

COMMUNITY ORGANISATIONS IN ACTION

DRIVING BUSHFIRE RECOVERY AT THE LOCAL LEVEL

CASE STUDY 1 | GIPPSLAND DISABILITY ADVOCACY



DISABILITY INCLUSIVE EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT: A PEER LED APPROACH

Aiming to develop more effective and sustainable methods to ensure people with disability are included in emergency management, this project places people with disability at the centre of the approach.

Funded by the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing and driven by Gippsland Disability Advocacy, University of Sydney and VALID, the project presents an innovative, grass roots approach by engaging peer leaders to work directly with local disability peer action and self advocacy groups.

Inclusive workshops bring emergency managers and community members together to increase trust and build relationships.

Participants are guided through emergency situations, exploring strategies and actions in relation to emergency preparation, management and recovery. Peer leaders are integral in leading this process.

Piloted in East Gippsland Shire, Wellington Shire and Latrobe City, Groups will contribute to wider municipal emergency planning work in their local communities.

With the support of a specialised team from the University of Sydney, this project aims to establish a framework for a more inclusive approach as it looks to adapt expertise to regional settings, including mobilising community resources and supports.

This case study series demonstrates the central role of community organisations as champions of place-based community led bushfire recovery.

“We are learning together across the disability, community and emergency management sectors.....about what people with disability can do for themselves, what they need support with, and the things that make it easy or hard to take action.”

PROJECT PARTNERS

- Gippsland Disability Advocacy
- Existing Self-Advocacy and Peer Action Groups
- VALID
- University of Sydney
- East Gippsland Shire
- Wellington Shire
- City of Latrobe
- Funded by the Victorian Department of Health and Human Services



“PCEP has allowed me to connect with other people with disabilities in Gippsland with regards to Emergency Preparedness. The shared learnings, peer support and discussion has allowed for PCEP members to have a shared and greater confidence now with regards to preparing for emergencies” Peer Leader James Griffiths

OUTCOMES

- Principles that guide disability-inclusive, local, emergency management planning that have state applicability.
- Strategies to support the well-being of people with disability before, during and after emergencies.
- Increased confidence and capacity across sectors to collaborate.
- Increased community engagement and ownership of emergency planning, preparedness, response and recovery.
- Increased resilience of people with disability, their families and carers.

EMERGING KEY LEARNINGS

- People with disability want to lead the approach with regards to individual emergency preparedness and recovery.
- Previously some people with disabilities had an expectation (falsely), they would be automatically saved by emergency services.
- People with disability want to lead others with disability in emergency preparedness and ensure learnings are shared amongst the community.
- Program members now have a clear plan in place with regards to Emergency Preparedness. This was not the case prior.
- The shared learnings and peer support and discussion has increased the confidence of all involved.



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For further insight: CFA Utube links [Mark and Jane](#) and [Delwyn's Story](#)

[VCOSS Bushfire Recovery Webpage](#)