Enabling sustainable emergency volunteering: Adapting the sector

Research advisory forum/ **2018**

Dr Blythe McLennan / RMIT University
Dr Tarn Kruger / RMIT University
Prof John Handmer / RMIT University

RMIT UNIVERSITY

Australian Government
Department of Industry, Innovation and Science

Business Cooperative Research Centres Programme

© BUSHFIRE AND NATURAL HAZARDS CRC 2018

The landscape of volunteering is transforming

1. **Practice of volunteering is changing**
   - Contraction of 'traditional' and expansion of 'modern' styles (McLennan et al 2016)
2. **View of volunteering is broadening**
   - More inclusive definitions & measures (VA 2015, ABS 2018)
3. **Expectations of volunteering are rising**
   - Formalisation & professionalization of volunteering & voluntary sector (Flint 2000)
   - Building resilience through "volunteer initiatives rooted in the community" (UNV 2011)

Mud Army and SES volunteers working together during the 2011 floods in Queensland. Photo: Queensland Fire and Emergency Services.

Traditional volunteer management models are unsustainable

"[Our change in thinking has] *come from an understanding of where the national and international trends are going around sustainable volunteerism models and the emergence of new volunteerism groups and what makes them attractive. You look at that and go, 'okay, here's what we're up against'. Our traditional models will not survive in this area. So where do we need to go?*"

Manager in volunteerism, Govt EMO

Emergency Volunteering 2030 – Adapting the Sector

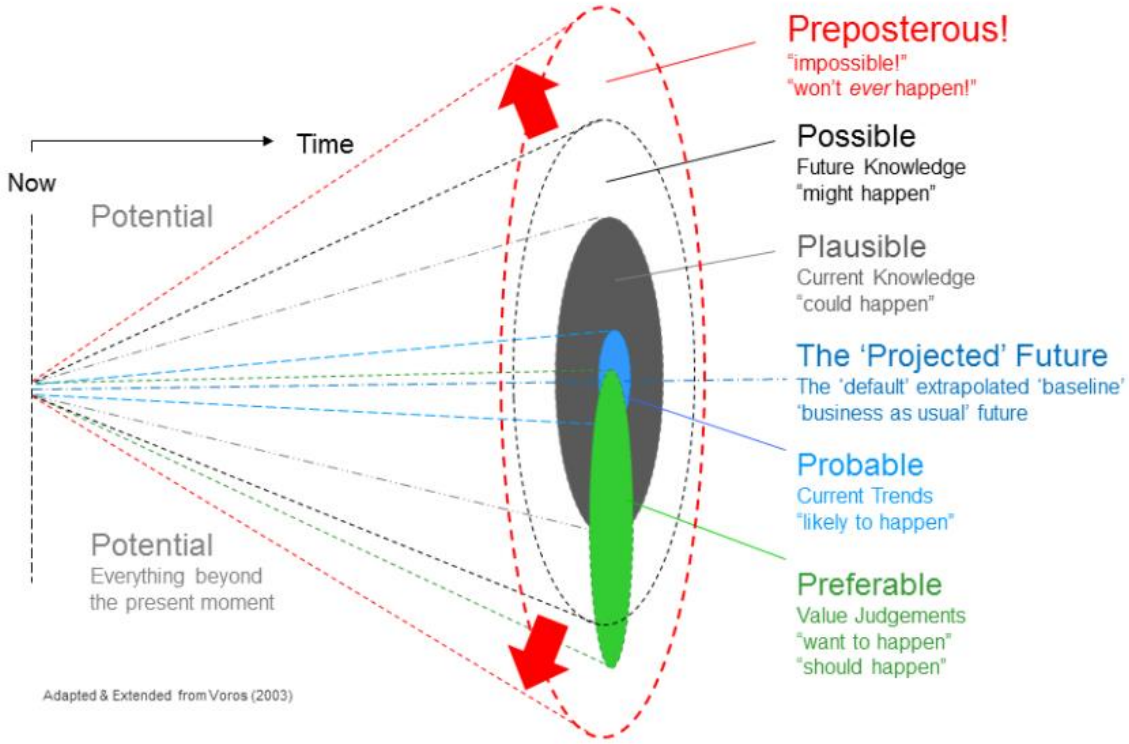
1. What might (and should) emergency volunteering look like in 2030 – before, during and after emergencies?

2. How, and by whom, might it be organised?

3. How can the EM sector best enable the value of this volunteering for communities over the next decade?

A foresight study

- "Foresight is a **systematic**, **participatory**, future-intelligence-gathering and medium-to-long-term **vision-building** process aimed at **enabling present-day decisions** and **mobilising joint actions**." (For-learn 2018)
- **Developing alternative future scenarios and examining their implications for today's decision making.**
- "In the longer run, it [scenario planning] can trigger **cultural change** in the way institutions and organisations approach their long-term future and make them **more adaptive to external changes**." (Volkery & Ribeiro 2009)



The Futures Cone. Source: Voros 2017

Who is involved

Researchers

- Dr Blythe McLennan, Dr Tarn Kruger, Prof John Handmer (RMIT)

CRC Lead End Users (whole project)

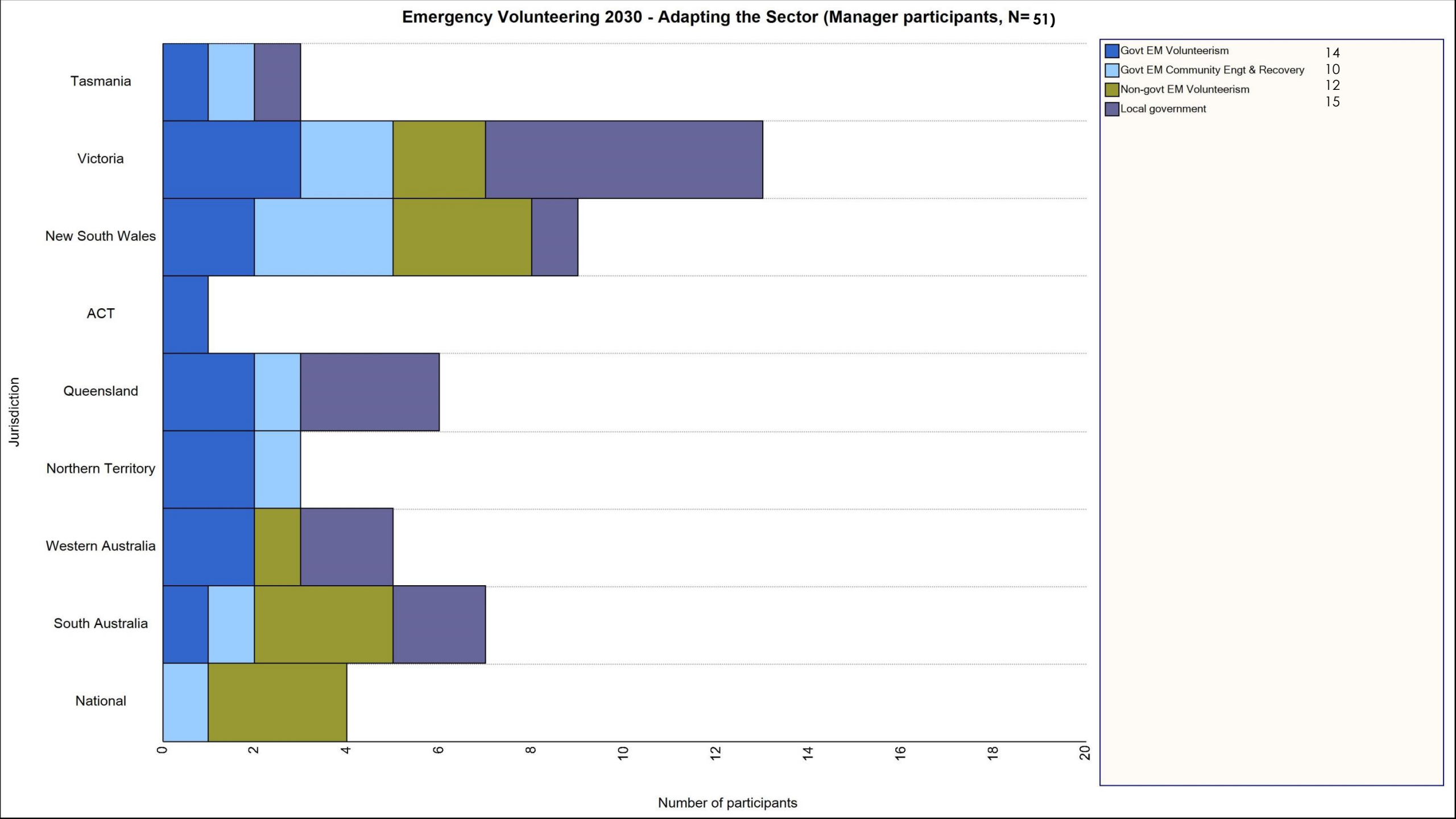
- Paul Davis, EMV; Troy Davies, QFES; Deb Parkin, IGEM-Vic

CRC End User Group (whole project)

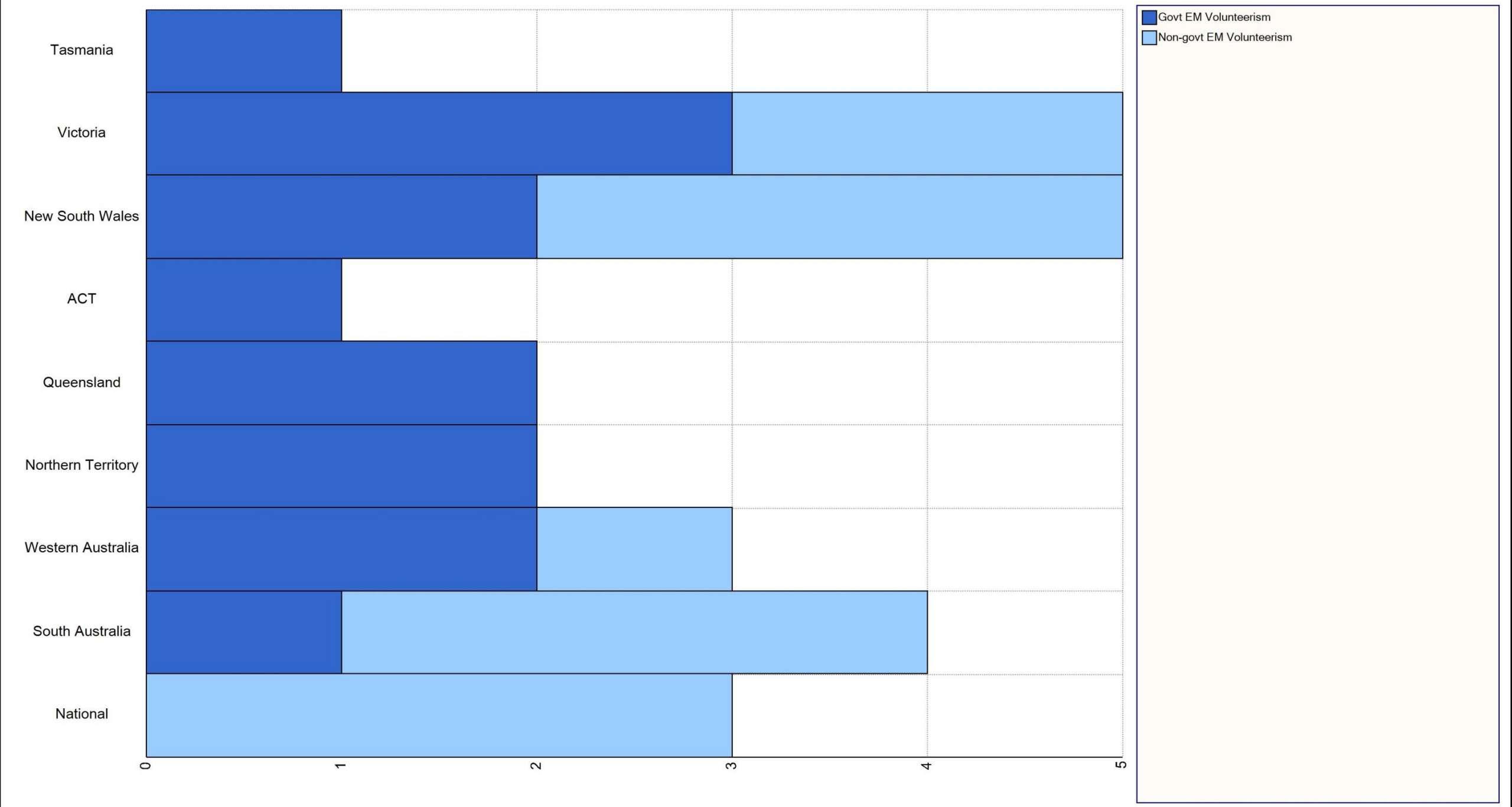
- Karen Roberts & Jennifer Pidgeon, DFES
- Ali Martin, CFA
- Peter Jeffrey, Qld SES
- Georgina Goodrich, SA SRO
- Kristine Wendtman, NSW RFS
- Adelaide Cooper & Lisa Grieg, SAFECOM
- Andrew McCullough, NSW SES
- Zoe Kenyon, AFAC VMTG
- Diana Bernardi, Australian Red Cross
- Kendra Clegg & Jenn Burgess, Vic SES

Advisory Group (Adapting the sector)

- Allie Guegan, Frankston City Council/ CFA vol
- Amanda Nixon, Vol Qld
- Anne Leadbeater, consultant
- Anthony Bradstreet, NSW RFS & AFAC CETG
- Bridget Tehan, VCOSS
- Carla Bailey, Logan City Council
- Faye Bendrups, VESA
- Julie Molloy, IGEM-Qld
- Mark Dryden, VFBV
- Melissa Pexton, WALGA
- Steve Pascoe, consultant
- (and more to come…)

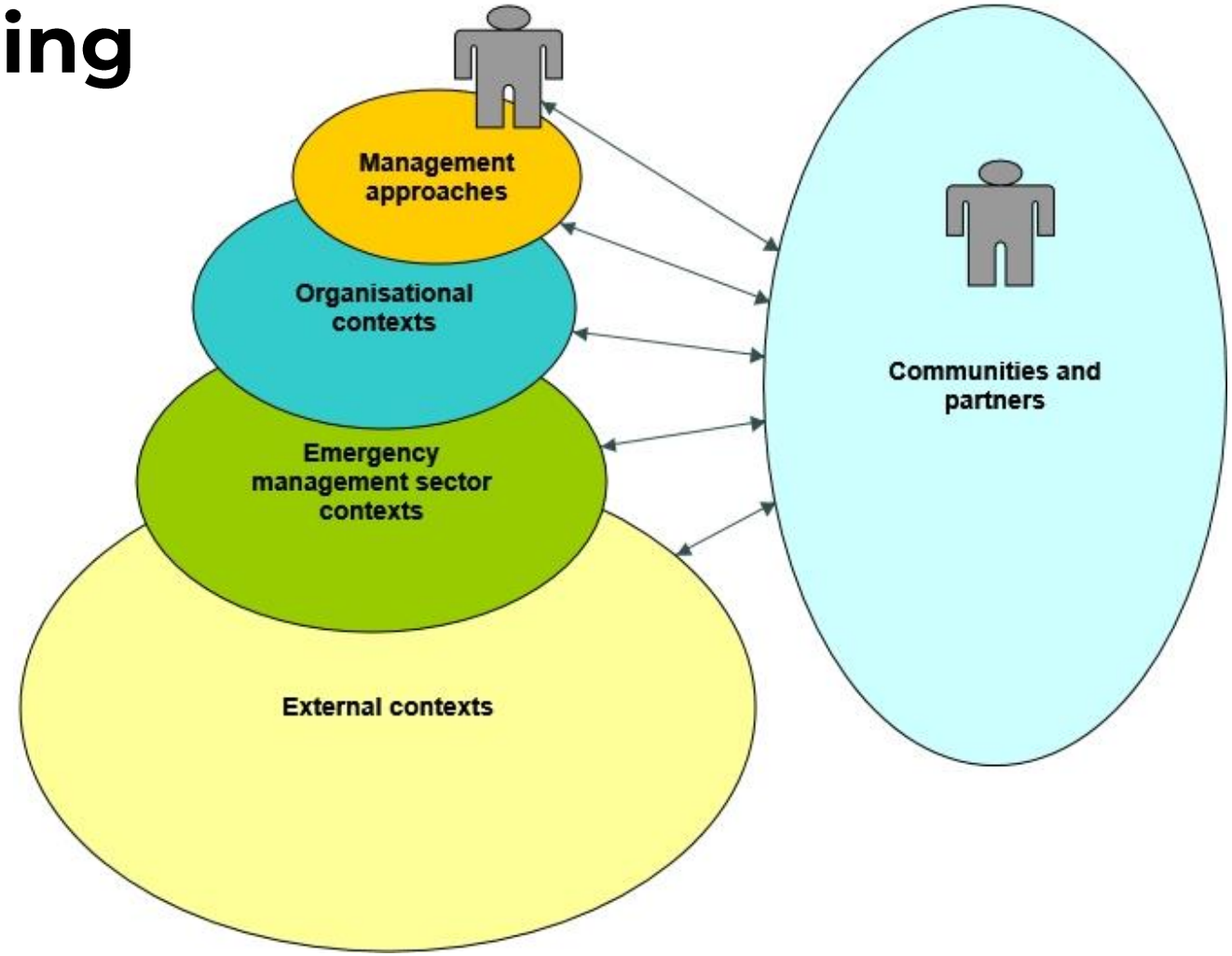

Emergency Volunteering 2030 - Adapting the Sector (Manager participants, N= 51)
Govt EM Volunteerism 14
Govt EM Community Engt & Recovery 10
Non-govt EM Volunteerism 12
Local government 15
Tasmania
Victoria
New South Wales
ACT
Queensland
Northern Territory
Western Australia
South Australia
National
Jurisdiction
0 2 4 6 8 10 12 14 16 18 20
Number of participants

Emergency Volunteering 2030 - Adapting the Sector (Managers in volunteerism, N=26)

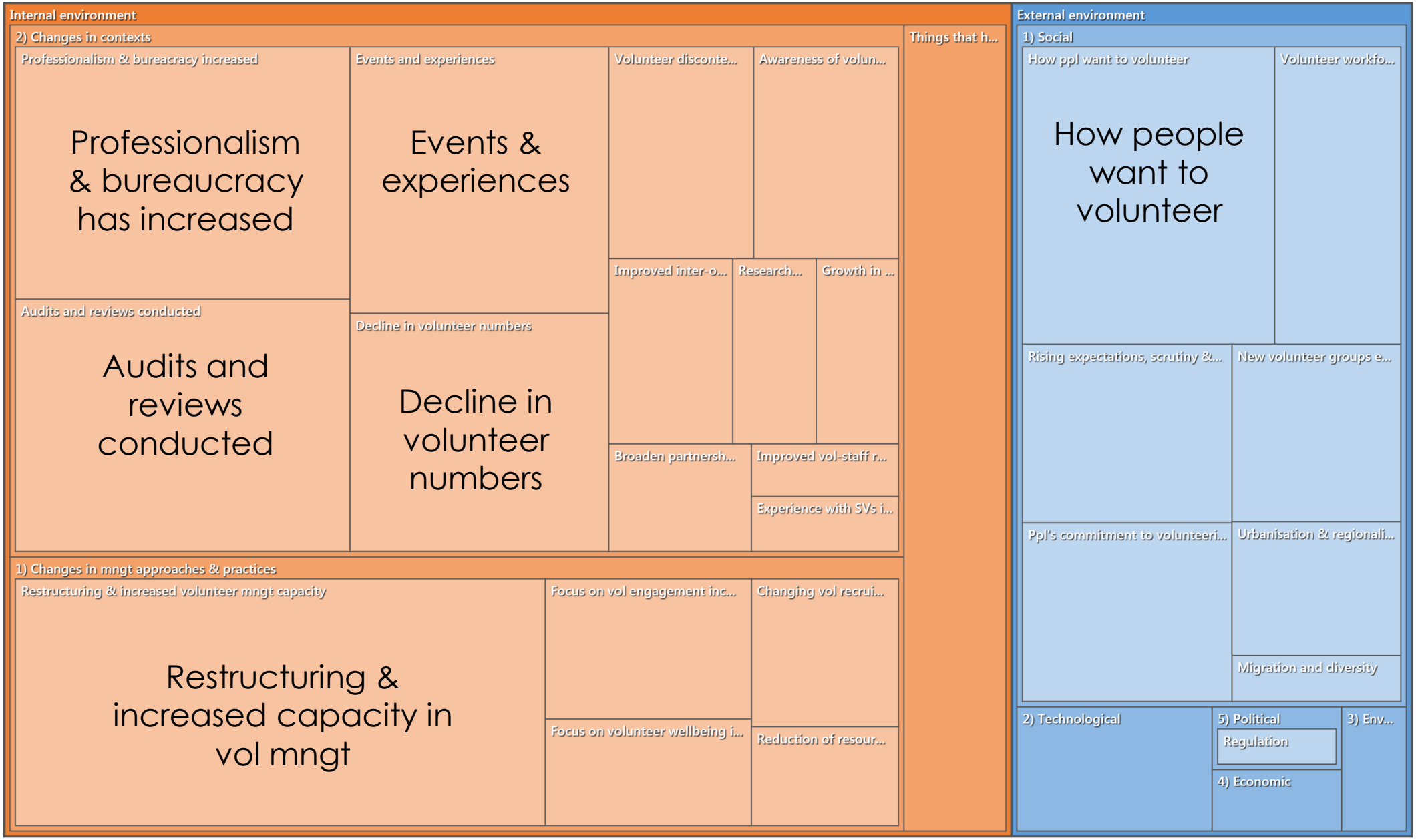


A volunteering system

Key elements in the volunteering picture drawn by managers

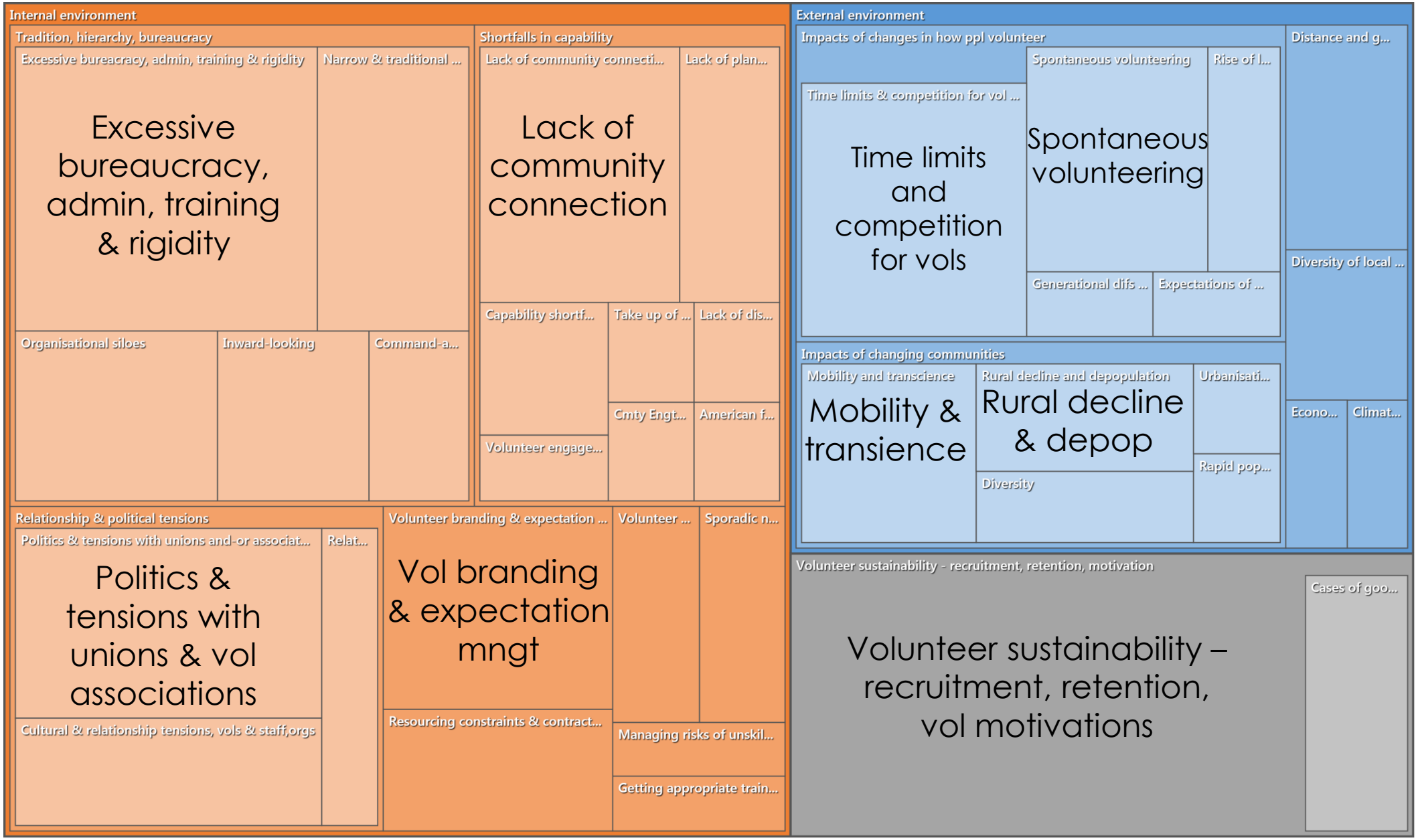


What has changed?

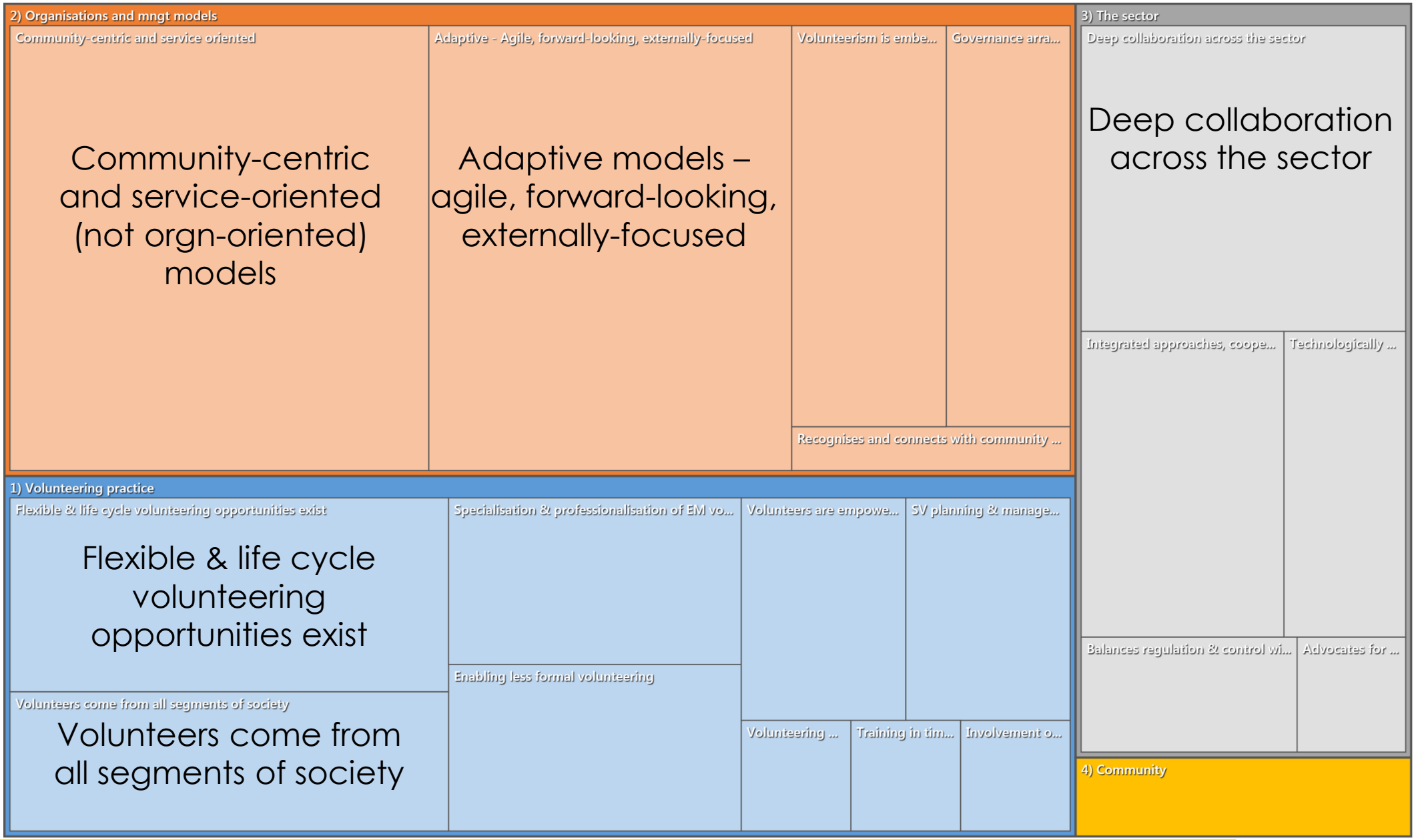


bushfire&natural HAZARDSCRC

Current issues

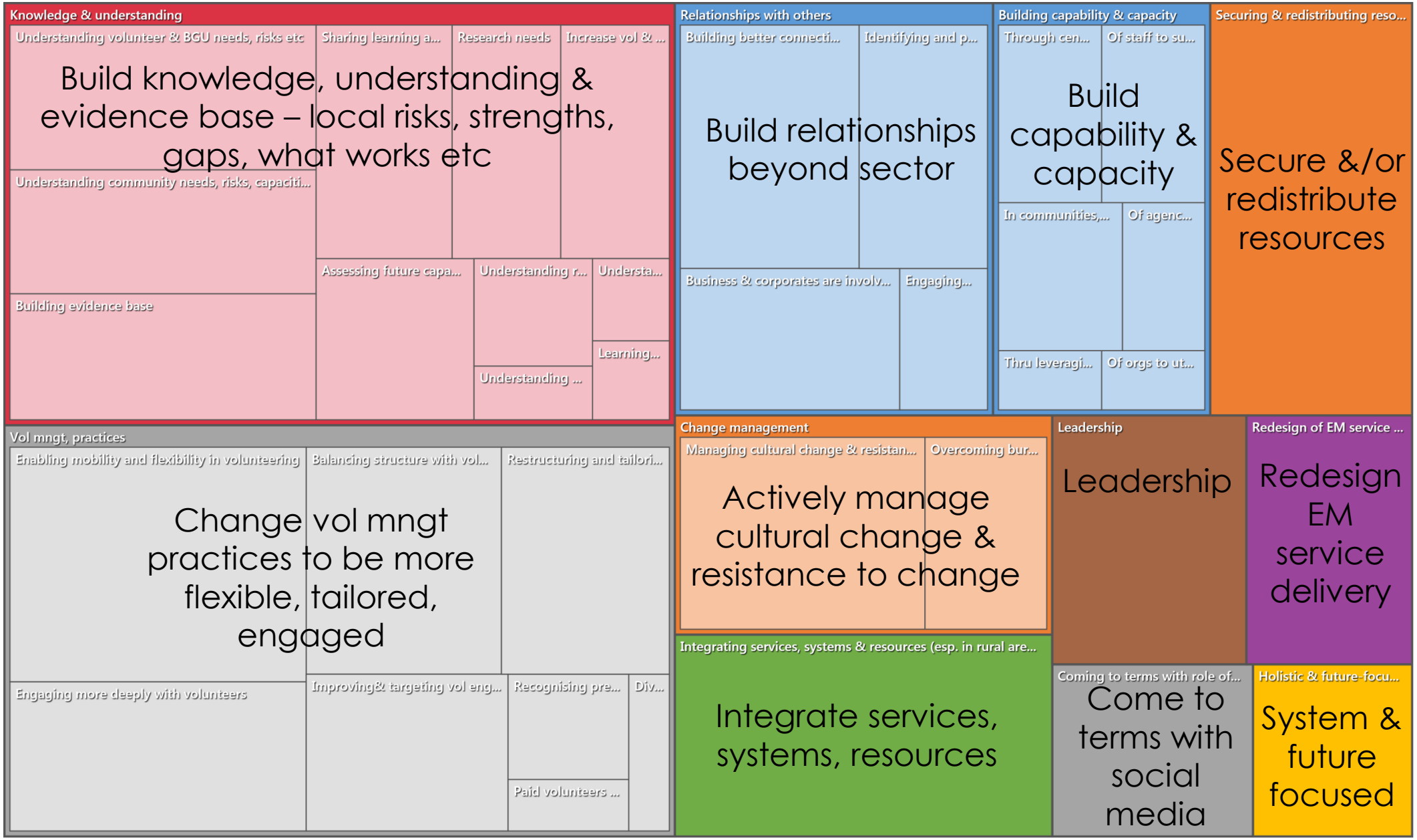


What the preferred future looks like



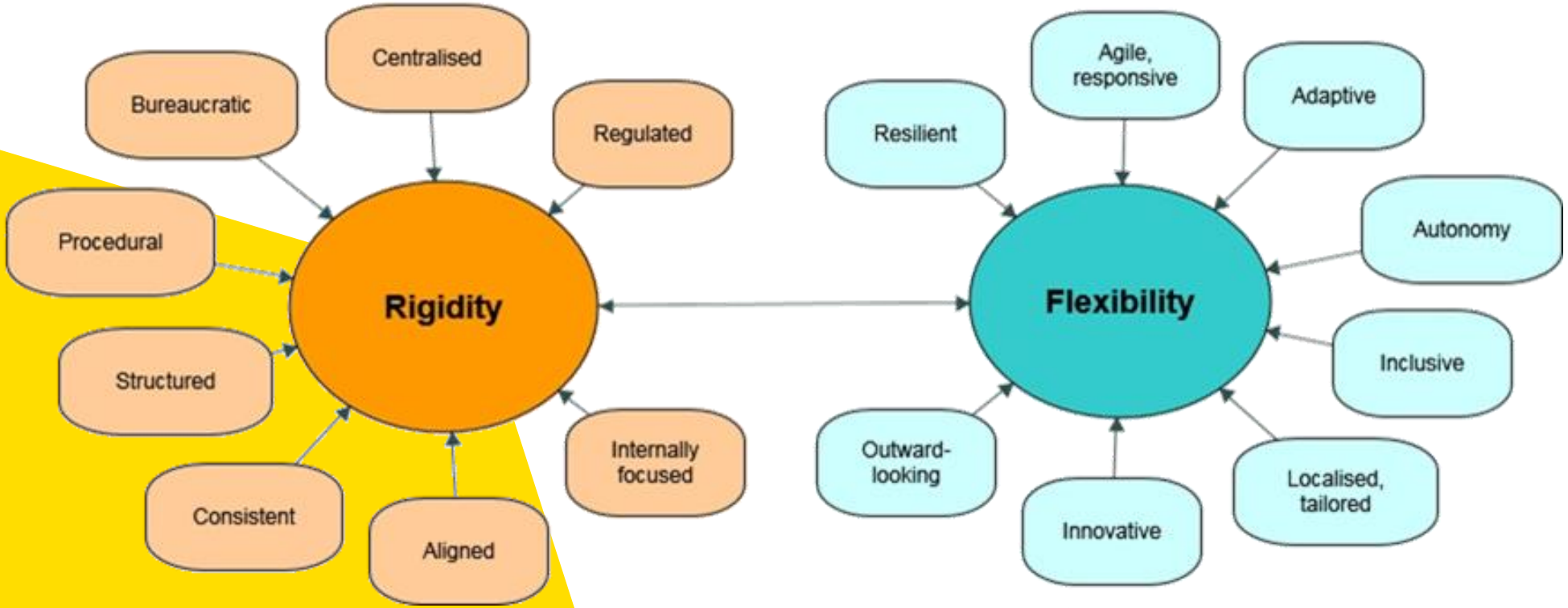
bushfire&natural HAZARDSCRC

What needs to be done



bushfire&natural HAZARDSCRC

A tug-of-war



A shift this way…

What's next?

- Finalise reports on EMO manager interviews & desktop review
- Qualitative, open-ended survey – volunteers and community/voluntary sector
- Group interview with vol peak CEOs 27th April

More info & contacts

- http://www.bnhcrc.com.au/research/resilience-hazards/3533
- Blythe McLennan, blythe.mclennan@rmit.edu.au
  m: 0406-059-510
- Tarn Kruger, tarn.kruger@rmit.edu.au

Utilisation Plan (working)

- Knowledge-sharing events (pilot late 2018)
- Sector-wide scenario-planning workshop (late 2019)
- Place-based scenario-planning workshops (2019/2020)

References

- ABS (2018). 4159.0.55.005 - Information Paper: Collection of Volunteering data in the ABS. Australian Bureau of Statistics. Retrieved from http://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/Lookup/4159.0.55.005Main+Features5March+2018
- Flick, M., Bittman, M., & Doyle, J. (2000). The community's most valuable [hidden] asset": Volunteering in Australia, report for FaCS. *Social Policy Research Centre, University of New South Wales, Sydney*. Retrieved from https://www.sprc.unsw.edu.au/media/SPRCFile/Report2_02_Volunteering_in_Australia.pdf
- For-learn (2018). Foresight. European Commission. Retried from http://forlearn.jrc.ec.europa.eu/guide/A1_key-terms/foresight.htm
- Hines A, Bishop PC. (2013) Framework foresight: Exploring futures the Houston way. Futures. 51:31-49.
- McLennan, B. J., Whittaker, J., & Handmer, J. W. (2016). The changing landscape of disaster volunteering: opportunities, responses and gaps in Australia. Natural Hazards, 84(3), pp. 2031–2048. Retrieved from http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/s11069-016-2532-5
- UNV. (2011). State of the world's volunteerism: universal values for global wellbeing. New York: United Nations Volunteers Programme. Retried from http://www.unric.org/en/images/stories/2011/PDF/SWVR%20Report%20[Eng].pdf
- Volkery A, Ribeiro T. (2009) Scenario planning in public policy: Understanding use, impacts and the role of institutional context factors. Technological Forecasting and Social Change. 76(9):1199.
- Voros (2017). The Futures Cone, use and history. [Blog] Retrieved from https://thevoroscope.com/2017/02/24/the-futures-cone-use-and-history/
- VA. (2015). *Volunteering Australia Project: the review of the definition of volunteering* Canberra: Volunteering Australia. Retrieved from http://www.volunteeringaustralia.org/policy-and-best-practise/definition-of-volunteering/