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**ANGLICARE** NSW SOUTH | NSW WEST | ACT

# Disaster Recovery NEWSLETTER



APRIL 2022

## Volunteer Leadership Program

- Helen Bennett

The Volunteer Leadership Program (VLP) is a dynamic, immersive residential two-day program spread over three days, for emergency sector volunteers with aspirations and aptitude to support their organisation's leadership. Funded by the Australian Institute for Disaster Resilience, the program aims at providing participants with the foundations for capability and confidence in leadership. Three of our Anglicare DR team attended the most recent program held in Canberra in early April and all came away giving glowing reports.

Patricia, a relatively new recruit from Moruya commented:

*You meet very interesting people from a range of different agencies....you learn different ways of handling people...the place we stayed was fantastic, with a swimming pool and plenty of food.....I would recommend the course to everyone*

Gail, from Junee continues:

*Thank you for sending me to the training in Canberra this weekend. Absolutely great training. Hard for me to put into a few words how and what I think about it all. I honestly think it is the best of all I have attended since becoming a Team Leader.*

*Sally and Kate were excellent trainers who led us through a packed program where we were challenged to look at our different leadership styles and personalities.*

*We were shown how we must "self-care" so that we are then able to understand and care properly for our teams. Building teams and maintaining motivation by leading inclusively as well as showing how to deal with tough conversations and challenges and problem solving models.*

*Prioritising and managing spontaneous volunteers with a number of 'exercises' throughout the week-end made us think of our personal styles and personalities and those of our team, as well as how we can make sure all our team is included in decision making.*



# From the Regional Disaster Recovery Coordinator

- Helen Bennett

Like me I am sure many of you have been following the news and weather forecasts and wondering if our Disaster Recovery teams would be called upon to respond. Evacuation Centres were set up in Queensland and Northern NSW and as far south as Sussex Inlet. Our DR teams watched and waited as their colleagues further north were activated as people had to leave flooded homes and properties. Then in March, following further flooding, the call went out across the state for additional trained and accredited volunteers to assist/supplement/relieve those who had been working so hard in Evacuation and Recovery Centres in the flooded areas.

The first contingent from our region, drawn from Anglicare volunteers who had submitted Expressions of Interest, headed to the Northern Rivers in late March. They were deployed from the Bungendore, Moruya, Narooma, Batemans Bay and Canberra DR teams. Magnus Linder, Anglicare's Sydney-based Disaster Recovery Manager joined the group on their route north. This group will work alongside Red Cross and other agencies in Evacuation and Recovery Centres meeting and greeting those impacted by the floods and assisting with registrations and grant applications. A second team, of which I will be a part, will head north at the end of the week to relieve this first contingent.

Depending on need and available resources (i.e. accommodation and rental cars), further DR volunteers may be deployed after Easter.

Sincere thanks go to all those who have let me know of their availability and willingness to assist. Be assured that if there are places available for more DR volunteers from this region to join in the recovery effort, I will be in touch.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank those of you who have been praying and supporting us in so many other ways. All are appreciated.

Also, just a quick heads up that we will be holding Refresher Training via zoom on Tuesday, 10 May so please make a note of that date in your diary. More details to follow, including a Zoom link.

May I wish you every blessing this Easter Season.



## \*Cont from page 1

*Past trainings I have attended have been mostly about 'what and how we do when activated'. This training was more about 'the leader' and how we should look after ourselves as well as the team. It certainly gave us many, many ideas and points on how to understand our thoughts and actions and thus enable us to function better as a leader and by doing so, you then can include/manage your team by understanding them and their personalities better.*

*I plan to engage more with my team and get them together and talk and listen to their thoughts and ideas.*

*I would recommend for ALL Disaster Recovery members to attend this training if they can.*

*What we learned is valuable for not only our roles as leaders, but for our everyday interactions with others.*

Thank you Gail, Patricia and Britt for giving up a weekend to participate in this program. We have others on the waiting list for the next training and I am sure they will find it as worthwhile.

## Community Grants Coordinator

We are really excited to introduce Radek Hruska, one of the new members of our Bushfire Recovery Program. Radek is the new Community Grants Coordinator and he is passionate about helping individuals and families on the far South Coast and Snowy regions to get back on track in the aftermath of the Black Summer bushfires. Here are some words from Radek:

This week I started a new job. I spent my whole career in the private sector, and now I work for an NGO. The change in the mission, organisational culture and mindset is unbelievable; it will be a new chapter of my life painted on a blank canvas. This cute building in the historical town of Cobargo will be my office for the next 15 months. But all that glitters is not gold. My fellow Australians, do you remember the catastrophic bushfire season in the summer of 2019/20? It feels like it happened ten years ago, especially because we are in a continuous battle with Covid, and La Niña is bringing one major flooding event after another. However, it has been only 2 years and three months since fires raged through Cobargo and other Far South Coast areas of NSW. And I use the word only because my house is standing and the quality of my life hasn't changed. Unfortunately, there are still so many people around me who have lived for 2 years and three months in inadequate accommodation, so many struggling to get back on track, so many dealing with mental and other health issues. Admittedly the whole region received significant help straight after the bushfires; however, the extent of the damage was impossible to fix within six months or a year. Most of the organisations have moved on to help elsewhere, and it feels we are left alone. Fortunately, there is Anglicare NSW South, NSW West & ACT, where I'm proudly working as the Bushfire Recovery Community Grants Coordinator to get our region back to normal. Furthermore, I regard this mission as a personal closure of the 2019/20 bushfires, when I seriously feared for my life while evacuating and driving through the flames.





## Volunteer Coordinator Update

-Britt Campbell

How blessed I am to be writing to you all with an update. What an amazing five months I have had - learning and connecting with so many passionate and dedicated individuals.

Connection and engagement, social learning and open communication for positive social impact have been my key areas of focus over the past few months. I am grateful for the opportunities I have had to connect with all of our amazing volunteers and volunteer coordinators/managers.

March was certainly a jam-packed month and oh how warm my soul feels upon reflection. Helen and I attended our DR Bungendore team meeting on 20 March and I thoroughly enjoyed the chance to meet the team - participating in discussions, learnings and team building activities. I travelled to Eden one week later to meet and connect with our amazingly dedicated Parish Partner volunteers, and also completed AIDR's Volunteer Leadership Training course (1-3 April) where I met two of our very own passionate DR volunteers.

Behind the scenes we continue to work on our own internal processes - streamlining current processes for greater efficiency and sustainability. I am happy to say that we are now on the home stretch with the redesign and configuration of our internal volunteer management system. In the coming months we are hopeful our hard work will allow volunteers to record their volunteer shifts, upload renewed credentials and update their own contact information.

Also, just a heads up that you will begin to notice more 'Expression of Interest' emails from me, as I am eager to share existing and new volunteering opportunities with all current Anglicare volunteers who might like a little more community/social engagement. If this is of interest to you, please feel free to call me or email me.

Lastly, I would like to end my update with an acknowledgement. A massive heart felt thank you to all of our DR volunteers who popped up their hand to assist with RAT distributions, Queanbeyan ER/Food Fair, and the devastated flood affected Northern Rivers region. Your kindness, compassion and dedication to help, together with my personal passion and drive for volunteer coordination/management, make my job an absolute privilege and joy.

## DR/Volunteer Team staffing update

As many of you will know, Lili Delahaye, our lovely Volunteers Administrative Officer resigned in January 2022 to relocate to Tasmania with her partner Sam. We were fortunate to have Karen Wright from Anglicare's Permanency Support Program act in the role for several months. Our recruitment process for a new Volunteers Administrative Officer is currently well underway and we hope to have a new person starting in the role within the next few weeks. Watch this space!

**Bushfire Recovery Program update** Government funding has enabled Anglicare's Bushfire Recovery Program to recruit/continue the following roles:

**Rebuilding Advisors (new)** Our two Rebuilding Advisors will provide mobile, technical building advice to those across the south east region rebuilding after the Black Summer bushfires. They will also advise on improvements to temporary accommodation which may alleviate stress whilst more permanent solutions are found. They will work alongside those rebuilding or seeking a change to their current accommodation.

**Bushfire Recovery Coordinators (continuing)** Covering Eurobodalla and the Bega Valley, our two Bushfire Recovery Coordinators work alongside the community to identify needs and coordinate solutions. They also work on resilience building projects, conduct outreach, and support individuals and community groups in their recovery journey. Our Bushfire Recovery Coordinators provide a mobile service as well as working from office locations in Bega, Cobargo and Moruya. Already embedded in the community, extra funding allows staff to continue in these roles.

**Sub-Contractor - Planner.** This role has the capability to provide high level planning advice to those impacted by the Black Summer bushfires.

**Community Grants Coordinator.** Our new Community Grants Coordinator (Radek Hruska) will assist community groups to meet their obligations to implement and finalise their particular grants and provide liaison with stakeholders as appropriate.

**Early Years Program/Pre-schools.** We will be expanding a program we ran in the Bega Valley, addressing trauma in young people. Based in preschools, we will provide therapeutic service to children, and also to parents as required at our offices.

**Financial Counselling services** will be continued with Black Summer funding.

## Makesure

Last year Anglicare made the decision to outsource police checks for new DR recruits to Makesure (AFP and ACIC accredited provider of clearance checks) because of the difficulty of physically sighting and verifying identification documents during Covid. This process has worked very well, saving our team considerable administrative time and effort, so we are looking to extend the use of Makesure for all of our DR volunteers. So next time your police check is due for renewal, keep an eye out for an email from Makesure and Anglicare, with easy to follow instructions on how to use the Makesure online police check process.

## We can also provide checks on

- ✓ National Police History Check
- ✓ NZ Ministry of Justice Conviction History
- ✓ Australian Federal Police Check
- ✓ Publicly available credit check (Bankruptcy/ Debt)
- ✓ ACIC/Directorship Report
- ✓ Identification (Politically Exposed Persons)
- ✓ Operator High Risk Licences Check
- ✓ Right to Work AU/NZ
- ✓ Employment Confirmation
- ✓ Exit Interview
- ✓ Qualification Check
- ✓ Online Reference checks
- ✓ Working with Children Check
- ✓ Social Media Check
- ✓ Professional Membership
- ✓ Driving related checks
- ✓ Assessments
- ✓ Medical Checks

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