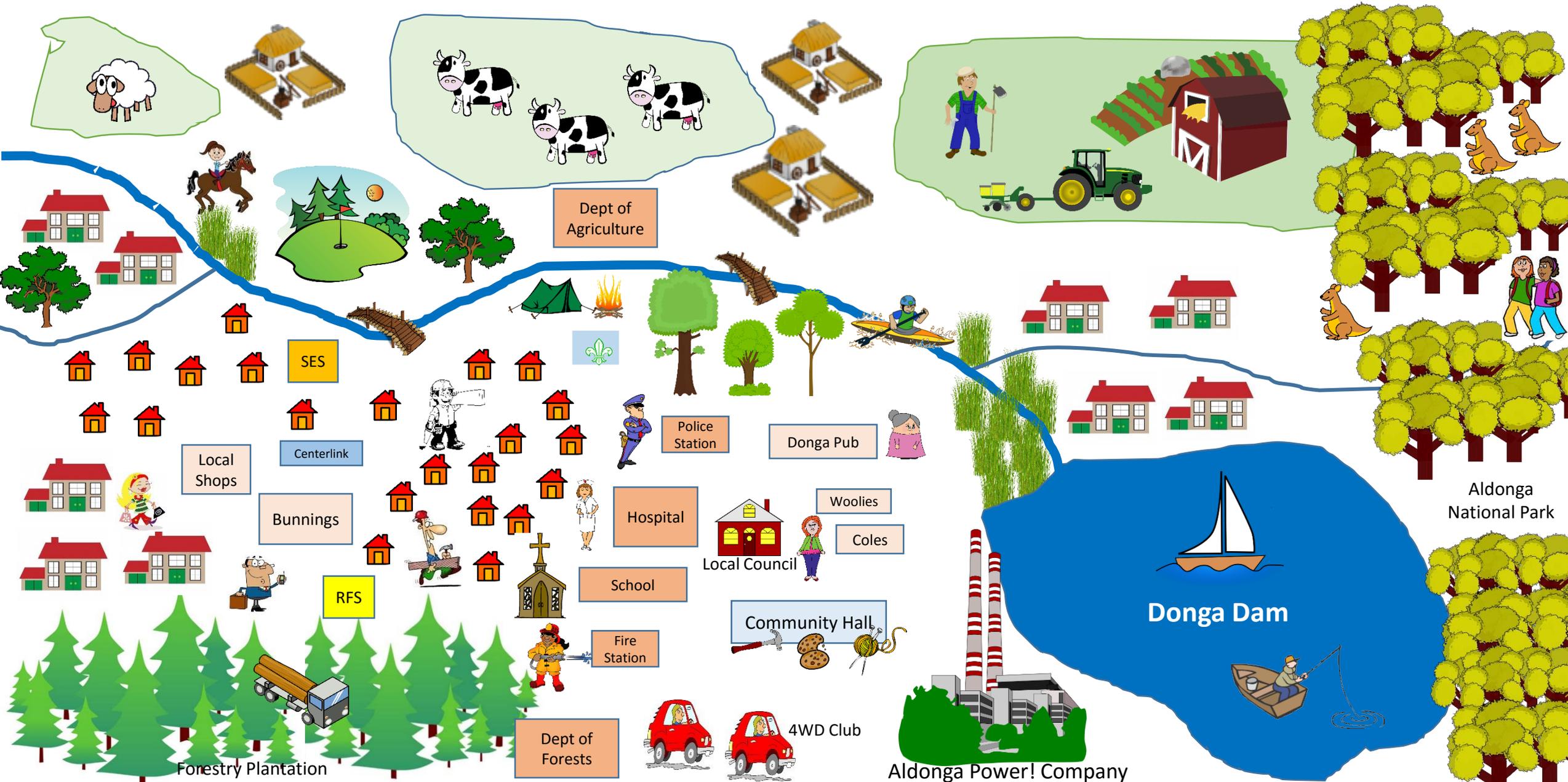
- Not established in practice
- Lack of willingness / capacity to accept and carry out responsibilities
- Just another face of Neoliberalism??
- NSDR lacks clarity re:
  - How actors should work together
  - Types of relationships they should have
  - What specific obligations actors have

# Community

Community Actor	Type	Examples
Individuals & Households	Homeowners, Renters	Families Single occupiers Share houses
Businesses	Small local family-owned businesses	local bakery
	Sole traders	Plumbers, roofers, carpenters
	Regional / national businesses	Woolworths, Bunnings
	Industries	Construction, manufacture, agriculture
	Owners and operators of critical infrastructure	Local power station
Government	Federal government	Australian Defence Force Funding for disaster relief
	Local government	Local councils & shires
	State government departments	National Parks, Police & other emergency services
Community Organisations (Not-for-profit Sector)	Local branches of volunteer-based emergency service organisations*	Rural Fire Service, State Emergency Service, St John, Volunteer Rescue Association, Surf Life Savers
	Local branches of national and international disaster relief or interest-based organisations	Red Cross, Oxfam, Country Women's Association, RSPCA, Lions Club, local church groups, bushwalking club, 4WD club, quilting groups + countless more

\*Technically part of state government, but seen as a community entity

# The very fictional township of Aldonga



# Community responsibilities

Individuals & Households	Businesses	Community Groups	Government
1. Understanding of and adequate preparation for risks	1. Understanding of and adequate preparation for risks	1. Providing appropriate local information to individuals	1. Providing information to allow all members of society to undertake decisions
2. Becoming actively involved in local community disaster preparedness	2. Wide-reaching business continuity planning	2. Helping individuals to cope with and recover from a disaster	2. Supporting individuals & communities to prepare for extreme events
3. Assuming responsibility for vulnerable household members	3. Understanding available insurance policies	3. Preserving community memory of catastrophic disasters.	3. Strategic planning to minimise disaster risk
4. Acting on information, advice & other cues provided before, during and after a disaster	4. Ensuring continuation of services during or soon after a disaster	4. Emergency Services Only: Maintaining operational readiness	4. Clarifying responsibilities to enable whole of government approach
			5. Coordinating the disaster response
			6. Assisting in the recovery

# Policy instruments

Policy Instrument Class	Explanation
Research & Development	Basic research & Applied research
Information / Communication Flows	Between research findings and policy imperatives; Between and within government structures; Between researchers, government, industries and community
Education & Training	Public education (moral suasion); Targeted education; Formal education; Training (skills development); Education regarding other instruments
Consultative Instruments	Negotiation; Mediation; Dispute resolution; Inclusive institutions and processes
Agreements & Conventions	Inter-governmental agreements / policies; MoUs; Conventions and treaties (national & international)
Statute Law	New statutes or regulations under existing law
Common Law	Application of doctrines such as negligence, nuisance, public trust
Contracts	Legal agreements detailing payment and responsibilities, between governments, firms and sometimes individuals
Assessment Procedures	Systematic reviews of processes or outcomes
Self-Regulation	Codes of practice; Codes of ethics; Professional standards within an industry or profession
Community Involvement	Participation in policy formulation; Freedom of information laws; Rights to comment on development proposals; Community implementation of programs
Price signals	Taxes & Charges; Use charges; Subsidies; Penalties; Insurance
Institutional Change	New or revised settings to enable other instruments or policy and management
Changing Other Policies	Removal or reform of distorting subsidies, conflicting policies or statutory objects
Inaction	Where justified by due consideration, and generally involving commitment to reconsider the issue at a later date

# Different policies for different groups and objectives

Obligation	Examples	Community Actor	Issues	Policy Choices
<b>Individuals &amp; Businesses:</b> Understanding of and adequate preparation for risks	Maintaining an asset protection zone in bushfire-prone areas		Power company: Single-site facility → easy to check compliance	Regulation – obligations re asset protection zone specified in licensing
			Rural households: dispersed remote properties, unique assets & different capacities	Information flows – public education; Contracts – between fire service and householders to provide assistance; Price signals – discount on insurance for regular mitigation
<b>Individuals:</b> Acting on information, advice & other cues provided before, during and after a disaster	Compliance with emergency services' directions, e.g. Respect roadblocks; Don't drive through floodwaters		Farmers need to enter the fire-ground to care for & feed animals	Community involvement – identify who needs access. Restricted entry passes can be issued to locals to bypass roadblocks
			People driving through floodwaters	Statute law and price signals – fines for failure to comply; Community information – public education. School education to encourage children to warn parents

# Summary

- NSDR & Shared Responsibility
  - Overarching government policy framework
  - Devil lies in the detail – i.e. implementation
- Community
  - Communities of place within which there are many overlapping & contradictory communities of interest
  - Business & Government = crucial parts of community
- Obligations
  - Emphasise Prevention & Preparation phases of disaster management
  - Assigned by policy – are community actors willing & able to accept them?
- Policies
  - Many tools in the policy toolbox – not just regulation & public meetings
  - Policies can push, pull, persuade or force others to accept responsibility
  - Policy choice depends on target audience and what behaviour is desired