



bushfire&natural
HAZARDSCRC

OUT OF UNIFORM:

building community resilience through non-traditional
emergency volunteering

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Centre for Risk & Community Safety, RMIT University, Melbourne

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An Australian Government Initiative



WHY RESEARCH NON-TRADITIONAL VOLUNTEERING?



In Haiti? Text **4636** (International: **447624802524**) on Digicel with your location and need. Report emergencies and missing persons.

Haiti
The 2010 Earthquake in Haiti

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RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- How does non-traditional volunteering contribute to community resilience throughout the phases of EM?
- How can the EM sector support non-traditional volunteering?
- What models or approaches will enable EM agencies to maximise opportunities for engaging non-traditional volunteers, while minimising risks?

RESEARCH TEAM



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Resources: Approx 1.4 FTE, in-kind + students

END USERS

- **Robert Dugdale**, Country Fire Authority (Lead)
- **Peter Jeffrey**, Queensland Fire and Emergency Services
- **Georgina Goodrich**, Department for Communities and Social Inclusion
- **John Richardson**, Australian Red Cross
- **Julie Molloy**, Volunteering Queensland
- **Karen Roberts**, Department of Fire and Emergency Services, Western Australia
- **Kristine Wendtman**, New South Wales Rural Fire Service
- **Paul Davis**, Emergency Management Victoria
- **Adelaide Cooper**, State Emergency Service, South Australia
- **Kathleen Iacurto**, New South Wales State Emergency Service
- **Ron Weston**, ACT Emergency Services Agency

ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES

- Identify **pros and cons** of engaging non-traditional volunteers in EM.
- Provide **guidance for end users** on engaging non-traditional volunteers and volunteering organisations.
- Provide **guidance for non-traditional volunteers** on engaging with EM organisations.
- Develop **new approaches and models** for engaging non-traditional volunteers and volunteering organisations in EM.
- Assess the **legal implications** of alternative approaches and models.



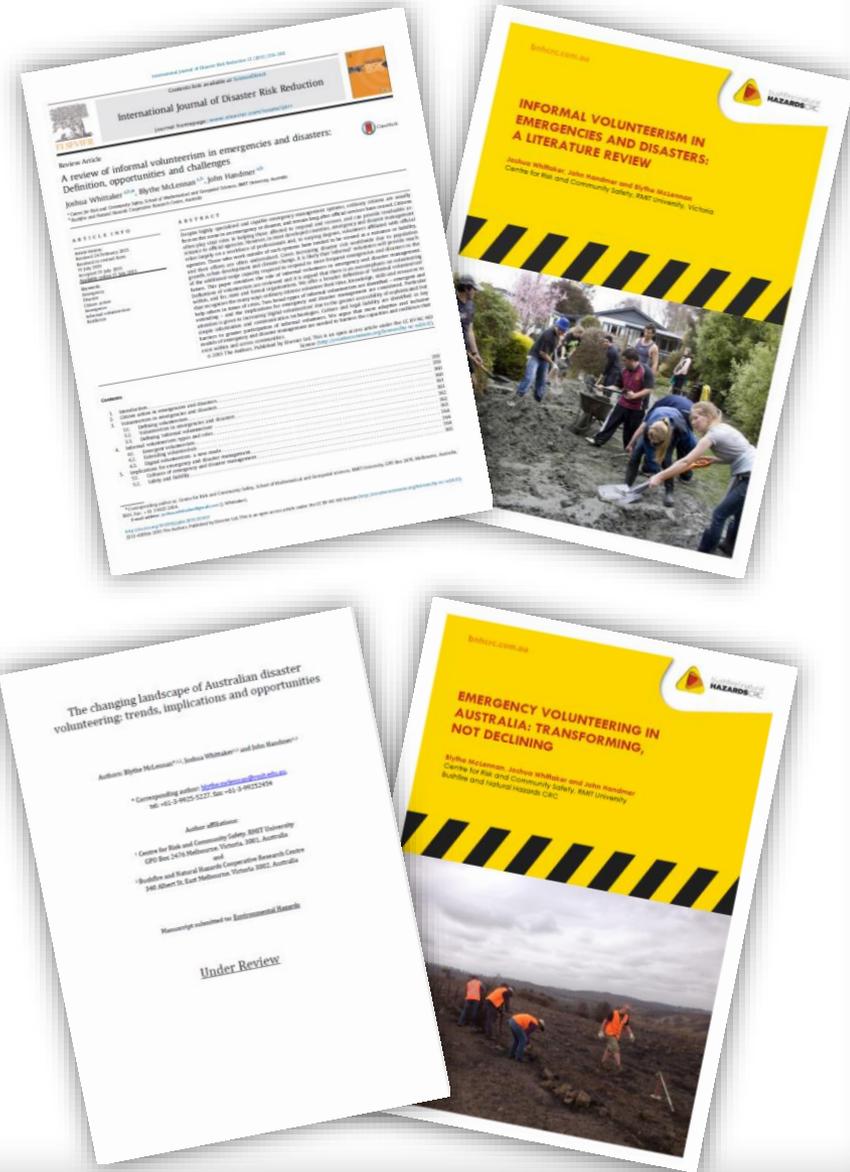
Credit: Jock McNeish, Strategic Images

RESEARCH DESIGN AND PROGRESS

Stage	Description	Progress	Time frame
1. Literature reviews	Review 1 - Informal volunteerism in disasters Review 2 - Trends in Australian emergency volunteering	Completed	Year 1 2013-2014
2. Case studies	Primary studies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 1. Community-led preparedness - Be Ready Warrandyte ▪ 2. Community-led recovery - COGA ▪ 3. Spontaneous volunteering - EV CREW ▪ 4. Faith-based volunteering - Pinery fire Affiliated studies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ • BlazeAid, Digital volunteering - Cyclone Pam Student projects <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ • VGI in preparedness (Haworth), ▪ • Community-led recovery (Jennings) 	1&2 completed 3&4 in-progress Affiliated and student projects in-progress	Year 2 2014-2015 Year 3 2015-2016
3. Evaluation of alternative engagement strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Briefing paper (June) • SWOT workshops (October) 	Briefing paper & workshop planning in-progress	Year 3 2015-2016 Year 4 to Dec 2016

LITERATURE REVIEWS

- Cross-pollination of volunteerism and disaster research.
- Impact of wider social, institutional and organisational landscapes.
- Brings larger body of research to bare on sector challenges and dynamics.
- Citizen response is inevitable.
- Citizens often more attune to what is happening on the ground, draw on local networks and resources, more responsive to local needs.
- Not just 'spontaneous'.
- Barriers: OHS, legal liability, culture of emergency management.



CASE STUDY: COMMUNITY ON GROUND ASSISTANCE

- Community-initiated project to assist people to rebuild after Black Sat.
- Holistic approach; focused on client needs; culture of safety and care.
- Challenged by relationships with official agencies, also issues of local people participating in own recovery.
- Highlights need to provide support (e.g. understanding contractual obligations; govt. processes; project management).
- Important to recognise that participants may be affected themselves, or become affected, and require assistance.



Building Preparedness,
Building Resilience,
Building Community

Community On Ground Assistance

The Community On Ground Assistance (COGA) project is a community and agency partnership that provides flexible and responsive assistance and support to eligible families, couples and individuals recovering from the Victorian Bushfires in 2009.

COGA also provides tailored corporate volunteer opportunities to help businesses improve their workplace culture through direct hands-on practical support wherever it is needed most - on the ground!

COMMUNITY	CORPORATE	ABOUT US	CONTACT US
<p>We provide a wide range of support to eligible people including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Removal of re-growth and fire affected trees- Dangerous tree removal- Property clean-up to enable rebuilding to start- Building repairs, carpentry and Occupancy Permit support- Technical advice, assistance and advocacy with Occupancy Permits	<p>COGA provides a range of safe and tailored corporate volunteer experiences. Participants are greatly encouraged by the meaningful way they can provide direct on-ground support to people in need while helping to reduce the ongoing bushfire risk.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Small and large groups- Wide variety of outdoor projects and locations- Experienced facilitators- Real team building <p>Call: 0427 454 174</p>	<p>Over the past 5 years, COGA has completed more than 500 jobs across Victoria. This has represented over 57,000 hours on site by our field staff and nearly 10,000 hours undertaken by volunteers. We operate through a range of principles which include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Shared Responsibility- Medium to Long Term Recovery- Fire Preparedness- Bushfire Risk Mitigation	<p>To find out more information or to discuss your eligibility, don't hesitate to contact us on:</p> <p>Ph: (03) 5786 1134 M: 0407 427 090 E: cogainlake@icloud.com W: www.coga.org.au</p>

Our Agency Partners include:

© 2015 Community On Ground Assistance

CASE STUDY: PINERY FIRE

- 82,600 ha burnt, 96 houses and 546 sheds and outbuildings destroyed + vehicle, machinery, livestock and crop losses.
- Faith-based community and volunteer groups active in relief and recovery efforts.
- Semi-structured interviews to examine:
 - How and why faith-based groups became involved;
 - Activities they undertook;
 - Costs and funding;
 - Relationships and interactions with other organisations;
 - Risks and liabilities;
 - How assistance was received.



Credit: adelaidenow.com.au



Credit: samaritanspurse.org

CASE STUDY: BE READY WARRANDYTE

- **'Proof of concept'** of community-based emergency management in Australia
- Conditions for effective **collective co-production** of public value
- **Roles and contributions** of emergency management representatives
- A **'community-led planning'** movement, EMV CBEM framework imminent



Credit: Jock McNeish, Strategic Images

CASE STUDY: EV-CREW

- **Centralised co-ordination** of spontaneous volunteers
 - **Expanding and formalising** role of volunteering peak bodies
 - Factors necessary for model to **work well for ALL stakeholders**
 - How to **integrate** with existing EM plans
 - **Sustainability, capacity-building**
- **Important secondary outcomes**
 - Potential to **open doors** on wider range of emergency volunteering



Credit: Volunteering Queensland



Credit: Volunteering Queensland

ENGAGEMENT AND UTILISATION

- End user communication
 - 5 newsletters, 2(3) annual stakeholder workshops, 2 teleconferences, 3 BNHCRC RAFs
- Numerous stakeholder group presentations
- 6 research conference events
- Policy application
- Community and NGO engagement
- **SWOT workshops to develop a strategic decision support tool**



Credit: Yoke Berry, Emergency Volunteers Project, UoW



Credit: Yoke Berry, Emergency Volunteers Project, UoW

EVALUATION OF ALTERNATIVE ENGAGEMENT MODELS

- 1) **Process:** engage stakeholders in a SWOT analysis of alternative strategies for engaging with non-traditional volunteers.
 - a) Briefing paper utilising case studies - June
 - b) Workshops - October

- 2) **Aim:** produce a strategic decision support tool that identifies pros and cons associated with alternative strategies for multiple stakeholders

SWOT ANALYSIS



Credit: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/SWOT_analysis#/media/File:SWOT_en.svg, CC-CC BY-SA 2.5

UTILISATION OPTIONS/PATHWAYS

- SWOT framework and strategy development
 - potential to feed into and/or design, test process to apply SWOT framework
- Non-academic communication products
 - E.g. short videos, policy briefs, infographics, information statements, social media campaign
- Guidance notes
 - inform and guide key players on specific issues
 - E.g. incident controllers, community groups, media spokespeople
- Operational procedures, plans
 - E.g. AIIMS



OUTPUTS TO DATE – ARTICLES AND REPORTS

Journal articles

- McLennan, B, Molloy, J, Whittaker, J, Handmer, JW. [Centralised coordination of spontaneous emergency volunteers: the EV CREW model](#). *Australian Journal of Emergency Management* 2016; 31: 24-30.
- McLennan, B. [Extending into community-led preparedness and planning just enough \(but not too much?\)](#). *Australian Journal of Emergency Management* 2016; 31: 5-6.
- Haworth, B. [Emergency management perspectives on volunteered geographic information: Opportunities, challenges and change](#). *Computers, Environment and Urban Systems* 2016; 57: 189-198.
- Whittaker J, Handmer J, and McLennan B. [A review of informal volunteerism in emergencies and disasters: definition, opportunities and challenges](#). *International Journal of Disaster Risk Reduction*, 2015; 13: 358-368.
- Haworth B, Bruce E, Middleton P. [Emerging technologies for risk reduction: assessing the potential use of social media and VGI for increasing community engagement in bushfire preparation](#). *Australian Journal of Emergency Management* 2015; 30(3): 36-41.
- Haworth B, Bruce E. [A review of volunteered geographic information for disaster management](#). *Geography Compass* 2015; 9(5): 237-250.

Reports

- Whittaker J, McLennan, B, Handmer J. *Community On Ground Assistance, Kinglake: a study*. 2016, Bushfire and Natural Hazards CRC: Melbourne, Australia.
- McLennan BJ, Whittaker J, Handmer J. [Community-led bushfire preparedness in action: the case of Be Ready Warrandyte](#). 2015, Bushfire and Natural Hazards CRC: Melbourne, Australia.
- Whittaker J, Handmer J, McLennan BJ. [Informal volunteerism in emergencies and disasters: a literature review](#). 2015, Bushfire and Natural Hazards CRC: Melbourne, Australia.
- McLennan BJ, Whittaker J, Handmer J. [Emergency volunteering in Australia: transforming not declining](#). 2015, Bushfire and Natural Hazards CRC: Australia.

OUTPUTS TO DATE – CONFERENCES

Published conference papers

- McLennan, B, Whittaker, J, Handmer, J. [The future of 'non-traditional emergency volunteering: What will it look like and how can it work?](#) In '*Research proceedings from the 2015 Bushfire and Natural Hazards CRC & AFAC conference. Adelaide*'. M Rumsewicz, Editor. 2015, Bushfire and Natural Hazards CRC.
- Whittaker J, Handmer J, McLennan B. [Building community resilience through informal emergency volunteering](#), in *Proceedings of the Research Forum at the Bushfire and Natural Hazards CRC and AFAC Conference 2014*, M. Rumsewicz, Editor. 2015, Bushfire and Natural Hazards Cooperative Research Centre: Wellington, New Zealand.

Selected conference presentations

- Whittaker, J. Contradictions and workarounds: the challenges of citizen-led recovery in post-disaster settings. *Association of American Geographers (AAG) Annual Meeting*. March 29 – April 2 2016, San Francisco.
- McLennan, B, Molloy, J. The changing landscape of disaster volunteering and an innovative response from Queensland. *National Volunteering Conference*. 6-8 April, 2016, Canberra.
- Whittaker, J. Co-producing knowledge and action in emergency and disaster management: the role of informal volunteers. *Royal Geographical Society and Institute of British Geographers Conference*. 26-29 August 2014, Imperial College, London.
- McLennan, B, Whittaker, J, Handmer, J. The future of non-traditional emergency volunteering: What will it look like and how can it work? *AFAC/BNHCRC Annual Conference Research Forum*. 1-3 September, 2015, Adelaide.
- Whittaker, J, McLennan, B, Handmer, J. Building community resilience through informal emergency volunteering. *AFAC/BNHCRC Annual Conference Research Forum*. 2-5 September, 2014, Wellington.

THANK YOU

The screenshot shows the website for bushfire&natural HAZARDS CRC. The header includes the organization's logo, navigation links (Home, Our research, Using our research, Education, Publications, News & media, Events, About us), and social media icons. A yellow banner reads "RESILIENT PEOPLE, INFRASTRUCTURE AND INSTITUTIONS". The main content area features a large photo of volunteers working on a dirt path, with the caption "Volunteers at Christchurch earthquake". Below the photo, the article title is "Out of uniform: building community resilience through non-traditional emergency volunteering". The text below the title states: "Given dwindling numbers of traditional volunteers within the EM sector workforce in recent years, it is likely that non-traditional volunteers will provide the bulk of the additional surge capacity needed to deal with the more frequent natural hazard events occurring under climate change." A right-hand sidebar lists various research clusters, including "Governance and Institutional knowledge", "Scenarios and loss analysis", "Emergency Management Capability", and "Sustainable volunteering".

<http://www.bnhcrc.com.au/research/resilient-people-infrastructure-and-institutions/248>