

# Transformative scenarios in a climate-challenged world

Engagement and implementation guide



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We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians across all the lands on which we live and work, and we pay our respects to Elders both past, present and emerging. We recognise that these lands and waters have always been places of teaching, research and learning.

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## Acknowledgement of Country

The project team acknowledges Traditional Owners of Country throughout Australia and recognises the continuing connection to lands, waters and communities. They pay our respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and to Elders past and present.

They acknowledge and respect their knowledge, science, creativity and storytelling, passed on from generation to generation for more than 65 000 years. They recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander right to self-determination and are committed to developing self-determined partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and organisations across Australia.



## Document purpose

The Engagement and Implementation Guide, including the Facilitator's Guide (Appendix 2), provides a clear roadmap for agencies or organisations to adopt and implement the Transformative Scenarios Planning Process.

This document answers critical questions such as: *How do you apply the process?* and *What's needed to make it work?*

This is a live document. It will be continuously reviewed and updated based on new and emerging information and circumstances. This ensures messaging and considerations are responsive to any changes to project needs and priorities.

To access other Transformative Scenarios Planning resources, [click here](#).

### Disclaimer

The Australian Institute for Disaster Resilience (AIDR), the Australian and New Zealand Council for fire and emergency services (AFAC) and Natural Hazards Research Australia (the Centre) advise that the information contained in this material comprises general statements based on scientific research. The reader is advised and needs to be aware that such information may be incomplete or unable to be used in all circumstances.

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## Part 1: Key messages



### About the Transformative Scenarios

**The Transformative Scenarios Planning Process offers four possible future scenarios to help leaders in the emergency management sector stress-test their existing strategies.**

Backed by research from top emergency management experts and leaders in Australia and New Zealand, these scenarios are tailor-made for the sector, giving you tools to navigate challenges and seize opportunities in an ever-changing landscape.

This approach isn't about predicting the future — it's about preparing for it.



### About the resources

**The resources are designed to be practical, insightful and easy to fit into your schedule.**

The resources are made up of engaging online modules designed to guide you through the Transformative Scenarios Planning Process.

It's fully online for maximum flexibility and you'll also get access to a comprehensive workbook and reference materials, available in both PDF and printable formats. The resources are designed to be practical, insightful and easy to fit into your schedule.



### About the benefits

**Transformative Scenarios Planning helps organisations prepare for an uncertain future, building resilience to natural hazards and climate change.**

This process lets you 'wind tunnel' or stress-test your current plans, prompting you to think beyond the usual assumptions and expand your perspective.



## About the study

### Overview

- The Transformative Scenarios Process provides a set of four plausible futures to stress-test strategic planning processes and that can support the emergency management sector and related sectors with their strategic, risk management and operational planning
- Transformative Scenario planning is an explorative and adaptable planning method designed to help organisations not only adapt to an unpredictable future but also influence and transform the future
- The research behind the Transformative Scenarios has been undertaken specifically for the emergency management sector by emergency management sector experts and leaders across Australia and New Zealand

### The Four Transformative Scenarios

- **Tech Horizons**—A world driven by data and information, where a reliance on technology for engagement erodes social connectedness in favour of protective self-interest
- **Balanced Stewardship**—Where the focus is on responsibly stewarding the planet for generations to come and banding together to help each other out through challenging times
- **Filling the Void**—A world where the power of community and collective goodwill expose a leadership void in government as corporations set direction and policy guidance for the future
- **Fragmented Era**—A world with an opportunistic short-term focus, where a ‘no worries’ mindset leaves us behind as individual needs and rights trump the collective good

### The methodology

- Immerse yourself in the four plausible alternative futures
- Factor in hazard events caused by increasing climate instability and consider exposure, vulnerability and adaptive capacity
- Complete a strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) analyses of your current strategic thinking
- Consider key implications for the future direction of your strategy or plan using both an adaptive and transformative stance
- Identify weak signals and lead indicators that will elicit the need for further action



## About the resources' focus

### Overview and Planning Process

- **Module 1** introduces participants to the Transformative Scenario Planning process, highlighting the scientific rigour behind the process, the benefits achieved from completing the process (the 'why'), with a view to ultimately motivating them to complete the process. It can be used as a marketing tool to promote the process of Transformative Scenario Planning, as well as an introductory tool when the participants are completing the process.
- **Module 2** introduces participants to the five steps of the stress testing process. It is designed to be a preview of the process prior to them completing it, plus it also introduces the key concepts in more detail.

### An overview of each scenario

- **Module 3a—The 'Tech Horizons' scenario:** a world with high strategic long-term governance and low social cohesion. It is driven by data and information, where a reliance on technology for engagement erodes social connectedness in favour of protective self-interest.
- **Module 3b—The 'Balanced Stewardship' scenario:** a world with more strategic long-term governance and higher social cohesion. A future where the focus is on responsibly stewarding the planet for generations to come and banding together to help each other out through challenging times.
- **Module 3c—The 'Filling the Void' scenario:** a world with short-term governance and high social cohesion. A world where the power of community and collective goodwill exposes a leadership void in government as corporations set direction and policy guidance for the future.
- **Module 3d—The 'Fragmented Era' scenario:** a world with short-term governance and low social cohesion. A world with an opportunistic, short-term focus, where a "no worries" mindset leaves us behind as individual needs and rights trump the collective good.

### Stress Testing Process

- These four distinct modules take participants through the five steps and allow participants to complete their responses online for each scenario, which will be collated into a final document for them to save as a PDF or print. Participants will also be provided with a workbook so they have access to all reference materials in a physical format as well.
  - **Module 4a**—This module will take participants through the stress testing process for the 'Tech Horizons' era
  - **Module 4b**—This module will take participants through the stress testing process for 'Balanced Stewardship' era
  - **Module 4c**—This module will take participants through the stress testing process for the 'Filling the Void' scenario
  - **Module 4d**—This module will take participants through the stress testing process for the 'Fragmented Era' scenario



## About the benefits

### Benefits for leaders and decision makers

- **Leadership development**—sector-wide workshops can build networks and strengths and capacities for leading teams and organisations. Organisations can stress-test their plans effectively and reduce complexity and uncertainty. The stress testing process can improve foresight, capacity for risk identification, mitigation and operational effectiveness.
- **Action learning journeys**—a robust methodology for small groups of industry peers to share, explore and resolve key challenges together in a confidential manner. Transformative Scenarios provide a methodology to work with complex situations that you want to transform but cannot do so alone or unilaterally.

### Benefits for your organisation

- **Strategic planning processes**—processes and workshop support that opens teams to plausible scenarios that can be applied to further develop or strengthen existing strategic plans or priorities.
- **Build organisational capability**—in-house development support to build leadership agility, foresight capacity, strategic thinking for future risk mitigation and strengthen strategic and operational plans. It also allows organisations to plan where best to allocate finite financial and material resources.
- **Innovation programs**—enables ‘safe spaces’ for bringing different leaders or teams together to examine and explore what could be done to improve operations and adapt to alternative futures. It allows time and space to step outside of operational commitments (the here and now) to think long-term and break reactive cycles of planning.
- **Implementation and business as usual (BAU) alignment**—aligns scenarios, strategy and operations or business-as-usual—providing a clear line of sight between planning and action..

### Benefits for the sector

- **Transformative Scenario Processes**—engage with plausible Transformative Scenarios through workshops with broad and diverse stakeholder participants to encourage new and shared insights. These processes build a shared understanding for what is possible and creates system-wide relationships based on new insights, a recognition of required capacities, initiatives and commitments.
- **Innovation labs**—Strategic and collaborative innovation processes that bring together key stakeholders from across the emergency management and related sectors to work on specific systemic challenges together—to collaborate and experiment on what can and must be done to best adapt to and transform our current situation.



## Part 2: Target audience

### Executive and senior leaders

**You set the vision and make the big decisions that shape your organisation's direction.**

Transformative Scenarios help you step out of the day-to-day and think long-term and help to see possible yet alternative bigger pictures that may unfold beyond current day assumptions.

Your role is to champion the process from the top. By embracing and supporting these explorative scenarios, you signal their importance to the team, helping drive action and creating space for transformative thinking that influences future outcomes.

### Strategic planning officers

**You are the architects behind organisational plans.**

Transformative Scenarios provides a powerful tool to stress test your strategies. It ensures your plans are flexible and effective, even in the face of uncertainty.

Your role is to dive deep into the process to stress-test current systems and spot gaps. You'll apply the scenarios to build resilience into strategic frameworks, ensuring your organisation can respond proactively to challenges like natural hazards or climate change.

### Subject matter experts

**You bring real-life threats and opportunities to the table.**

Strategic and operational planning is based on real-life threats and opportunities.

Your role is to use your technical expertise to bring the scenarios to life. Your knowledge of real-life threats and opportunities allows participants to see that these scenarios are plausible futures grounded in science and lived experience.

### Facilitators

**You create collaborative, inclusive and productive spaces.**

By facilitating discussions and guiding teams, you ensure the process stays collaborative, inclusive, and productive.

Your role is to bring people together, hold space for open dialogue and ensure everyone's input is valued. As the facilitator, you help the group explore the scenarios meaningfully, transforming insights into tangible next steps that inspire real change.

Refer also to Appendix 2: Facilitators Guide.



## Part 3: Engagement tactics and activities

The modules are aimed to be used to assist with in person or online workshops. Tailor each workshop and engagement activity to ensure the Transformative Scenarios Planning Process aligns with your organisation's goals, culture and capacity.

Here are examples of tactical communication and engagement activities you might use to embed Transformative Scenarios Planning into your organisation, from advocating its introduction at your agency to implementing the outputs.

### Stage 1

#### Advocate

Build momentum by engaging key decision-makers, industry leaders and influencers. Position the

### Stage 2

#### Promote

Once approved, spread the word through internal networks, social media, and public channels. Use both

### Stage 3

#### Facilitate

Guide meaningful conversations, workshops, and collaboration opportunities. Ensure

### Stage 4

#### Showcase

Highlight successes, lessons learned and impact through reports, case studies and presentations. Inspire others



| Stage                          | Example activity               | Description                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Stage 1:<br/>Advocate</b>   | <b>Seed idea</b>               | <p>Start conversations early by introducing the concept to key stakeholders (such as your Manager, Executives, Board members and Commissioners).</p> <p>This could be through informal chats, leadership meetings or small brainstorming sessions to build interest and momentum.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|                                | <b>Develop a project plan</b>  | Once the idea has been seeded, outline clear goals, key activities, timelines, budget and responsibilities to keep the project on track. A solid plan helps ensure everyone knows their role and how the work will roll out.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|                                | <b>Brief leaders</b>           | <p>Deliver concise, high-level presentations to leadership teams, highlighting the benefits to the organisation, using the project plan.</p> <p>Briefings are also useful to ensure leaders take on advocacy roles within organisations, ensuring buy-in from all parts of the organisation as well as external partners and stakeholders.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|                                | <b>Host webinars</b>           | <p>Set-up a webinar to promote the Transformative Scenarios Planning Process—what it is, about the modules and their benefits.</p> <p>Webinars provide great opportunities to promote the benefits of the Transformative Scenarios Planning Process to broader staff as well as external stakeholders.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| <b>Stage 2:<br/>Promote</b>    | <b>Use existing channels</b>   | Use internal newsletters, email updates, team meetings and organisation-wide platforms to spread the word. Leverage the networks you already have!                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|                                | <b>Social media campaign</b>   | <p>Create engaging content—think short videos, infographics and posts—to spark interest and encourage participation.</p> <p>Keep it accessible, shareable and relevant to your audience.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| <b>Stage 3:<br/>Facilitate</b> | <b>Interactive workshops</b>   | <p>Host tailored sessions that focus on your organisation’s strategic priorities, using real-world scenarios to engage participants. Use a combination of plenary discussions and breakout groups to cater to diverse learning styles.</p> <p>Facilitate small group discussions where participants focus on a specific scenario or ‘world’. By staying within one world, teams can develop expertise, explore challenges and identify actionable opportunities. It’s also important to encourage cross-pollination of ideas through report back sessions.</p> |
|                                | <b>Collaborative planning</b>  | <p>Involve cross-departmental teams to co-create solutions, build buy-in and represent diverse perspectives.</p> <p>Encourage diverse and multigenerational participation. This includes involving diverse participants, including future leaders, senior decision makers and staff at all levels, to ensure intergenerational insights. This promotes inclusive decision making and reflects the complexity of future challenges.</p>                                                                                                                         |
|                                | <b>Small focus groups</b>      | <p>Gather diverse voices in informal settings to test emerging ideas, gain deeper insights and ensure the work is relevant.</p> <p>These sessions help refine messaging and approach before integrating outputs into existing organisational plans.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| <b>Stage 4:<br/>Showcase</b>   | <b>Conferences and forums</b>  | <p>Present at key industry events to build awareness, spark conversations and connect with potential partners. A great way to position the project as forward-thinking and impactful.</p> <p>This may include the annual AFAC Conference and the Natural Hazards Research Forum.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|                                | <b>Social media campaign</b>   | Refer to above in “Promote” stage.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|                                | <b>Communities of practice</b> | Establish ongoing forums or chat boards to share tips, insights and success stories across organisations.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |



## Case Study

### SAFECOM Strategic Planning Process

The South Australian Fire and Emergency Services Commission (SAFECOM) facilitated a one-day workshop for the emergency services sector which included the Country Fire Service, Metropolitan Fire Service, State Emergency Service and SAFECOM leaders and personnel. SAFECOM used the Transformative Scenarios Planning Process to test and refine the South Australian sector strategic thinking. Here's what we learned about the process and our tips for organisations using the Transformative Scenarios in their planning.

#### Tips for organisations

- A clear agenda and running sheet would help with the workshop's structure and flow.
- Keep workshop concise by limiting workshop duration to a maximum of 5 hours.
- Make it relevant (geographically and temporally). There can be a tendency for participants to think this will not happen here / to them.
- Avoid overloading the start of the session; allocate more time for deep thinking and imagining future scenarios (activities that occur later in the session).
- Breakout groups work best when participants stay focused on one world, becoming 'experts' in their world.
- Use extreme, catastrophic climate change scenarios (e.g., multiple fires, earthquakes, even extreme ideas like a zombie apocalypse) to stretch thinking around organisational capacity.
- Link climate change timelines with the four transformative worlds but keep it manageable.
- Focus on stress-testing strategies by imagining future risks and consider using national doctrine (e.g., AFAC strategic priorities) for evaluation. This particularly works well where multiple agencies are in the room.
- Consider holding multiple workshops or segmenting the workshop to have the right people in the room at each Step, depending on the objective.
- Consider what could happen, what is likely to happen and what you want to happen.
- When considering strategic priorities, be aware of the world you are in and the world that is approaching.
- Build in the opportunity to shift or adapt a strategic direction to allow for any changes to the world.
- Consider holding workshops on a formal rotation basis to adapt strategies for a changing environment.

#### Learnings for future workshops

This workshop underscored the need for adaptable, future-focused strategies and highlighted the importance of collaboration and critical thinking in stress-testing organisational plans. By refining facilitation techniques and streamlining processes, future sessions can become even more impactful.

Learnings from the SAFECOM Strategic Planning Process have been incorporated into this Communications and Engagement Plan, including Appendix 2: Facilitator's Guide.



## Part 4: Frequently asked questions

### Enrolment

#### Q) Who can access the modules?

A) AFAC Member organisations and Centre Participants are automatically approved to access the modules. Email [learninganddevelopment@afac.com.au](mailto:learninganddevelopment@afac.com.au) or [research@naturalhazards.com.au](mailto:research@naturalhazards.com.au) for further instruction on self-enrolment. Other organisations or individuals can apply for approval to access the modules, by emailing [research@naturalhazards.com.au](mailto:research@naturalhazards.com.au) to request the application form.

#### Q) How do I enrol myself?

A) After you or your organisation have been approved, you can self-enrol by clicking the enrolment link provided. You'll be able to create an account with your organisation's email address, and you'll receive a confirmation email.

#### Q) Do I need an account to access the Transformative Scenarios Learning modules?

A) Yes. You must use your organisation's email address to log in. Approved organisations (Centre Participants and AFAC Members) are able to create an account (e.g. [username@afac.com](mailto:username@afac.com)).

If you are unsure whether your organisation is approved, please contact [learninganddevelopment@afac.com.au](mailto:learninganddevelopment@afac.com.au) or [research@naturalhazards.com.au](mailto:research@naturalhazards.com.au).

#### Q) What should I do if I see a “domain not allowed” error?

A) This means your organisation has not been approved. Contact the support team [learninganddevelopment@afac.com.au](mailto:learninganddevelopment@afac.com.au) or [research@naturalhazards.com.au](mailto:research@naturalhazards.com.au) to request the application form.

#### Q) How long do the Transformative Scenario resources take to complete?

A) The resources consist of seven online modules and can be completed at your own pace. The first three modules will take approximately 40 minutes to review. The interactive stress testing process contained within modules 4a, 4b, 4c and 4d is self-paced. Most participants finish in 5–6 hours. We recommend focusing on one scenario at a time.

#### Q) What recognition will I get for completing these resources?

A) As a participant, you will learn how to apply the Transformative Scenario Planning process to stress-test your organisation's strategic priorities. This learning can be further applied to risk frameworks and other planning approaches. However, this is not a certified/accredited course as such.



## Payment and fees

### Q) Do I have to pay a fee to use the Transformative Scenario resources?

A) No. The resources are free and accessible to AFAC Members and Centre Participant organisations in the emergency management and community sectors from the [Natural Hazards Research Australia Transformative Scenarios webpage](#)..

### Q) Will I receive a confirmation after enrolling?

A) Yes. You'll get a confirmation email after creating an account.

### Q) What if I forget my password?

A) Use the "Forgot Password" link on the login page to reset it.

## Tailoring resources to my organisation

### Q) Can the resources be tailored to my organisation?

A) While the modules cannot be tailored to each organisation, facilitators in preparing for the workshops may consider tailoring the climate change overlay and applying the resources to the relevant strategic priorities for their organisation. We recommend that the climate change overlay be adjusted to include climate change scenarios that are most relevant to agencies.

## Support

### Q) Who can I contact for support?

A) For support, please reach out to Natural Hazards Research Australia : [research@naturalhazards.com.au](mailto:research@naturalhazards.com.au) or AFAC Learning Development Team [learninganddevelopment@afac.com.au](mailto:learninganddevelopment@afac.com.au) with Transformative Scenarios in the subject line of your email.

### Q) Can I provide feedback on the modules?

A) Absolutely, yes please! We welcome feedback to improve the learning experience. You can submit comments via the feedback form at the end of each module or email the support teams at [learninganddevelopment@afac.com.au](mailto:learninganddevelopment@afac.com.au) and [research@naturalhazards.com.au](mailto:research@naturalhazards.com.au).



## Appendix 1. Implementation considerations

|   | Consideration                                                              | Description                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|---|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 | <b>Two options for accessing the Modules</b>                               | <p>AFAC Member organisations and Centre Participants automatically have access to the modules.</p> <p>Email learning and <a href="mailto:learninganddevelopment@afac.com.au">learninganddevelopment@afac.com.au</a> or <a href="mailto:research@naturalhazards.com.au">research@naturalhazards.com.au</a> for further instruction on self-enrolment.</p> <p>Other organisations or individuals can apply for approval to access the modules, by emailing <a href="mailto:research@naturalhazards.com.au">research@naturalhazards.com.au</a> to request the application form.</p> <p><b>How to enrol:</b></p> <p>After you or your organisation have been approved, you can self-enrol by clicking the enrolment link provided. You'll be able to create an account with your organisation's email address, and you'll receive a confirmation email.</p> <p><b>Do you need an account to access to the modules?</b></p> <p>Yes. You must use your organisation's email address to log in. Approved organisations are able to create an account (e.g. <a href="mailto:username@afac.com">username@afac.com</a>). If you are unsure whether your organisation is approved, please contact <a href="mailto:learninganddevelopment@afac.com.au">learninganddevelopment@afac.com.au</a> or <a href="mailto:research@naturalhazards.com.au">research@naturalhazards.com.au</a></p> <p><b>How is my data going to be used?</b></p> <p>Content that you upload into the Transformative Scenarios Knowledge Modules is not confidential. Any sensitive or organisation-specific information used during the modules' stress testing exercises may be visible within the AFAC system. Participants seeking confidentiality are recommended to download the PDF versions of material available within modules 4a, 4b, 4c and 4d and complete them by hand. This offline approach still allows full participation in the modules</p> |
| 2 | <b>Use AFAC Strategic Directions</b>                                       | <p>This process is for stress testing existing strategies, rather than creating new strategies.</p> <p>For organisations without a strategy, the <a href="#">AFAC Strategic Directions 2022-2026</a> provide a useful starting point and an overarching framework for stress testing. The six AFAC Strategic Directions are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Supporting resilient communities through risk reduction</li> <li>2. Providing a trusted response</li> <li>3. Using credible and timely information and data</li> <li>4. Safe, capable and diverse workforce<br/>Informed by knowledge, innovation and research</li> <li>5. Effective and transparent governance</li> </ol>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| 3 | <b>Alternative uses for Transformative Scenario stress testing process</b> | <p>While the narrative for the Transformative Scenario stress testing process is focused on applying a strategic plan, once the transformative scenario and adaptive approaches are understood, it could be used to stress-test organisational risk planning or other policies and processes.</p> <p>There may also be occasions where participants consider applying the resources to a community organisation they are a part of, or on a personal family level.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |



## Appendix 2. Facilitator's guide

This Facilitators' Guide can be used by internal agency staff facilitating the Transformative Scenarios Planning Process, or external facilitators contracted by agencies.



### Step 1

#### Prepare

Set the stage for success by reviewing the materials, identifying strategic priorities to stress test and tailoring the process to your audience. Organise logistics, like hosting platforms and ensure participants understand what to expect. Preparation is key to a smooth session.



### Step 2

#### Facilitate

Guide the group through the process with clarity and focus. Encourage open dialogue, keep participants on track, and adapt as needed. Use tools like Slido and breakout rooms to keep engagement high and ensure all voices are heard.



### Step 3

#### Integrate

Consolidate outputs, share insights with participants and help integrate findings into organisational strategies. Encourage ongoing engagement, reflection and collaboration to maintain momentum and turn ideas into action.



## Prepare

### Build awareness

- Promote the course and build interest across agencies and staff
- Highlight the diverse participation required, including multiple generations and future leaders from a variety of emergency management agencies and organisations
- Develop tailored key messages highlighting the benefits of the process
- Highlight the flexibility of the process and its alignment with broader organisational priorities
- Organise logistics, like hosting platforms and ensure participants understand what to expect

### Provide prereading materials

- Ensure participants can access and use the modules effectively.
- Provide links to review the first two modules—the Overview and the Process Overview—to help set expectations for what the workshop will involve.
- You may pre-allocate participants to one of the four scenarios. This will enable participants to review their scenario (about five minutes) and immerse their thinking in that plausible scenario.
- Provide participants with relevant organisational strategy to be stress tested. For organisations without a recently completed strategy, the [AFAC Strategic Directions 2022-2026](#) provide a useful starting point and a nationally aligned strategic framework for stress testing.
- Identify any aspects of the Transformative Scenario Process that may have already been recently completed by your organisation, for example a SWOT analysis. Providing these outcomes will ‘shortcut’ the workshop and help participants to understand they are building on work that has already happened not ‘reinventing any wheels’.
- Encourage open-mindedness and broad thinking around climate change forecasts and challenges for first responders.
- If relevant, provide case studies (e.g., SAFECOM example) to demonstrate practical applications and results.
- You may wish to help breakout groups immerse in their future world by posting some imagery around the breakout area they will be working in.

### Workshop logistics

- Book meeting rooms, and if possible, breakout rooms to enable separate discussions. The interactive stress testing module has audio which participants may want to play and could be disruptive to other groups.
- If possible, access a room with audiovisual (AV) facilities so that all participants (in person and online) can view the video and group input.
- Often good to get into participants’ calendars earlier rather than later, that is, provide 3-4 weeks’ notice for the meeting.
- Coordinate at least four breakout groups (one for each scenario) with a minimum of three people each.



- Breakout groups will have one scribe (preferably not a participant but a co-facilitator) and scribing can be done online in the interactive module for each of the four scenarios. However, breakout groups may wish to use a printed workbook or use whiteboards to draw. Plan for these alternative options by potentially printing out a spare workbook or two or having a whiteboard handy.

## Session planning

- Coordinate an **executive leader** to provide an introductory welcome, emphasising the importance of strategic planning in the context of a 'climate-challenged world' for your organisation.
- You may wish to **pre-allocate breakout groups** to assist planning and preparation. Aim for a diverse mix in each group to achieve a diversity of conversation and thinking. You may suggest 'no uniforms' to encourage everyone to participate on a level playing field. If pre-allocated, you may also send these participants a link to preview the scenario (or immersive world) relevant to them (each immersive world module is approximately 5 minutes).
- Pre-identify an appropriately 'catastrophic' hazard event or events for all breakout groups to apply in **Step 2 'Factor in Hazard Events caused by increasing climate instability'**. This hazard event needs to stretch thinking around organisational capacity. For example, multiple fires, earthquakes or even consider an extreme idea like a zombie apocalypse. While each agency or organisation may not have lead responsibility, assume that your agency is required in a surge capacity.
- Pre-identify the most relevant Strategic Priorities (or have your organisation's Strategic Plan at hand) for participants to **complete Steps 3-5** in their breakout groups. You may wish to use the [AFAC Strategic Directions](#) to encourage national alignment.
- Should any of the steps have been recently completed, such as the **Step 3 SWOT analysis**, coordinate printouts or email those session outcomes to all participants so that they can inform the activity.
- Provide participants with a clear agenda and develop your own run sheet for workshops to keep time-allocated to activities on track. Tips:
  - Don't spend too much time on activities at the front end, while being mindful that time is required to imagine, deep dive and think deeply. All the steps are necessary, but the stress testing process centres around Steps 4 and 5.
  - Address no more than three strategic priorities (unless you have two days allocated).
- Knowing the participants you have invited and whether they are coming together for the first time, consider some simple workshop rules to help facilitate productive discussions. You may introduce a couple of rules or guidelines before breaking into breakout groups. Consider the following:
  - [Ground rules for workshops](#)
  - [Ground rules for productive workshops](#)



## Facilitate

### Frame the workshop

- Facilitators should emphasise the importance of looking beyond the immediate future and thinking strategically about long-term risks.
- Remind participants that as a sector we need to ‘think differently’ as today’s processes and arrangements won’t meet the future demands of living in a climate-challenged world.
- There are no ‘wrong’ answers. This is future-focused and a diversity of participants will enable different thinking and provide innovative outcomes.
- Use real-world examples to inspire reflection and ensure the relevance of scenario planning. For example, the Spanish flash flood (Nov 2024) where locals threw mud at their Spanish King for an inadequate response after 200 people died, Los Angeles wildfires (Jan 2025), where fire trucks needed to drive past burning buildings due to a shortage of resources.
- Encourage participants to take off their ‘emergency management’ hat and consider broader societal perspectives.
- Position the process as a way to align with organisational priorities while preparing for transformative challenges.
- Give participants a summary of the order of upcoming tasks, in case they miss it in the video. Clearly map out the day for them.

### Breakout sessions

#### Facilitating discussion

- **There are no wrong answers.** The steps throughout the process build on each other so if a group gets off track, it will be righted in the next step. Although note, the more likely scenario is that participants are thinking differently which strengthens the process. Similarly, if a group thinks through the implications in an earlier step, it may streamline responses to the following steps.
- To encourage discussion (if there are quiet groups), remind participants again that there are no wrong answers. We don’t know what will happen in the future. Encourage participants to be future-focused, rather than relying on the past.
- Use engaging tools like Slido for interactive exercises and outputs. For example, the workshop could do the first step together (watching the immersive scenario and answering the questions) as a plenary session.

#### Breakout groups

- If breakout groups are not pre-allocated, encourage participants to tackle the scenario that challenges them the most.
- It is useful for breakout groups to report back after the first activity to share the variety of thinking that is happening in each of the groups and to stimulate or motivate participants.
- Ideally there are at least four breakout groups of 4-7 people to allow for a variety of ideas and participation by all.
- Each breakout group should focus on one scenario (or ‘immersive world’) for all of the Transformative Scenario steps. If more than four breakout groups, two groups can independently engage with the same scenario and may identify different transformative opportunities.



- Balance perspectives, that is find negatives in optimistic scenarios (such as Balanced Stewardship) and positives in pessimistic ones (such as Fragmented Era).
- Frame sessions to explore feelings and responses, building on collective ideas.
- Ensure scribe role allows for active participation. Scribe can use an interactive online module (e.g., via a laptop), a printed workbook (can be downloaded from the Stress Testing Process module(s)) or may wish to scribe on a whiteboard.

#### Supporting resources

- **Progress Bar**—participants can gauge their progress via the panel on the left-hand side of the screen
- **Glossary**—located in the top right-hand corner of the screen, this provides key terminology used in the Transformative Scenario process
- **Resources**—located in the top right and corner of the interactive stress testing module, provides PDF booklets of:
  - i. **Stress Testing Workbook**—specific to the immersive world selected (~25 pages).
  - ii. **Immersive World Summary**—provides a ready reference of characteristics or features of the immersive world selected (five pages).
  - iii. **RMIT Report Summary**—provides an extract from the RMIT Report of examples of direct and flow-on effects of extreme climate events (two pages).
  - iv. **Implications of Climate Change for Emergency Services Operations: Insights from the literature**—detailed RMIT Report (~71 pages).

#### Workshop outputs

- Where scribes are using the online modules, coordinate PDF/printout of outputs (from online modules) to streamline report back sessions. This involves ‘submitting’ answers and downloading the PDF module and clicking Save and/or Print.
- If using whiteboards for conceptual diagrams, facilitator could recommend participants take photos, so that breakout group can build upon concepts in later steps.

#### Reminder: Save data

- **Do not close your browser during the session.** Closing the browser during the session resets or erases all data.
- Facilitators should reinforce the importance of keeping browsers open to avoid losing workshop outputs. It’s a potential logistical challenge that facilitators must be mindful of throughout the workshop.

#### Data and sensitive information

Please note that content uploaded into the final four modules of the Transformative Scenarios Knowledge Modules is not confidential. While learning tools interoperability (LTI) Bridge will still upload data into AFAC systems for tracking and engagement purposes, any sensitive or organisation-specific information used during the stress testing exercises may be visible within the system. To protect confidentiality, it is recommended that participants download the PDF versions available within each module and complete them by hand if they are working with sensitive or internal data. This approach ensures that critical insights remain secure while still allowing full participation in the learning process.



## Integrate

### Consolidate and share outputs

- Immediately after the workshop, download and save outputs. If hosted via AIDR, ensure all workshop outputs (e.g., SLIDO results, breakout room discussions, stress testing insights) are downloaded before participants close their browsers.
- Organise workshop data by consolidating notes, feedback and outputs into a clear, accessible format (e.g., a report, summary slides or a shared folder). This should include:
  - Insights from each transformative world
  - Identified risks, opportunities and priorities
  - Stress testing results and action plans
- Share consolidated workshop outputs with participants. This may include sending a follow-up email thanking participants, summarising key findings and sharing workshop outputs. Attach links to relevant resources.

### Integrate workshop outputs into organisational strategy

Integrating workshop outputs into organisational strategy is not just about adopting new objectives—it's about embedding foresight and adaptability into the fabric of how organisations plan and operate. Facilitators should emphasise that this is an ongoing process, with scenario planning serving as a foundational tool for building resilience and navigating uncertainty.

Some examples of integrating workshop outputs into organisational strategy include:

- a. **Aligning with existing strategic goals.** Map workshop insights (e.g., risks and opportunities from the scenarios) directly against existing strategic objectives. For example, if Fragmented Era scenario highlights workforce shortages, consider strategies for flexible, adaptive staffing models.
- b. **Develop new strategic objectives.** If workshop scenarios highlight emerging risks that are not currently addressed in the strategy (e.g., cyber threats, climate-induced crises), use the insights to develop new objectives. Update the organisational strategy to include a section on 'Emerging Priorities' derived from scenario insights.
- c. **Create tactical action plans.** For each priority identified in the workshop (e.g., building community resilience or enhancing interagency collaboration), develop a clear, actionable plan. For example, if "Balanced Stewardship" highlighted the need for strong public engagement, create an action plan that includes community workshops, partnerships with local organisations and communication campaigns.
- d. **Incorporate into risk management plans.** Workshop outputs often highlight vulnerabilities or blind spots (e.g., reliance on a centralised supply chain in Fragmented Era). These can be integrated into risk assessments and contingency planning. For example, if a scenario shows an increased risk of supply chain disruption, update risk management plans to include alternative suppliers and resource distribution strategies.
- e. **Update workforce development plans.** Scenarios may reveal workforce-related challenges, such as skills shortages or the need for greater diversity and adaptability. For example, if the Tech Horizons



scenario highlights a need for data analytics and AI expertise, incorporate these skills into future recruitment, training and development plans.

- f. **Integrate into budget planning.** Use workshop findings to inform budget allocations for strategic initiatives. A revised budget that reflects scenario priorities would ensure the actions are realistically implementable.
- g. **Embed into your organisation's strategic narrative and continue to stretch thinking.** You may wish to refer back to the scenario workshops as leaders come and go to and maintain a link with the leadership group's previous experience/thinking/feeling with new leaders. This will help to foster a dynamic strategic culture that is forward-thinking and engages with plausible scenarios that may seem like science fiction, but has the opportunity to be very impactful.

## Participant feedback

- Each module has a button on the final screen to an [Evaluation Form](#) hosted by the Centre. This form asks participants asking about their experience, key takeaways and suggestions for improvement. Feedback will be monitored centrally by the Centre's Monitoring and Evaluation Team.
- In the weeks following the workshop, you may wish to ask participants if they have applied any workshop insights and what support they might need for next steps.

## Facilitator reflections

- Review what worked well in the workshop and identify areas for improvement (e.g., timing, structure, participant engagement)
- Note common challenges or sticking points (e.g., difficulty linking scenarios to strategic timelines) and adapt future workshops accordingly

## Reflective learning and encouraging ongoing engagement

- Reflective learning questions could be included to benefit the participant, help embed the learning and support commitment to next steps. For example,
  - i. From your perspective, what were the takeaways from the module/stress testing process/workshop?
  - ii. How clear was the presentation of the material?
  - iii. How do you feel about the complexity of the information?
  - iv. How do you feel about the amount of information covered in the module/stress testing process?
- Encourage participants to join or create a forum (e.g., a chat board, discussion group, or community of practice) where they can share experiences, tips and challenges.
- Provide continued guidance by sharing additional resources or examples of how other organisations have implemented outcomes. Case studies can be particularly helpful.
- If required, facilitate follow-up sessions or informal check-ins where participants can discuss progress and learn from each other.