Implementing disaster resilience policy in the Australian Federation
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Susan Hunt, ANU Fenner School of Environment and Society

Implementation makes the difference

Framing good policy is one thing: making it work is another. Finding pathways between government policy and community resilience is one of the most critical challenges facing the emergency management sector. This project will advance this search" —

John Schauble, Strategic Advisor, Executive Office, Emergency Management Victoria

Disaster resilience policy domains

- **Social capital** - the social ties or membership of particular communities that make resources, advantages and opportunities available to individuals and groups (Australian Government Productivity Commission, 2003)

- **Community competence** - the capacity of a community to assess and generate the conditions required to demand or execute change (Brown & Kulig,1996).

- **Economic development-** a dynamic process of economic growth where nation states generate sufficient savings and investment in order to diversify their economies from agriculture to industry, with the necessary supporting infrastructure such as roads and seaports (Bannock et al, 1998).

- **Information and communication** - What is conveyed or represented or presented by a particular arrangement or sequence of things" (Oxford University Press, 2002) and creation of common meanings and understandings and the provision of opportunities for members to articulate needs, views and attitudes (Norris et al, 2008).

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DISASTER RESILIENCE POLICY IMPLEMENTATION – DOMAINS & POLICY OBJECTIVES			
Domain	Social Capital	Community Competence	Economic Development	Information & communication
Theme	Trust	Self-efficacy	Sustainable development	Behaviour change
Policy Objective	1.Networks 2.Non-adverse geography/place-based attachment 3.Community engagement 4.Leadership (internally focused)	1.Political partnerships 2.Stakeholder engagement 3.Leadership (externally focused) & empowerment 4.Community participation	1.Security 2.Economic diversity 3.Equity of resource distribution 4.Shared (equitable) risk allocation	1.Narratives 2.Responsible media/access to trusted information 3.Skills and infrastructure 4.Information flow between sectors

Policy mechanisms

- Australian Constitution,
- Intergovernmental arrangements,
- Federal financing arrangements,
- Micro and macro-economic levers,
- Risk communication,
- Media,
- Volunteering,
- Insurance
- Copyright practices
- Emergency services
- Public-Private Partnerships
- Land use planning and building codes

The Big Picture – Tom Roberts, 1903
Opening of the 1st Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia by HRH the Duke of Cornwall and York, 9 May, 1901

Participating organisations

The **National Flood Risk Information Project**, a Commonwealth Government NSDR initiative agreed by COAG in 2012 and managed by Geoscience Australia (Commonwealth of Australia),   – 1 interview,

The **Community Resilience Innovation Program**, (CRIP) managed by the NSW Government under the Federal and State jointly funded National Partnership Agreement – Natural Disaster Resilience (NSW Government) - 2 interviews,

The **Lake Macquarie City Council Local Adaptation Plan for Flooding** (Lake Macquarie City Council) – 3 interviews,

The **Rivers and Ranges Community Leadership Program**, a Not-For-Profit organisation established following the 2009 Victorian fires and later affiliated with the Victorian Government Regional Community Leadership Program Network (Rivers and Ranges Community Leadership Program) – 8 interviews, and

Australian Business Roundtable for Disaster Resilience and Safer Communities, managed and established by the Insurance Australia Group and a partnership between the insurance, building and building financing sector and the Australian Red Cross (Insurance Australia Group) – 1 Interview

Findings: The story so far

➢ **Social capital** - low levels of trust in government, although emergency services enjoy high levels of trust.

➢ **Community competence** and **Information and Communication** - Changing role of the media with declining trust in traditional models while new media requires individual critical choice, it offers opportunities for more community empowerment and participation

➢ **Community competence** – Implementation must include a commitment to tenacious stakeholder and community engagement approaches.

➢ **Information and communication** – risk communication must include strategies that support behaviour change.

➢ **Economic development** – incentives for investment in risk mitigation, including efficient insurance price signals, clarify ownership arrangements of publicly funded risk information Private-Public-Partnerships, cost-benefit analysis.

➢ **Subsidiarity** is the organising principle of choice for implementing disaster resilience policy in a multi-level governance system

The subsidiarity principle – 5th policy domain

➤ *Powers and responsibilities should be left with the lowest level of government practicable. Such a devolved system means there is greater local input into decision-making and states/territories can customise policies and services to suit local preferences*

➤ *A central authority should have a subsidiary function, performing only those tasks which cannot be performed at a more local level*

➤ *Applies to the allocation of government functions but it also applies at a sociological level ie sovereignty of the individual has primacy above all other forms of social organisation*

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➤ *The subsidiarity principle stems from a conviction that each human individual is endowed with and inherent and inalienable worth, or dignity.*

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