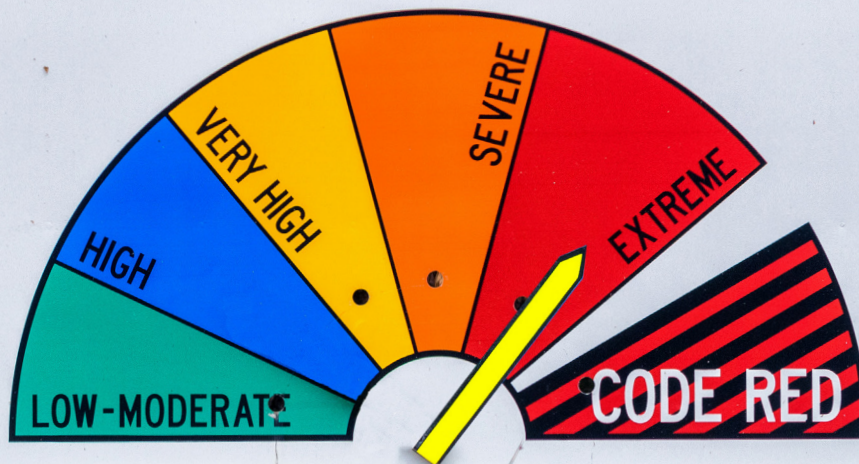


FIRE DANGER RATING TODAY



PREPARE. ACT. SURVIVE



MISSION +
COMMUNITY
ENGAGEMENT

**DISASTER
RECOVERY** 
RESPONDING TO OUR COMMUNITY

- > Compassion
- > Integrity
- > Inclusiveness
- > Dignity

December 2018 NEWSLETTER

To discuss your specific training needs or for further information please contact Anglicare's Disaster Recovery team on the details below.

Fire Season Foresight


A fire believed to have been started from a burnt out car at Pierces Creek, ACT was a scary and timely reminder of the importance of being ready to act quickly this fire season. The fire quickly grew to 204 hectares in size, only seven kilometres from the Canberra suburb Kambah. The SES door knocked in areas under threat to ensure that the residents were fire ready, and Anglicare Disaster Recovery was put on alert but stood down a couple of days later.

Emergency Services Australia said strong winds made conditions difficult, bringing to mind the 2003 Canberra bushfires. 23 crews, 6 helicopters, 3 bulldozers, 2 graders and an excavator were deployed to help get the blaze under control.

The Pierces Creek fire was contained but has prompted the community to ensure they are prepared for the remainder of the fire season, which this year due to the forecast of dry conditions, was brought forward by one month.

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 Anglicare representation at ESA Open Day & Canberra team BBQ

Team Gatherings & Activities

Our Disaster Recovery team members have been busy recently with several teams holding meetings and training, as well as team members attending Disaster Recovery events in the region.

In addition to several combined team meet ups, a team BBQ was held by our Canberra teams which doubled as an opportunity for some psychological first aid training. This was a great informal way to catch up with team members while keeping everyone's skills up to date.

Several of our DR team members attended the 2018 National Volunteering Conference in Sydney while some of our Batemans Bay and Shoalhaven colleagues met in Ulladulla for a mock cruise ship fire!

Anglicare was well represented at the ACT Emergency Services Open Day at Fairbairn, ACT in October and at a Multi-Agency Evacuation Centre Exercise in Tumut in November. Whilst this exercise was co-facilitated by the Office of Emergency Management, Disaster Welfare Services and Red Cross, one

of our Canberra North team members Sue was heavily involved in the development of scenarios and other logistics on the day. The next Multi-Agency exercise is scheduled for Goulburn on 11 April 2019.

It is wonderful to have so many volunteers getting involved with DR activities as the stories and information shared after an event is of benefit to the entire team. If you are planning a team gathering or would like ideas of ways you could engage with your team please get in touch.

Changes

At the end of September Anglicare farewelled Rev Dr Ian Coutts, General Manager for Mission and Community Engagement. Ian is embarking on his next chapter of ministry as the 10th Bishop of Bunbury, WA. The Mission and Community Engagement team responsibilities include Disaster Recovery and during Ian's time as General Manager were the Carwoola and Tathra fires. The response of Anglicare Disaster Recovery volunteers at these events greatly assisted the communities affected.

The Disaster Recovery Team wish Ian and his wife Anne all the best for their move and new responsibilities in Western Australia.

Anglicare's newly appointed Deputy CEO, Brad Braithwaite will be picking up some of Ian's duties. Brad was Deputy CEO of Argyle Community Housing and earlier in his career, a Marketing Manager for retirement and aged care provider IRT. We give Brad a warm welcome and look forward to him getting to know the Disaster Recovery Team.

In our Disaster Recovery team, Jann and Gary Dyson have stepped down as deputy team leaders in June, Maxine Mansill has returned to Disaster Recovery administration after welcoming her baby, and Justine Slockee returns to her duties as Anglicare Communications Administrator. Thank you Justine, for all your help while Maxine was away.



Cruise ship crisis!

On a lovely sunny autumn day in late May, DR volunteers Margaret, Garry and Vere from Batemans Bay, joined the Shoalhaven group in Ulladulla for a Disaster Recovery Training day. This is how their day unfolded.

Our scenario involved a cruise ship on fire off the coast of Ulladulla. Two types of role were played out in rotation by participants. Cruise ship passengers, having evacuated with no notice from the life boat areas, had various issues, such as no medications, limited mobility, family separation, identification papers and valuables left behind, signs of mental health or

symptoms of distress. Those receiving them on shore needed to ensure everyone was registered, offered catering, hospitality, an ear to listen and endeavored to resolve the various issues passengers needed assistance with.

As passengers were to be transported by bus to another location, there was no need to organise accommodation, though many passengers needed reassurance that they would be looked after and that their issues would be resolved. The changing situation on the cruise ship, or for passengers, as the exercise progressed, added to the realism

and the challenges. Thankfully towards lunchtime, we were advised that the fire on the cruise ship had been extinguished and it was being towed to Port Kembla.

It was a valuable 'realistic' training exercise and the three of us appreciated being able to join in the activities. We want to thank most sincerely the Shoalhaven organisers for allowing us to be with them on the day. They did a marvelous job putting the exercise together and assisting us all in working through the scenarios.

Margaret, Garry & Vere

Thoughts from the Volunteers Conference

At Anglicare's invitation, Disaster Recovery volunteers Charles and Robyn attended the 2018 National Volunteering Conference in Sydney in June 2018. Here they share their impressions of the thought-provoking topics covered at the event.

The conference was mainly aimed at those who manage volunteers, rather than volunteers themselves. Nevertheless we learnt a lot, some of which is directly relevant to disaster recovery and some of which is of more general interest.

There was an informative session about partnerships between business and charities. There is scope to expand such partnerships, not just through donations of money and goods but also through businesses allowing employees time off to work for charity.

Charities receiving government funding are often under pressure not to criticise government. However, it was widely agreed that advocacy is a core responsibility of charities – it is good to help people living in poverty but we should also advocate for policies which reduce the incidence of poverty in the first place. Anglicare, through its advocacy on behalf of the homeless and unemployed, is particularly good at this.

There was an interesting session on the United Nations' 17 Sustainable Development Goals which seek to tackle the causes in inequality and injustice around the world. Charities should link their work to the Sustainable Development Goals when seeking funding and preparing plans.

Not surprisingly, social media generated much discussion. While social media enables the rapid

spread of information, it can also cause problems when large numbers of poorly prepared people turn up to assist at a disaster. It is a challenge to ensure that their skills and enthusiasm are used without putting them at risk and without causing conflicts.

Looking specifically at disaster recovery, a sobering statistic is that nearly 80% of disaster recovery volunteers are over 55. As these volunteers retire or die, how do we attract new younger volunteers?

This article barely touches the surface of the fascinating and wide-ranging issues which were covered at the conference. We urge anyone who is offered the opportunity to attend in the future to grab that opportunity.

Charles & Robyn



From the Regional Disaster Recovery Coordinator

It is great to welcome Maxine back on board the Anglicare DR team. Maxine has taken responsibility for this latest newsletter. If you appreciate it or have some suggestions of what you would like included in the next edition, please email Max at maxine.mansill@anglicare.com.au.

Demand for Disaster Recovery workshops continues and we recently trialled a new regional approach on the south coast. Interest far exceeded our expectations! Participants came from as far south as Tura Beach, north of Batemans Bay and across to Bungendore and Queanbeyan. Special thanks go to team leaders Fran Sanders, Margaret Browning and John and Lesley Mordike, for all their help, to the ladies (and gentleman) at Moruya who fed us so very well, to Fran's daughter who assisted with processing all the new forms, and to the participants. We expect to welcome 30 plus new Anglicare DR volunteers.

Soon after this training, an activation call came through for assistance at a Bega Evacuation Centre to help people affected by the Bemboka fires. Thank you to everyone who responded.

I have also benefited as a DR volunteer from recent combined team meetings organised by the two Canberra teams. It was lovely to better get to know members of my own and the other Canberra team over a BBQ and learn from the skills and experience of other team members. Thank you Karen for your excellent input.

I do encourage other teams to consider the periodic combined team meeting.

May I wish you all a joyful and blessed festive season. Despite the forecast, I really hope you won't be hearing from me this year!

Cheers Helen



Fire Season Foresight

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Following months of extremely dry conditions, Australia experienced the driest September on record. Despite heavy rains in some areas during October, drier and warmer than average conditions are expected to continue during the coming months.

Warmer October days resulting in increased evaporation, and below average soil moisture all play a part in the coming season set to be one of the ten driest seasons on record. The Bureau of Meteorology has raised the likelihood of an El Nino to 'El Nino Alert', indicating an increased risk of bushfire and dangerous conditions.

As this bushfire season continues and we hear of the horrific fires in California, we are reminded of the significance of Disaster Recovery and thank you for being part of such a valuable team.

Upcoming Training

Multi-agency exercise is scheduled for Goulburn on 11 April 2019.

Further Info: Contact
Helen on 6245 7188

Email:
disaster.recovery@anglicare.com.au

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