

# 2016- 2017

Annual Report



Australian Institute for  
**Disaster Resilience**



# AIDR IS A DISASTER RESILIENCE KNOWLEDGE CENTRE.

We coordinate and promote the development, sharing and use of information for anyone working with, in, or affected by, disaster. We work with governments, communities, non-government organisations, not-for-profits, research organisations, education partners and the private sector to enhance disaster resilience through innovative thought leadership, professional development and knowledge sharing.

AIDR is funded by the Commonwealth Attorney General's Department through Emergency Management Australia, managed by AFAC and supported by the Australian Red Cross and Bushfire & Natural Hazards CRC.



the  
power of  
humanity



bushfire&natural  
**HAZARDS**CRC

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# Foreword

## **I am pleased to introduce the second annual report of the Australian Institute for Disaster Resilience (AIDR).**

AIDR was established by the Australian Government in partnership with AFAC, the Australian Red Cross and the Bushfire & Natural Hazards CRC to enhance disaster resilience of Australian communities through innovative thought leadership, professional development and knowledge sharing.

In a remarkable second year, AIDR extended its reach in the sector and delivered outstanding national events, bringing us together to canvas ways we can continually improve our preparation for the inevitable. Updates to the web-based Knowledge Hub and Emergency Management Library, a refresh of the disaster resilience doctrine, and improved circulation and focus of the Australian Journal of Emergency Management have meant we are now reaching more Australians than ever through modern and accessible platforms. The 2016 Resilient Australia National Awards ceremony in November in Melbourne was a highlight on the calendar.

AIDR has a bright future and, on behalf of the Australian Government Attorney-General's Department I wish it well for its year ahead.



**Mark Croweller**  
Director General  
Emergency Management Australia

## **In its second year of operation AIDR is making an increasing contribution across the disaster resilience continuum. In the last 12 months AIDR has delivered products and services to a broader range of disaster resilience stakeholders.**

AIDR's focus on developing, maintaining and sharing disaster resilience knowledge and practice to support a more disaster resilient Australia is enabled through a range of programs.

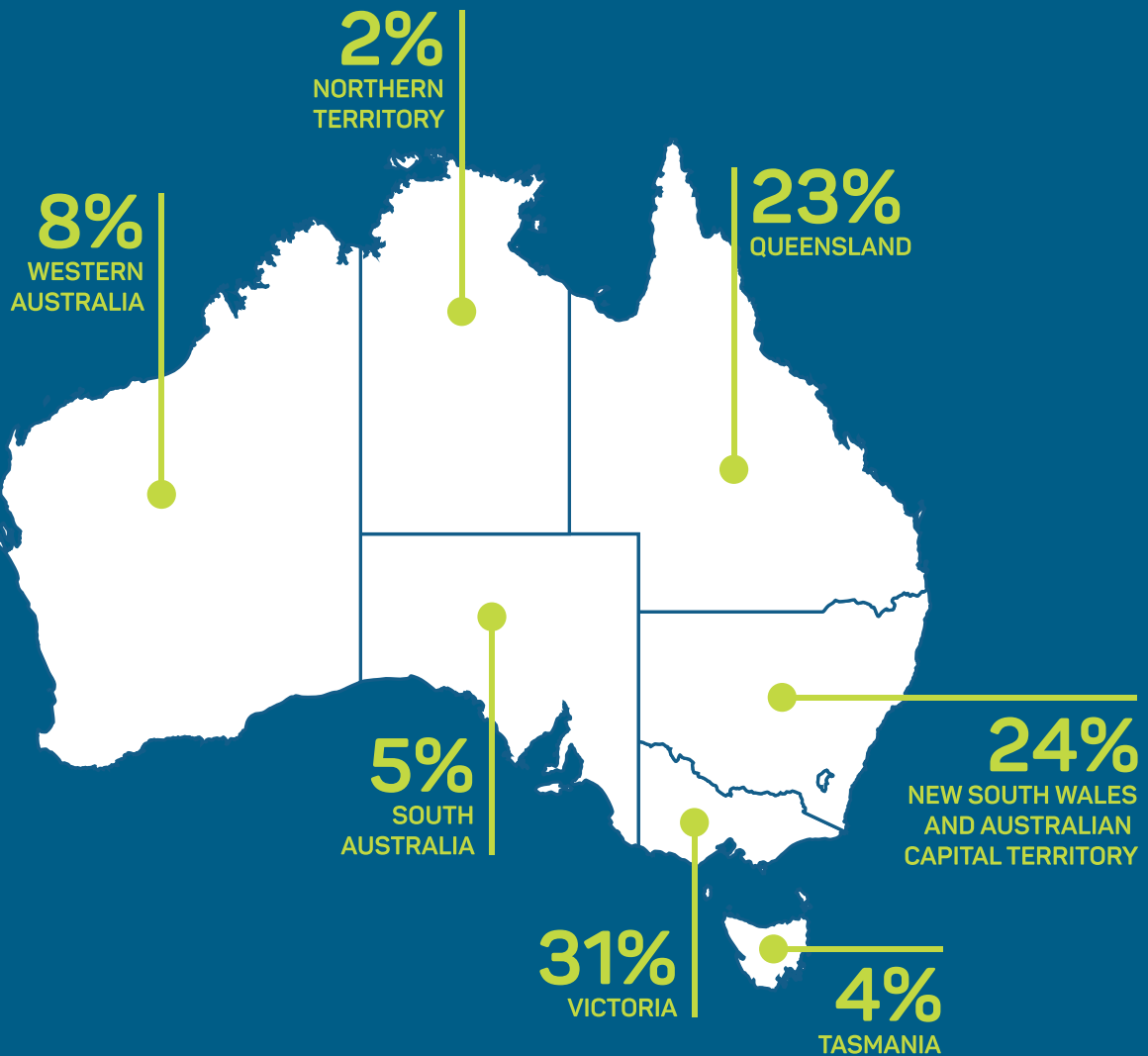
AIDR's program channels span websites, publications and events. These activities target a range of organisations and individuals that all have a role to play in reducing risk and building resilience.

All these targeted contributions would not be possible without funding from the Australian Government through Emergency Management Australia and a management partnership between AFAC, Australian Red Cross and the Bushfire & Natural Hazards CRC.

My thanks to all AIDR staff for their effort and contributions over the last 12 months.



**Stuart Ellis, AM**  
CEO  
AFAC



## Sector engagement

Engagement across AIDR's combined products and services

Since its launch in November 2016, AIDR has actively engaged with stakeholders active in disaster resilience across Australia.

# Foreword

**The Bushfire and Natural Hazards CRC is the national centre in the sciences of natural hazards, bringing new knowledge and new thinking borne out of research, together with extensive national collaborative networks.**

Our involvement with the Australian Institute for Disaster Resilience provides further opportunities for research outputs to support those in the emergency management sector and beyond.

Through direct collaboration on the Australian Journal of Emergency Management, the Knowledge Hub, the development of the Handbook Collection, and a calendar of events and activities, our participation in AIDR with its partners increases the number of people who can be better informed about making their communities safer in the face of natural hazards.

Each partner involved in delivering the important work of AIDR brings to the table a unique set of skills and strengths. Together we are bringing an unprecedented breadth and depth of expertise, supported by knowledge and delivery networks built over many years with our respective communities.



**Dr Richard Thornton**  
CEO  
Bushfire and Natural Hazards CRC

**Whether faced by humanitarian emergencies caused by disaster and conflict or the personal crises that keep people trapped in poverty and hardship, Australian Red Cross focuses on the people who need us most, now and into the future.**

Red Cross has been pleased to contribute to the work of the Australian Institute for Disaster Resilience, sharing local and global experience, and expertise in emergency management. In its second year, AIDR has collaborated with consortium partners on numerous initiatives, broadening access to its programs and strengthening the knowledge delivered to the sector.

Through support of AIDR's suite of programs—the Volunteer Leadership Program, the Australian Journal of Emergency Management, the development of the Handbook Collection, and a range of events—Australian Red Cross is able to extend its reach across the spectrum of emergency management agencies, governments, other NGOs, and most importantly, the volunteers at the heart of what we do.

Red Cross looks forward to a continuing partnership with AIDR; to enhance knowledge and capacity building; to save lives, preserve livelihoods and allow communities to better prepare and recover.



**Andrew Coghlan**  
National Manager, Emergency Services  
Australian Red Cross

# I connected

“ Before the Disaster Resilient Australia-New Zealand School Education Network (DRANZSEN) was established, people were operating in silos within their states and cities. The network brought people together to share what they were doing —out of DRANZSEN came so many connections and collaborations. It was nice for people to have a community, because people working in other areas of disaster resilience had that, whereas educators didn't.

The DRANZSEN that AIDR has now developed has evolved significantly. Initially we would have bi-annual or annual national meetings, but attendance was low from educators in the more remote areas of Queensland, Western Australia and the Northern Territory. Now, because the groups are state-based, capacity building is happening locally. The national forum provides an opportunity for the states to be able to share what they're doing with others. It's a nice mix, having both 'micro' and 'macro' knowledge sharing. The groups are also much more practitioner-driven than they used to be, as states take responsibility for their own groups.

I have learnt so much from being part of the Victorian DRANZSEN. For me, as a young researcher, having the opportunity to sit in a room with people like psychologist Michelle Roberts and the MFB's Marthese Kavanagh, and learn from them, is so valuable.

Through the Victorian DRANZSEN, I've been able to make connections with people I hadn't worked with before. I'm currently working with Jennie Schoof from Yarra Ranges Council. She's designing a new program for schools in her municipality, and I'll be building research into that. To be able to partner with someone who works locally with schools, who has those relationships and can support and facilitate the research process, is invaluable. Doing it on your own as a researcher is hard. Principals get letters all the time inviting them to participate in research—you need to have access to that person who they know and trust, and who is willing to facilitate the process to build the project.

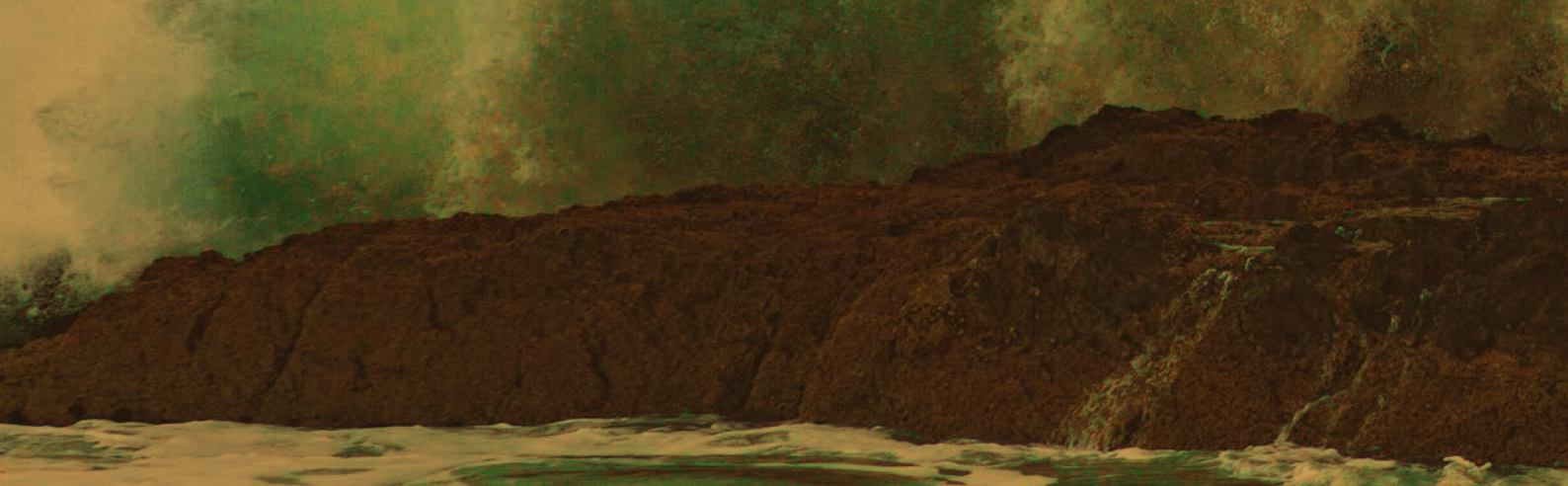
The most important thing in any sector is the relationships that you have with people; social connections and trusted relationships. DRANZSEN creates an opportunity to build those relationships. It's hard to quantify the value of something like that, but it's so important. Even though I'm in the CRC and I have end-user groups, there's a still real need to have DRANZSEN and be able to share knowledge, build relationships, identify opportunities for collaboration, and learn from each other.

BT

**Briony Towers**

Bushfire and Natural Hazards  
CRC Researcher

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## Connecting the dots

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**Ready access to knowledge and information is a core enabler of learning. Nationally, there is a wealth of information that has been developed by many organisations and governments.**

A significant amount of this information is not easy to find because of factors including the age of the documents, organisational restructures and website changes, obscure online locations, and storing information behind paywalls and firewalls. Consequently, significant knowledge risks being excluded from our collective learning. The Australian Disaster Resilience Body of Knowledge has been developed

and continues to expand, bringing this information together as a free national online resource.

The Australian Disaster Resilience Knowledge Hub is the online entry point for this information. Through the Knowledge Hub, anyone can explore:

- what has been done and what is being developed through research, debates, inquiries and reviews
- relevant policies and guidance
- case studies and community perspectives

The information in the Knowledge Hub is continuing to grow through the

support of the sector, individuals and organisations who are contributing their resources.

The Knowledge Hub is the new home for the *Australian Journal for Emergency Management*, Australia's premium publication in emergency management and disaster resilience.

The Knowledge Hub hosts the Australian Disaster Resilience Handbook Collection and the Glossary; making it the central source for information gathering and sharing.





# Australian Disaster Resilience Knowledge Hub

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**In May 2017, AIDR launched an updated and refreshed Knowledge Hub. The Knowledge Hub brings together official data, new research and historical collections to provide people and organisations with information to support building a safer Australia.**

Information in the Knowledge Hub has been grouped into collections with advanced search and filter capabilities to make it easier to find relevant information.

These collections include Australian disaster information, the Emergency Management Library, the *Australian Journal of Emergency Management*, the Australian Disaster Resilience Handbook Collection and Australian news feeds. Other resources include reports, research, statistics, stories, photos, and videos about disaster events in Australia. Resources and information are being added and updated regularly, and the Knowledge Hub will periodically feature guest collections from emergency services agencies and relevant national and international organisations.

The Knowledge Hub incorporates information from news feeds, allowing users to find links to relevant news stories from across Australia. This feature provides timely access to a diverse collection of information, ideas and opinions.

In 2017, AIDR published the first in its annual series on *Major Incidents of the Year* for the year ending on 30 June, to share information that can be found in the Knowledge Hub.

# Australian Disaster Resilience Handbook Collection



**THE LEADING  
AUTHORITATIVE  
COLLECTION  
OF NATIONAL  
PRINCIPLES  
FOR DISASTER  
RESILIENCE IN  
AUSTRALIA.**

**The Handbook Collection is a suite of resources which provide guidance on nationally agreed principles for disaster resilience across different disasters, jurisdictions, contexts and stakeholders. It continues to evolve as the leading authoritative collection of national principles for disaster resilience in Australia.**

The Handbook Collection supports implementation of the National Strategy for Disaster Resilience by creating a framework to connect national policy and strategy to local practice. It provides a foundation for the development of strategies and other policy documents that flow down the levels of government into agencies, the not-for-profit sector, business and communities, where they are translated into strategies, business plans and practices.

The principles presented in the Handbook Collection draw on expertise, experience, learning, theoretical and data analysis, research, collaboration and knowledge sharing between individuals and across organisations and jurisdictions.

National consultative committees representing a range of state and territory agencies, governments, organisations and individuals are involved in the review and development of the Handbook Collection.

The Handbook Collection creates the opportunity for collaboration and continuous learning and improvement, while accommodating different jurisdiction and disaster contexts.

The Handbook Collection expands current emergency management doctrine to more fully encompass disaster resilience and include audiences beyond the traditional emergency services and governments, to include others involved in disaster resilience such as the not-for-profit sector, private sector, education, academic and research institutions, community groups and individuals.

The intended audience for the Handbook Collection includes the people responsible for developing policies, plans, capabilities and doctrine within their own organisations and communities.

A collaborative national project is underway to review the Handbook Collection, coordinated and managed by AIDR. The review ensures the content reflects current good practice with enhanced currency, useability and accessibility nationally across a broad range of users and organisations.

The following handbooks were reviewed in 2016-17 and are due for publication in the latter half of 2017:

- Community Recovery – Handbook 2
- Evacuation Planning – Handbook 4
- Communities Responding to Disasters: Planning for Spontaneous Volunteers – Handbook 12 (new)
- Managing the Australian Disaster Resilience Handbook Collection – Handbook 13 (new)

The following handbooks will be reviewed in 2017-18:

- Emergency Management Arrangements in Australia – Handbook 9
- Crowded Places & Mass

Gatherings – Handbook 15 (formerly Manual 12)

- National Warnings Handbook – Handbook 16 (new)

The following handbooks are in discussion for review commencing in 2017-18:

- Incident Management in Australasia – Handbook 14 (new)
- Tsunami Emergency Planning in Australia – Handbook 17 (formerly Manual 46)
- Land Use Planning – Handbook 18 (formerly Manual 7)

Australian Disaster Resilience Glossary

The Australian Disaster Resilience Glossary has been integrated into an online glossary of disaster resilience and emergency management terms and definitions. It allows consistency and avoids ambiguity in the definition and use of words and terms associated with disaster resilience and emergency management.

Features of the Australian Disaster Resilience Glossary include:

- published online (with search and

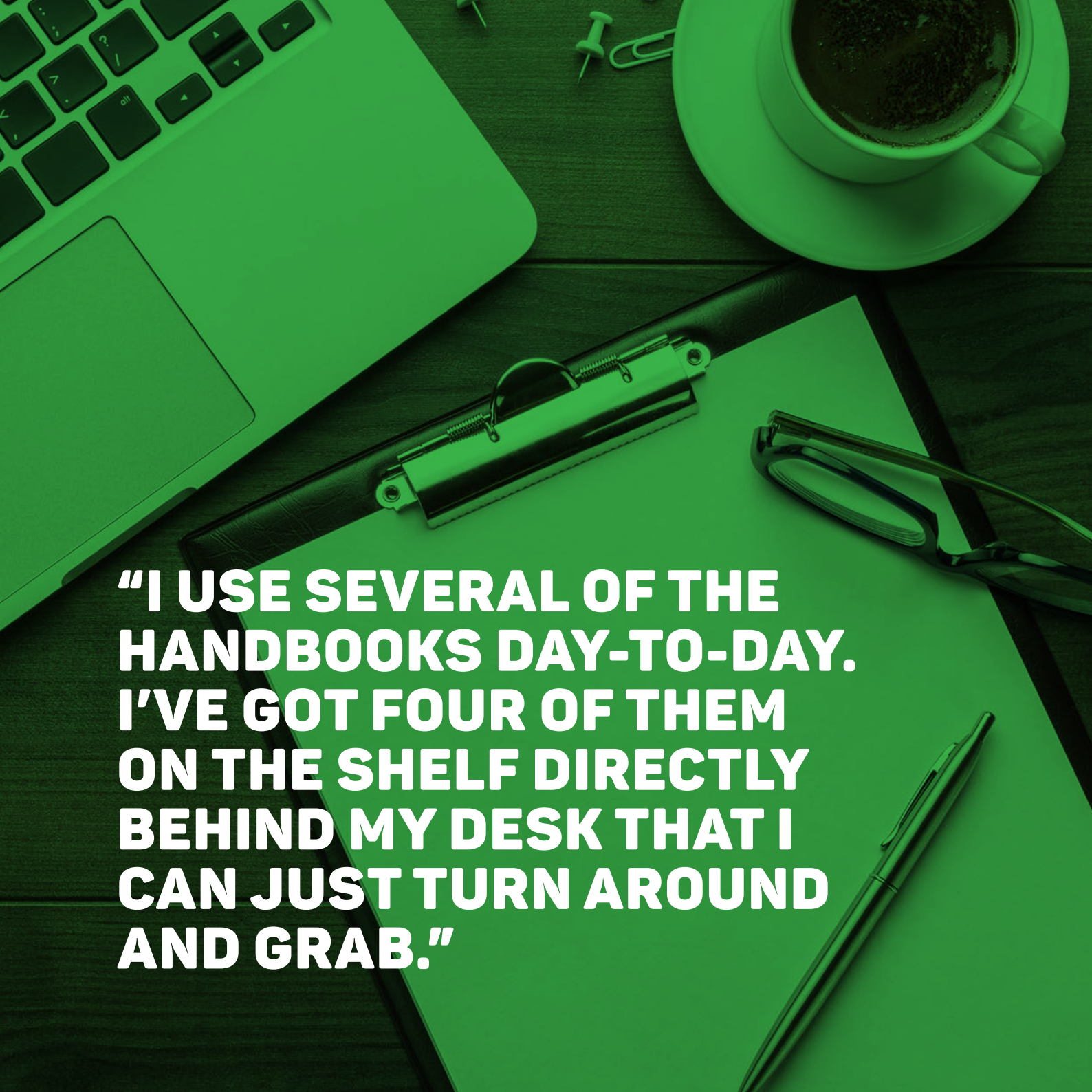
print functionality)

- recognises words (and definitions) that are used across multiple communities through to those that are used exclusively by a single community
- governed by a set of principles and guidelines to ensure consistency and visibility across the collection
- includes the ability for users to recommend new words and provide suggestions or comment on existing definitions
- includes a process for continuous review.

The development of the Glossary has been supported by key organisations with a role in disaster and emergency management in Australia and internationally.

The Glossary will continue to develop and over time will include links to related terms, images, pronunciation audio, and additional references.

The glossary is online at [www.knowledge.aidr.org.au/glossary](http://www.knowledge.aidr.org.au/glossary)

A top-down view of a desk with a dark wood grain. On the left is a silver laptop. In the top right is a white coffee cup on a saucer. In the center is a black clipboard with a silver clip. To the right of the clipboard are a pair of glasses and a silver pen. The entire image has a green color overlay.

**"I USE SEVERAL OF THE  
HANDBOOKS DAY-TO-DAY.  
I'VE GOT FOUR OF THEM  
ON THE SHELF DIRECTLY  
BEHIND MY DESK THAT I  
CAN JUST TURN AROUND  
AND GRAB."**

# I was guided

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“ I’ve been the Emergency Management Coordinator at South Australia Police since 1999. Half of my role is looking after the people in blue. The other half is looking after the South Australia Police as the agency responsible for coordinating all government agencies in an emergency.

I use several of the handbooks day-to-day. I’ve got four of them on the shelf directly behind my desk that I can just turn around and grab. The Glossary and Thesaurus are the ones we use most often, and we’ve also used the Managing Exercises Handbook, the Evacuation Planning Handbook, the various risk and planning handbooks, and the Lessons Management Handbook.

I have helped review many handbooks over the years. As a state, South Australia endorsed the handbooks, long before their previous form. We’re having them re-endorsed in their new format as well, as part of the state arrangements.

At the moment, I’m writing a CBD evacuation plan that came out of our last storm event. This piece of work is built around the next version of the Evacuation Planning Handbook. I’m also consolidating some work that we had some consultants do from the state perspective around a strategic plan for the emergency management component of government. I had to take some words out of the Glossary yesterday to put into the strategic framework

because they had been misusing the concepts and were going to confuse people by using wrong words under wrong concept headings. By having a centrally agreed set of words and definitions, or centrally agreed set of processes, it brings everyone back so that interpretation doesn’t get in the way of standards.

The Evacuation Planning Handbook is paraphrased in our evacuation policy for the state. The words out of the Thesaurus and Glossary are directly referred to in our state plan. We’ve applied them as all the states agreed to apply them many years ago—which is apply them as the default and then make as many changes as you need to as you go. We’ve made minimal changes, we’ve always tried to stick with the default.

By having formal written guidelines we can all use, and state policy that says we use them where at all possible, it’s made it easier to ensure that we don’t allow inconsistencies in language to affect our response. Having been around and using them for so long, I tend to become a guardian of the standards and the language.

In the handbooks, the hardest part is done for us. The words are on paper.



**Russell Dippy**  
South Australia Police



# The Australian Journal of Emergency Management

**The Australian Journal of Emergency Management is Australia's premier journal for emergency management covering all hazards and all emergencies.**

From research to practice, global government to community engagement, the Journal focuses on promoting and facilitating discussion and debate at all levels of emergency management. The Journal's papers feature extensive analysis, considered views, lessons learned and insights into current and future issues from researchers and practitioners.

This year the Journal was re-launched with a new look. The July 2016 edition debuted a new colour scheme which easily identifies News and Views; including news, opinion pieces, conference reports, and practitioner papers, and research for the Journal's strong core of peer-reviewed research articles.

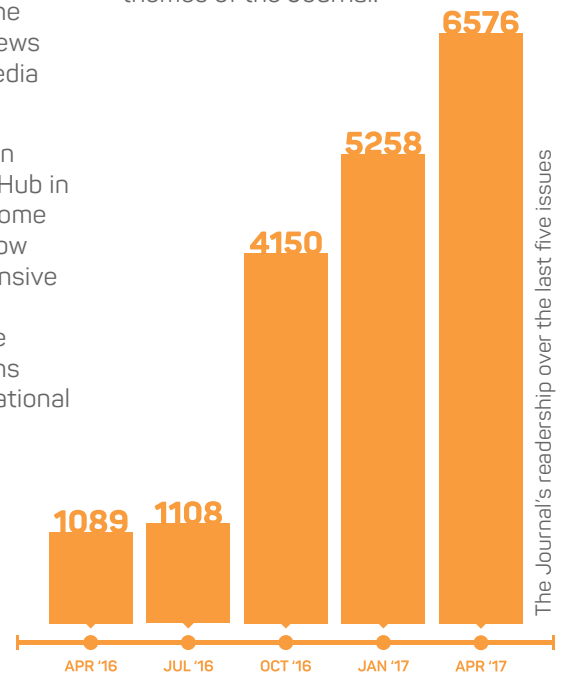
The establishment of an Editorial Advisory Board further enhanced the Journal through the advice and feedback of expertise within the government, emergency management agency and university sectors. The Board has provided advice on the

growth and development of the Journal in reaching new readers, new authors and aligning the Journal to research and practice in Asia-Pacific and internationally.

Research published in the Journal has been developed through strong partnerships with academia, including the resources of the Bushfire and Natural Hazards CRC. Research papers from premier emergency management conferences including the AFAC17 Conference and ANZDMC have been submitted through the Journal, as well as News and Views articles from the Emergency Media and Public Affairs Conference.

With the launch of the Australian Disaster Resilience Knowledge Hub in May, the Journal found a new home online. All Journal articles are now accessible through a comprehensive search, alongside supporting information from the Knowledge Hub's complementary collections such as case studies and the national Handbook Collection.

With a wealth of online visitors, this year the Journal branched out with an online Monograph series. The series provides ongoing and timely publication of information in selected topic areas that are relevant to emergency management and disaster resilience in Australia and internationally. Both peer-reviewed research papers and news and views articles will continue to be published as independent publications that are consistent with the objectives and themes of the Journal.



# I contributed

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I've been in disaster management since 1990. As far back as I can remember I have been reading the Australian Journal of Emergency Management.

I've kept reading it for its relevance to emergency and disaster response agencies here in Australia. It's also great for information sharing, especially for new initiatives and ideas that can be applied elsewhere.

The first article I wrote for the Journal was in 2015. I had been working with the Sunshine Coast University through my role at the Sunshine Coast Council for a few years—we had a common focus on building and assessing disaster resilience in communities. We embarked on a project to look at different tools to measure disaster resilience. We selected locations around the Sunshine Coast for focus groups, brought them together in a workshop, and analysed the resilience in those communities.

After that article was published we had people contact us from all over Australia. People were interested in the work that we did and how we adapted the tools to an Australian context. There were many follow-up discussions about how we conducted the research.

The next time the Sunshine Coast Council was featured in the Journal was after the 2016 Resilient Australia Awards. The Awards were a great experience; by meeting people around Australia

doing similar work, and getting to talk to them, you realise we all have the same issues and challenges. To have AIDR running these awards brings together collaboration across councils, and across communities. I would recommend the awards to anybody wanting to be involved in what's happening beyond their region, and even their state. It's to look at what's happening nationally.

I'm looking at submitting articles written for my PhD through the Journal as well. The focus of my PhD is coastal hazards and disaster risk reduction—looking at how we adapt, and adapting to climate change. My focus is the Sunshine Coast coastline, but the impacts of climate change on hazards are common right across Australia. The Journal covers Australia as a jurisdiction and I think the research I'm doing on a local level on coastal hazards is just as relevant to Queensland, and every state in Australia. That's why my choice is to publish my research through the Journal. I know that the readership is there to look at the research seriously, and the learnings we're getting at a local level could be just as relevant for them.

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JG

**John Gallina**  
Sunshine Coast Council

📍 QLD

# Promoting open conversations



**COLLECTIVELY  
TURN GOOD  
INFORMATION  
INTO EFFECTIVE  
DECISIONS.**

## **AIDR has embraced a concept of disaster resilience that acknowledges the complexities and interconnections at all levels across our society.**

The fundamental connections between businesses, governments and communities and the role of critical infrastructure and services in our everyday lives must be acknowledged. Strengthening those connections through dialogue and investment will build our ability to develop national and global resilience to disasters.

Disaster resilience is best understood as a process that has, at its core, an understanding and willingness to negotiate with others that allows us to effectively balance the politics, complexities, capitalism and processes that influence us, our families and the world around us.

AIDR's guiding principle is to engage with our stakeholders and provide opportunities to have open discussions that broaden our thinking and challenge our assumptions. Ultimately, this will allow us to collectively turn good information into effective decisions that build resilience across all communities.

AIDR has been actively promoting and supporting national conversations by:

- hosting regular seminars and workshops across Australia, including events focused on learning from local and international disaster events
- brokering partnerships and creating a culture of information sharing between state-based groups and nationally through the Disaster Resilient Australia-New Zealand School Education Network (DRANZSEN)
- using research from our partners at the Bushfire and Natural Hazards CRC and others alongside specialist forums and focus groups in the development and review of Australian Disaster Resilience Handbooks and related publications
- partnering with organisations across Australia and New Zealand beyond traditional emergency management organisations to promote discussion and explore innovative approaches to the development of disaster resilience
- engaging with its Advisory Committee, whose members represent a broad range of stakeholders beyond emergency response.



# I was informed

“ I’ve attended two AIDR events this year. The Cascading and complex network failures forum in May was a really worthwhile event. I appreciated being able to hear many different perspectives; in particular, hearing from people outside the more traditional emergency management sector. It encouraged people to think a little more broadly around emergencies and what cascading events look like, and to explore scenarios we don’t entertain in our everyday work.

John Blackburn, a defence and national security systems consultant, gave a thought-provoking presentation. He talked about the idea that our society is based on ‘just in time’ arrival of goods—problems can eventuate if something gets interrupted. It’s a perspective we at Red Cross haven’t really thought about yet. We’ve since had the opportunity to discuss it in the context of some of the work we do.

I was also a speaker at that event, which was a great opportunity for the Red Cross. We were able to contribute from a very practical and grounded experience of working with communities, drawing out the human side of the impacts of events. Based on the feedback, it was a perspective people connected with.

I also attended the Adelaide Leadership and adversity masterclass in May. The stand-out feature over two days was the debunking of the command and control model in providing leadership for emergencies. In a small city like Adelaide, to be able to do that class with several colleagues was valuable—we developed strong relationships and we’ve been able to draw on that in our work. The content was interesting, and relevant to the conversations we’re having in the sector now. There are still prevailing attitudes around what it means to be a leader that reflects the traditional command and control view—it was quite challenging to some of the participants in the room. The presenters were good at providing space in the program to enable people to explore different attitudes and concepts.

I believe AIDR provides an important linking role within our sector. AIDR plays an important part in changing the discourse around the room of emergency management. It would be great to see AIDR continue to engage as a thought leader in our sector, pushing progressive views that individual government agencies aren’t able to do.

MA

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**Michael Arman**  
Australian Red Cross

SA

# We were recognised

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I am a big champion of the work Yarra City Council is doing in disaster preparedness and resilience. I've been moving these issues through the

Council Chamber, especially in addressing the needs of vulnerable people during heatwave. That work has been quite challenging.

Other councils have taken some obvious approaches, such as opening council buildings with air conditioning during heatwave for people to rest in, or opening swimming pools for longer hours. When we looked at approaches like that, there were actually many risks in moving vulnerable people to different locations.

The work Yarra City Council did through a grassroots community engagement approach resulted in something innovative and effective. We've worked with agencies and organisations who know vulnerable people, and developed an approach that is appropriate for people's needs and adaptable to other contexts.

Being recognised at the 2016 Resilient Australia Awards was important. Getting that recognition for an innovative program does encourage further innovation and it does encourage us to not automatically follow what someone else has done.

It's wonderful to have that recognition and to share our successes with other organisations who can also use what we've developed.

On the night I spoke to people from the City of Melbourne, and Emergency Management Victoria. They knew of our program and being able to get their perspective on what we were doing was helpful.

The approach which we took for our heatwave project was all about working with the community. It was nice to have that recognised and encouraged. We've got quite a dense, built-up city, so there's a clear potential for panic in disasters. But because we've got a lot of people living close together, we've also got a fantastic opportunity to build local capacity and neighbourhood responsiveness, and get people to look out for each other.

It's a nice fit for Yarra.

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**Mayor Amanda Stone**  
Yarra City Council

→ VIC

# Resilient Australia Awards

**The Resilient Australia Awards is a national program that recognises and promotes initiatives that strengthen community disaster resilience across the nation.**

By celebrating innovation and exemplary practice, the awards showcase work that is often unseen, motivating others to think about how they can be better prepared and more disaster resilient. The awards program started in 2000, and has a solid history in Australia's emergency management sector.

Sponsored by the Attorney-General's Department in conjunction with the states and territories, 2016 marked the first year the awards were hosted by the Australian Institute for Disaster Resilience. The event brought

together national finalists and winners to commend the projects and initiatives being undertaken across the country, share learning and connect with those involved in building disaster resilience.

The Minister for Justice the Hon. Michael Keenan MP presented the national awards at a ceremony held in Melbourne on 17 November 2016. Winners were acknowledged for the National Award, National School Award, and National Photography Award. Highly commended entries from government and community groups were also celebrated.

All finalists and winners shared the story of their projects through the *Australian Journal of Emergency Management* January 2017, with the National Photography Award winner featuring on the cover of the Journal.



The winners and finalists from the 2016 Resilient Australia Awards with AIDR Director John Bates and Director-General Emergency Management Australia Mark Crossweller

# Professional Development

**AIDR's Professional Development Program delivers courses and events across Australia to challenge assumptions and build knowledge and practice in emergency management at all career stages. The program benefits individuals across diverse sectors; from volunteers to management teams, and across governments, business, emergency management agencies and humanitarian organisations.**

Seventeen events were delivered in the 2016-17 financial year (seven in partnership with key stakeholders). AIDR hosted two international speakers including Judi Frank (Canadian Red Cross) who spoke in Melbourne and Sydney on reflections on community recovery following the

Canadian Fort McMurray wildfires; and Dr Patricia Watson (US National Center for PTSD) who spoke in Sydney, Melbourne, Adelaide and Hobart. Other keynote events included presentations by former NSW SES Commissioner Murray Kear in Perth and Brisbane on his personal story of a professional journey, and Special Inquirer Euan Ferguson in Adelaide, Canberra and Hobart on the Special Inquiry into the January 2016 Waroona Fire, WA.

AIDR delivered a solid year of skills clinics, with four Facilitating successful debriefs clinics, and other programs Leadership in times of crisis; decision making under pressure; and Learning for tomorrow: Developing strategic foresight today to create a disaster resilient future. AIDR has a robust schedule across existing and new skills clinics.

A highlight for the year was a workshop for practitioners called Engagement Matters: tools for

disaster resilient communities. The program ran in early May in Albury and was hosted by the Centre for Emergency Management (TAFE NSW). Participants were guided by experienced practitioners in community engagement, and acquired evidence-based tools, skills and insights to employ in their work.

Several AIDR events focused on critical infrastructure resilience following extreme weather events across the country during the summer season. These included the Infrastructure resilience forum held in Melbourne in December 2016, and the follow-up event Cascading and complex network failures forum. Both events demonstrated the importance of whole-of-community considerations to emergencies, and the importance of critical infrastructure and supply networks to community resilience and wellbeing.

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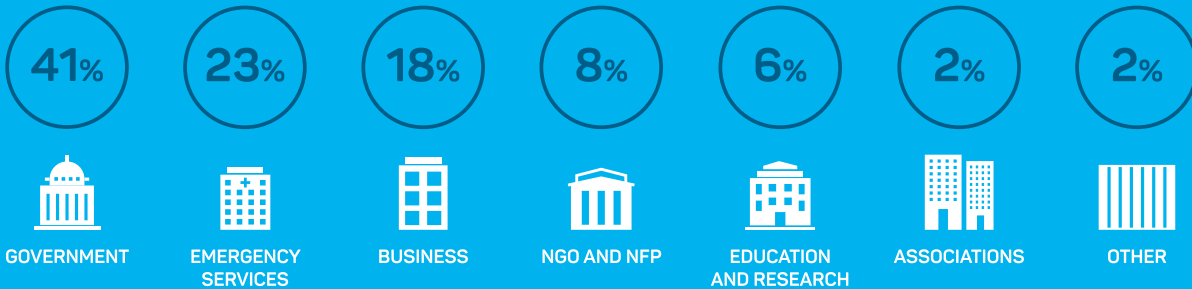
Participants



Average satisfaction rating *from*



*working in*



Distribution of participants and organisations in AIDR's Professional Development Program



## Investing in people

**Without people, there is no resilience. From our individual place in the world to the systems we put in place, the infrastructure we build and the way we interact with our environment—people are at the heart of the decisions, the actions and the compromises we make.**

With global consensus that the frequency, complexity and impact of disasters are all increasing, AIDR

has a commitment to contribute to knowledge sharing and capability development in individuals and groups across Australia.

From long-term strategies that begin with young people in their formative years through to professional development programs for experienced volunteers and career staff, AIDR is delivering a program of resilience strengthening activities that will lay the foundation for generational change to achieve enhanced national resilience.

Whilst many of AIDR's programs are developed to engage large audiences, our Resilience Ambassadors Program was launched in 2016 to provide an opportunity for a small group of outstanding individuals at an early stage in their careers to come together as local champions of disaster resilience and future leaders in our communities. Our vision is that our Resilience Ambassadors will act as catalysts to accelerate national progress towards sustainable resilience.



## Emergency management volunteer scholarships

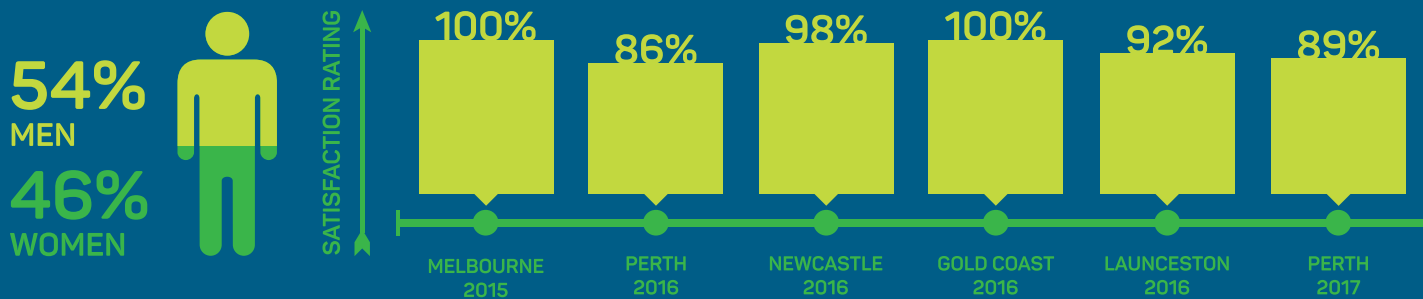
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**In 2017, AIDR was contracted by the Australian Government to deliver a million-dollar scholarship program to enable eligible volunteers access to accredited vocational and higher education qualifications in emergency and disaster management fields.**

The program encourages women, indigenous volunteers, and those living in regional and rural areas to apply.

Successful scholarship applicants will receive up to \$12,000 for completing vocational education and training and up to \$25,000 for higher education.

Applications are invited across four rounds, and volunteers can apply for courses that finish in mid-2019. The first round received over 100 applications.



Gender balance and satisfaction rating for each of the VLP deliveries

# Volunteer Leadership Program

**The Volunteer Leadership Program (VLP) enhances volunteer skills in leadership and organisational management.**

The program builds individual and organisational capability and promotes collaboration and innovation in emergency management organisations. It introduces practical leadership frameworks using interactive activities led by engaging and experienced facilitators. The program enhances participants' skills to improve awareness of volunteer teams, self and others. It is run in association with the Australian Emergency Management Volunteer Forum (AEMVF) and participants are chosen by their agencies to attend.

The course fee and associated accommodation and catering are fully supported.

Across the year, over 150 volunteers completed the program, in four locations, across four jurisdictions. VLPs ran in Newcastle (September), the Gold Coast (November), Perth (March), and Darwin (June). Participant satisfaction with the VLP has been exceptional, and there have been many commendations for the program, and the facilitators.

In 2016-17, AIDR undertook a substantial program review, engaging widely with AEMVF agencies and seeking feedback from past participants. As a result, AIDR was able to double the number of VLPs running around Australia, AIDR now delivers eight programs annually.

This year there is a VLP associated with each Australian jurisdiction, with several of the programs being delivered regionally. AIDR also increased the number of participants on each course, allowing us to more than double participation.

The diversity of AEMVF agency applications has also increased, and the VLPs delivered in 2016-17 had several participants from the smaller agencies of the AEMVF including volunteers from humanitarian and religious organisations.

Following the review AIDR instituted a number of changes to the program, including streamlining the application process and ensuring we deliver the programs on weekends.

The participants on the Volunteer Leadership Program in Adelaide



# I was empowered

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I've been with the Australian Red Cross as an emergency services volunteer since 2006. I retired in 2003 after 25 years with the Northern Territory Police.

I've done a lot of training with the Australian Red Cross, and I've been deployed to the Bundaberg floods. When I was deployed to the floods I noticed people there in leadership roles who probably shouldn't have been. It wasn't their fault; they were just thrown into those roles, but it created problems in the organisation they were with at the time. I thought it would be good to go along to a Volunteer Leadership Program (VLP) to update my skills and make sure I wasn't getting left behind; and to share with others what I'd done and observed. The world is changing all the time—you have to keep up to date with progress and make sure your education stays abreast of all the changes.

The program was really enjoyable. There was a diverse group, both in age and occupation. Because I'm at the older end of the spectrum, it was helpful to have the young people come on board and share some of the skills they had. You need to be aware of how people think and feel differently.

What I learnt at the VLP was useful. I used to work long hours as a police officer and I knew the effect that had on my body, but the course taught me more about the different effects of adrenalin and cortisol. I also learnt about Tuckman's stages of group development. I recognised them because I'd been in those situations. When I saw it written down on paper, it was enlightening. I knew the process but I didn't know somebody had mapped it out.

Some of the skills I have now will hopefully come into practice in the future. At the moment I'm all trained up with nowhere to go. But when the time does come, you'll need your training. If you don't recognise the situation you're in, and you haven't been put in that situation before because you haven't had the training, you are at a disadvantage.

Volunteer leadership is something that needs to be addressed, and I'm glad somebody's doing something about it. Not before time.



**Roger Newman**  
VLP participant



# Resilience Ambassadors

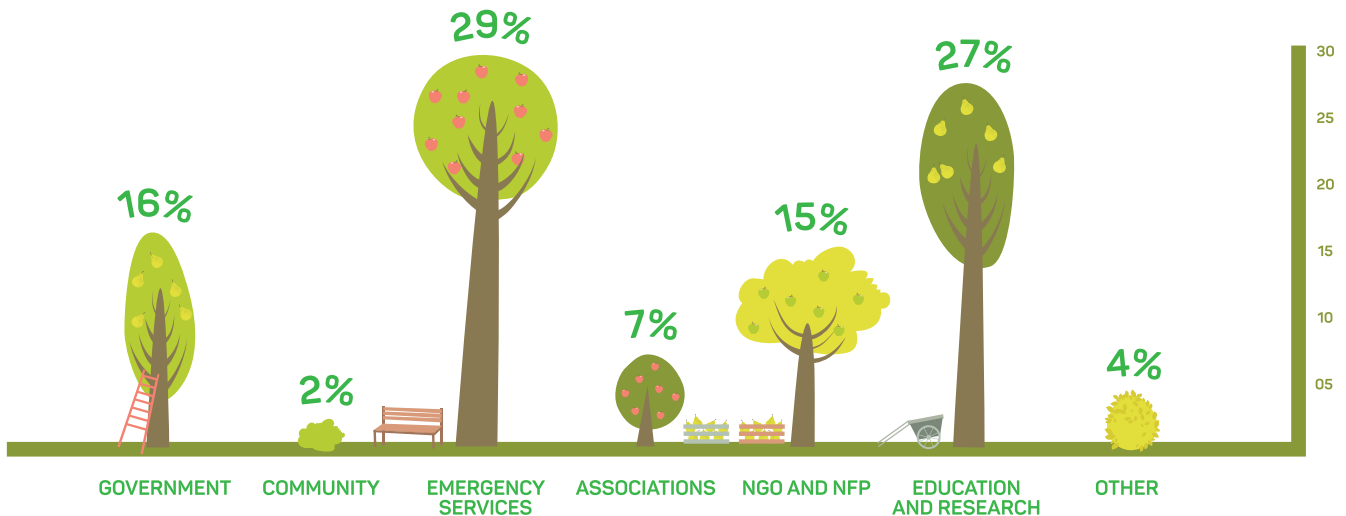
**Long-term behavioural change is an essential element of resilience-building, and sustainable change needs leaders who are capable and empowered. AIDR's Resilience Ambassadors Program is one initiative to support this need.**

The Resilience Ambassadors Program provides an opportunity for a small group of outstanding individuals aged under 30 and actively engaged in disaster resilience to

participate in a one-year program to strengthen their knowledge and leadership skills and to learn from senior executives from across relevant organisations. The 2017 Ambassadors are already engaging with the broader community—putting their leadership skills into practice and building their knowledge through a personal disaster resilience project, with guidance and support from experienced mentors.

This year's Ambassadors include urban and regional employees and

volunteers from state emergency services, a fire agency and the Australian Red Cross. Through the year-long program the Ambassadors will become champions of resilience within their organisation and region. They are being mentored and encouraged to work together and to network through engagement with their peers, senior members in the sector and leaders in the broader community. The Ambassadors are developing their personal knowledge and skills by participating in AIDR's professional development program.



Organisations participating in the Disaster Resilience Education for Young People Program

# Education for Young People

**Over the past 18 months, much energy has been put into engaging with relevant stakeholders to commence a national discussion about disaster resilience education.**

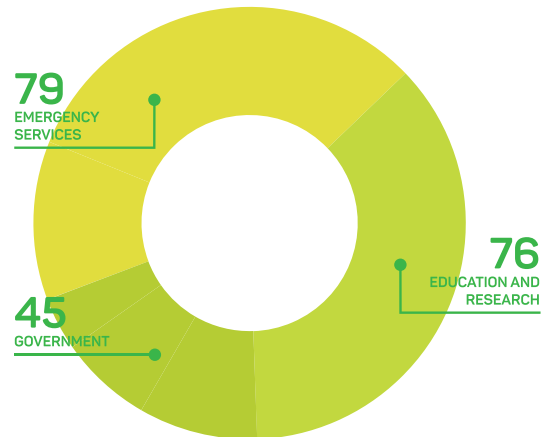
The Disaster Resilient Australia-New Zealand School Education Network (DRANZSEN), part of AIDR's national disaster resilience "Education for Young People" initiative, has established active groups in each state and territory. Currently, over 250 individuals from 124 organisations are involved in this network.

DRANZSEN encourages and strengthens the ability of teachers and other educators to deliver consistent disaster resilience education to young people. One of the ways it facilitates this is through state/territory forums. DRANZSEN forums provide unique opportunities for educators, including teachers and principals, researchers, fire and emergency management practitioners involved in disaster resilience education to meet and learn about disaster resilience education practices, be informed about current research, and share knowledge and expertise. These events also enable participants to identify opportunities for working together; to plan future directions and actions that will help implement quality disaster resilience education in their own localities.

Throughout May the state and territory forums were held for the first time in Sydney, Hobart, Perth, Darwin, Brisbane and Adelaide. These forums were attended by more than 120 participants from 72 organisations. The forums helped broker relationships among the education and emergency management sectors and others, cementing partnerships and collaborations.

In May 2016, AIDR established the national Disaster Resilience Education Strategy Group (DRESG) to provide leadership for the Education for young people program and to identify strategies and opportunities to support professional development opportunities in disaster resilience education for professionals and volunteers who are active in the schools' sector.

The group is comprised of representatives of national, state and territory policymakers, researchers, practitioners and emergency management agencies/organisations, educators and AIDR's partners AFAC, Australian Red Cross and Bushfire & Natural Hazards CRC and meets regularly. DRESG is currently working on developing and testing a national disaster resilience education strategy, including advocating to the Government through the most appropriate channels.



Participant representation in the Disaster Resilient Australia-New Zealand School Education Network (DRANZSEN)



## Australian Institute for Disaster Resilience

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