Australian Disaster Recovery Framework

VERSION 3.0 OCTOBER 2022

In the spirit of reconciliation, the Australian Government acknowledges the many Traditional Custodians of country throughout Australia and their connections to land, sea and community. We pay our respect to their Elders past and present and extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Acknowledgements

This framework has been developed and advanced with the support of disaster recovery professionals across Australia, and Community Outcomes and Recovery Sub-Committee members.

The following Steering Committee has overseen development of this latest version.

Document information and version control

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Version	Release Date	Change History	Authorisation
Interim National Recovery Framework V1.0	25 August 2020	Establishment of this framework as interim while multiple post-incident reviews are conducted following major bushfires during 2019/20	CORS
Interim National Recovery Framework V2.0	12 October 2021	Incorporating key changes to the Australian Government's arrangements for recovery as a result of recommendations arising from the 2020 Royal Commission into National Natural Disaster Arrangements and including various amendments and updates.	CORS
Australian Disaster Recovery Framework V3.0	13 October 2022	A major revision of the Interim National Recovery Framework V2.0	ANZEMC
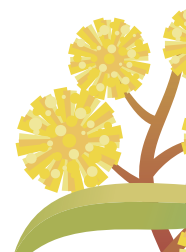
Foreword

In Australia, we are all familiar with the devastating impact and reality of disasters. Many of us have a personal experience of it. And while images of bushfires, floods, storms, and other disasters highlight the immediate impacts, we know that what lies ahead - recovery - will be a complex and long-term process.

The way that we respond as a nation to the critical work of recovery has advanced significantly over time. Assisting communities to recover is now a recognised and formalised aspect of emergency management across Australia. All governments have legislation and arrangements in place to prioritise and coordinate these efforts, and our capability and practice is on a path of continual improvement.

The importance of a well-coordinated recovery effort with the local community's needs at heart cannot be overstated. This framework has been established to support all governments and recovery partners in their respective and collective recovery efforts. It is the product of work led by the Community Outcomes and Recovery Sub-Committee (CORS) of the Australia-New Zealand Emergency Management Committee (ANZEMC). The framework brings together essential policy, doctrine and arrangements in one place, for recovery leaders and practitioners.

Recovery remains an evolutionary discipline. The framework reflects today's approach to recovery, but our experiences, capabilities, policies and arrangements are by no means static, and so continued advancement should be expected. No single government, agency or organisation can meet all of the need's communities will have following a disaster. When we work together, our collective efforts deliver better outcomes.

This framework is another step to enhance resilience to disasters, and a shared commitment to developing Australia's disaster recovery discipline.

Table of contents

The framework is presented in three parts:

Part 1

FRAMEWORK PURPOSE AND ESSSNTIAL CONTEXT

Provides a high-level introduction to recovery principles and outcomes. Includes information on Australia's disaster recovery context, approach and key characteristics.

Part 2

RECOVERY GOVERNANCE

Part Two provides information about the legislative context for recovery, including respective jurisdictional arrangements and the National Emergency Declaration Act (2020). It also offers guidance for activation of national and inter-jurisdictional coordination, and advice on working with recovery partners.

Part 3

RECOVERY DOCTRINE AND POLICY

Part Three provides links to relevant doctrine and policy that is nationally endorsed or is under development. It is important to recognise that as our understanding of recovery advances, there are corresponding changes in local, state, and federal arrangements and legislation. This will see the framework continue to evolve over time. Annual review is recommended to identify essential updates, and to assess extraordinary amendments or considerations for future revision.

Framework Purpose and Essential Context

1.1 Purpose of this framework

The Australian Disaster Recovery Framework provides a common understanding of Australia's approach to Disaster Recovery.

This Australian Disaster Recovery Framework (the framework) describes the principles and arrangements that support effective, coordinated recovery for disaster-impacted communities.

The framework:

- provides general guidance on recovery for planners and practitioners

- describes mechanisms for coordination and collaboration between recovery stakeholders, including in events of nationally significant harm, and

- provides links to legislation, arrangements, and practice for recovery in the Australian context.

1.2 Scope and audience

The framework provides guidance for those who have a role in recovery to work collaboratively to achieve a cohesive approach, that can be applied to hazards of all scales, and in any community.

The scope of this framework includes all stages of recovery, as well as the key actions required for pre-disaster recovery planning. Jurisdictions and entities define the phases of recovery slightly differently. **The Australian Emergency Management Arrangements (2019)** outline four phases of emergency management: prevention, preparedness, response and recovery (PPRR). Some jurisdictions are redefining PPRR to three phases of 'before', 'during' and 'after' the emergency. The **Australian Government Crisis Management Framework (2022)** refers to seven phases: prevention, preparedness, response, relief, recovery, reconstruction and risk reduction. The framework is intended to align with any approaches in use in Australian states and territories.

It is important to note that government authorities, systems and programs for disaster recovery are established and take effect under various federal, state and territory legislative instruments. This framework is subordinate to these legislative instruments and does not subsume existing arrangements at any level.

The framework is designed to support recovery leaders and practitioners across all levels of government and may also be of value to other recovery stakeholders and partners such as non-government, charitable and philanthropic organisations, business and community groups.

1.3 Recovery in Australia

In contemporary times and throughout history, there are many examples of disasters in Australia that have had national, and even global significance. It is critical to recognise, however, that regardless of the location, scale or magnitude of a disaster event, the impacts and consequences are invariably experienced most profoundly at the local community, neighbourhood and household level. It is for this reason that the importance of effective community engagement and collaboration in all phases of emergency management cannot be overstated.

The framework:

- provides general guidance on recovery for planners and practitioners
- describes mechanisms for coordination and collaboration between recovery stakeholders, including in events of nationally significant harm, and
- provides links to legislation, arrangements, and practice for recovery in the Australian context.

Recovery as a process

Recovery is the process of coming to terms with the impacts of a disaster and managing the disruptions and changes caused, which can result, for some people, in a new way of living. Being 'recovered' is being able to lead a life that individuals and communities value living, even if it is different to the life they were leading before the disaster event.

The impacts of disasters on affected individuals and communities can be profound, long lasting and life changing. Therefore, recovery is a long-term, multilayered social and developmental process that is more than simply the replacement of what has been destroyed and the rehabilitation of those affected. At its centre, recovery is the complex process of individuals and communities who have been impacted by a disaster working to resolve the impacts that the event has had on the trajectory of their lives.

Source: Australian Disaster Resilience Community Recovery Handbook (AIDR 2018)

Recovery as an outcome

The restoring or improving of livelihoods and health, as well as economic, physical, social, cultural and environmental assets, systems and activities, of a disaster-affected community or society, aligning with the principles of sustainable development and 'build back better', to avoid or reduce future disaster risk.

Source: Build Back Better in recovery, rehabilitation and reconstruction (UNISDR 2017 p6)

Australia is a signatory to the international Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015 – 2030 (the Sendai Framework). Through the Sendai Framework, countries around the world recognise the importance of managing disasters, disaster risk, and their impacts. This framework broadly aligns with the vision, goals and priorities of the Sendai Framework and the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals.

1.3.1 | Recovery management and planning

Recovery management routinely presents complexities for policy and practice including:

- diverse disaster impacts and consequences

- the likelihood and further impact of subsequent and cascading events

- pre-existing community dynamics, strengths and vulnerabilities

- natural tensions between community-led recovery and government processes

- work which spans multiple levels and areas of government

- funding and timelines not aligning with community priorities

- the need for coordination across large numbers of organisations, each with different mandates, goals and resources

- the importance of embedding disaster risk reduction into recovery planning and action.

Recovery is not a linear process. Progress will ebb and flow in response to a range of internal and external pressures, which may include those listed above and others that may appear or evolve over time. These complexities must be anticipated and recognised in planning and arrangements, and form part of ongoing practice and capability development.

The **National Disaster Risk Reduction Framework** provides further information on recovery in the context of holistic emergency management planning.

1.3.2 | Community-led recovery

Australian communities are remarkably diverse in their demographic composition, geography and the risks and hazards they face. Most importantly, communities are a critical source of local experience, knowledge, capacity and skills which can help to shape and direct recovery processes.

Recovery doctrine in Australia commits to recovery efforts being designed for and maintaining focus on a community-led and locally managed model, even when coordination efforts are escalated to an inter-jurisdictional or national level. This requirement is reflected in National Recovery Principles (**see Section 1.4.1**), and respective jurisdictional emergency management and recovery plans.

1.3.3 | Recovery environments: a holistic approach

In Australia, the work of recovery management is generally divided into four environments of social; economic; natural; and built.

Some jurisdictions have adopted additional or different environments, and these are set out in their respective arrangements (see **Section 2.1.1**).

All recovery environments are intrinsically linked, and the impacts and consequences of disasters will develop over time both within and across the environments. While organisations may use the concept of recovery environments to structure their plans, and set out roles and responsibilities, action may span more than one environment. It is essential that all work is considered with a holistic view of recovery, because for disaster affected communities there is no segmentation of environments and impacts.

Community development approaches that engage and mobilise community strengths and capacity are most effective in ensuring that recovery activities will be locally relevant, accessible and will meet the needs of affected communities.

Further discussion of recovery and recovery environments can be found in the **Australian Disaster Resilience Community Recovery Handbook** (AIDR 2018)

Social Environment

The social environment considers the impact on health and wellbeing of individuals, families and communities, including safety, security and shelter, health and psychosocial wellbeing.

Economic Environment

The economic environment considers the direct and indirect impacts of a disaster on the economy. It includes physical damage, lost income and livelihoods, disruption of trade, loss of industry and business closure.

Built Environment

The built environment considers the impacts on physical infrastructure, including essential services, commercial and idustrial facilities, public buildings, assets and housing.

Community

Natural Environment

The effects on the natural environment may be a direct result of the disaster, a secondary impact or as a consequence of response or recovery processes.

Figure 1: In Australia, the work of recovery management is generally divided into four environments.
Source: Australian Disaster Resilience Community Recovery Handbook (AIDR 2018)

1.3.4 | Cascading and compounding impacts and consequences

Disaster impacts and consequences are frequently interconnected and compounding. Disaster impacts can be considered as primary stressors - that is, those that arise directly from the disaster - and secondary stressors, which can be considered as indirect consequences. Primary and secondary stressors may be localised and immediate, or more widespread and experienced over time. Disaster impacts can present new issues in the lives of those affected and can amplify pre-existing inequity and vulnerability.

Additionally, factors such as a changing climate mean that Australian communities are at increasing risk of exposure to successive and cascading disaster events (where one hazard event leads to systems failures and / or secondary hazard events). As disaster events become more frequent and severe, communities may face multiple disasters simultaneously or in quick succession. This adds to the overall complexity of recovery management efforts and lived experience.

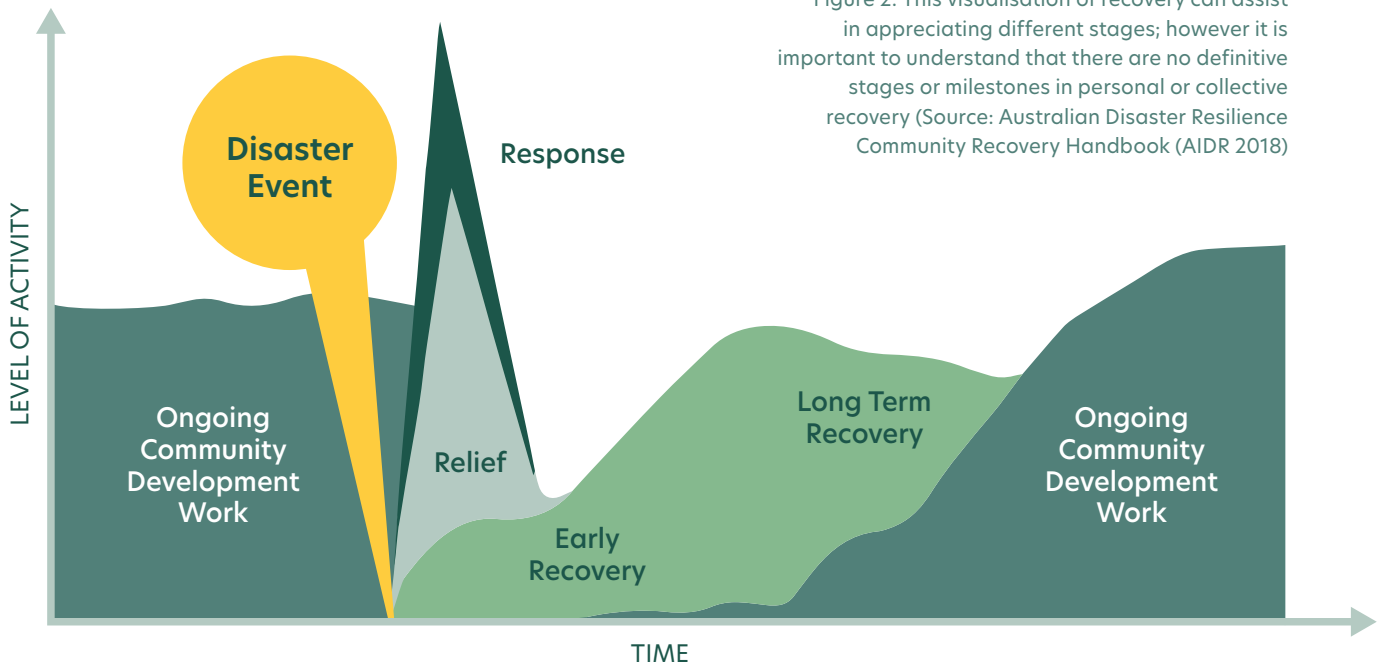### 1.3.5 | Recovery management over time

Recovery begins at the same time as response, with initial relief and recovery activities usually coordinated by an incident management team as part of the overall disaster response effort. The transition of coordination from response to recovery can vary between jurisdictions and is commonly influenced by a number of factors such as the nature of the event, the degree of impact and consequences for the affected community and the type of resources required to meet immediate and longer-term needs. It is important that the formal transition from response/relief to recovery, and from recovery to the resumption of mainstream services is planned, cohesive and well-timed.

The concept of 'PPRR' (prevention, preparedness, response, recovery) can be useful in identifying the key stages of emergency management. However, it can also suggest a logical or linear segmentation which is rarely reflective of the experience of communities or agencies. In reality, for those impacted by, or those who support communities impacted by disaster, progress is more complex, particularly in recovery. Disasters have the capacity to disrupt all facets of life, and the direct and indirect impacts and consequences can be experienced for months, years or decades.

Commonly used terms such as 'relief', 'early recovery' and 'long-term recovery' can be useful in planning and education about recovery, but it is essential that policymakers and practitioners appreciate that there are no set or agreed timeframes or milestones in recovery, and that the road will be different in every event, and for every impacted individual, organisation and community.

Further discussion of the stages of recovery and transition can be found in the **Australian Disaster Resilience Community Recovery Handbook** (AIDR 2018).

1.3.5 | Recovery management over time

Figure 2: This visualisation of recovery can assist in appreciating different stages; however it is important to understand that there are no definitive stages or milestones in personal or collective recovery (Source: Australian Disaster Resilience Community Recovery Handbook (AIDR 2018)

With all of this information in mind, nationally consistent practice is supported by agreed disaster recovery principles, recovery program characteristics, effective recovery planning and a framework for evaluating recovery programs.

1.4 Recovery principles, characteristics and outcomes

1.4.1 | National Recovery Principles

Recovery in Australia is guided by the **National Principles for Disaster Recovery** (National Principles). The principles were first developed in 1986 and have been reviewed and refined over time, most recently in 2018. They are endorsed by the Australian and New Zealand Emergency Management Committee (ANZEMC). The National Principles are an important foundation for Australia's approach to recovery and are intended to apply at national, state and territory, regional and local levels. They define a standard for good practice, as well as a basis for accountability and evaluation, and should underpin emergency management plans and arrangements at all levels.

The National Principles are further supported by a set of Characteristics of Successful Recovery Programs (the Characteristics) which have been developed by the Community Outcomes and Recovery Sub-Committee of ANZEMC and are intended to further inform the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of programs and initiatives supporting recovery. When considered together, the National Principles and the Characteristics provide comprehensive guidance on good practice and help to highlight the interrelationships and interdependencies that exist across the spectrum of recovery. A summary of the National Principles and the Characteristics is set out in the table below.

Further information on the National Principles can be found in the **Australian Disaster Resilience Community Recovery Handbook** (AIDR 2018). The Characteristics are described in further detail in this Framework at **Appendix A: Characteristics of Successful Recovery Programs.**

Recovery Principles	Recovery Practice
Understand the context Successful recovery is based on an understanding of the community context, with each community having its own history, values and dynamics.	**Recovery should:** • Acknowledge existing strengths and capacity, including past experiences • Appreciate the risks and stressors faced by the community • Be respectful of and sensitive to the culture and diversity of the community • Support those who may be facing vulnerability • Recognise the importance of the environment to people and to their recovery • Be acknowledged as requiring a long term sustained effort as needed by the community, and • Acknowledge that the impact upon the community may extend beyond the geographical boundaries where the disaster occurred.
Recognise complexity Successful recovery is responsive to the complex and dynamic nature of both emergencies and the community.	**Recovery should recognise that:** • Disasters lead to a range of effects and impacts that require a variety of approaches; they can also leave long-term legacies • Information on impacts is limited at first and changes over time • Affected individuals and the community have diverse needs, wants and expectations, which can evolve rapidly • Responsive and flexible action is crucial to address immediate needs • Existing community knowledge and values may challenge the assumptions of those outside of the community • Conflicting knowledge, values and priorities among individuals, the community and organisations may create tensions • Emergencies create stressful environments where grief or blame may also affect those involved, and • Over time, appropriate support for individuals and communities, from within and outside, can cultivate hope and individual and collective growth.

Responsive and accessible

Successful recovery programs reflect the specific context of the event and unique history, values, dynamics and needs of affected communities.

Whole-of-community

Successful recovery programs actively include those more at risk in disasters and respect the role of Australia's culturally diverse communities throughout recovery.

Dynamic

Successful recovery programs anticipate and are responsive to the complex, dynamic disaster context.

Recovery Principles

Recovery Practice

Use **community-led** approaches

Successful recovery is community-centred, responsive and flexible, engaging with community and supporting them to move forward.

Recovery should:

- Assist and enable individuals, families and the community to actively participate in their own recovery

- Recognise that individuals and the community may need different levels of support at various times

- Be guided by the community's priorities

- Channel effort through pre-identified and existing community assets, including local knowledge, existing community strengths and resilience

- Build collaborative partnerships between the community and those involved in the recovery process

- Recognise that new community leaders often emerge during and after a disaster, who may not hold formal positions of authority, and

- Recognise that different communities may choose different paths to recovery.

Needs & evidence-based

Successful recovery programs are designed, managed and adjusted on the basis of needs and evidence from diverse sources, including community input and lessons learned.

Community-led

Successful recovery programs respect the role of communities in recovery and seek to engage and enable communities throughout all stages of recovery.

Recovery Principles	Recovery Practice

Coordinate all activities

Successful recovery requires a planned, coordinated approach between community and partner agencies, based on continuing assessment of impacts and needs.

Recovery should:

- Have clearly articulated and shared goals based on desired outcomes

- Be flexible, taking into account changes in community needs or stakeholder expectations

- Be guided by those with experience and expertise, using skilled, authentic and capable community leadership

- Be at the pace desired by the community, and seek to collaborate and reconcile different interests and time frames

- Reflect well-developed community planning and information gathering before, during and after a disaster

- Have clear decision-making and reporting structures and sound governance, which are transparent and accessible to the community

- Demonstrate an understanding of the roles, responsibilities and authority of organisations involved and coordinate across agencies to ensure minimal service provision disruption

- Be part of an emergency management approach that integrates with response operations and contributes to future prevention and preparedness, and

- Be inclusive, availing of and building upon relationships created before, during and after the emergency.

Communicate effectively

Successful recovery is built on effective communication between the affected community and other partners.

Recovery should:

- Recognise that communication should be two-way, and that input and feedback should be encouraged

- Ensure that information is accessible to audiences in diverse situations, addresses a variety of communication needs, and is provided through a range of media and networks

- Establish mechanisms for coordinated and consistent communications between all service providers, organisations and individuals and the community

- Ensure that all communication is relevant, timely, clear, accurate, targeted, credible and consistent, and

- Identify trusted sources of information and repeat key recovery messages to enable greater community confidence and receptivity.

CHARACTERISTICS OF RECOVERY PROGRAMS

Demand-driven

Successful recovery programs address and reflect community needs and aspirations.

Interoperable

Successful recovery programs require compatibility of functions and resources, assuming the needs for combined action throughout recovery.

Scalable

Successful recovery programs are flexible and scalable in the face of unknown and potentially compounding consequences.

Recovery Principles	Recovery Practice

Recognise and build **capacity**

Successful recovery recognises, supports and builds on individual, community and organisational capacity and resilience.

Recovery should recognise that:

- Assess capability and capacity requirements before, during and after a disaster

- Support the development of self-reliance, preparation and disaster mitigation

- Quickly identify and mobilise community skills, strengths and resources

- Develop networks and partnerships to strengthen capacity, capability and resilience

- Provide opportunities to share, transfer and develop knowledge, skills and training

- Recognise that resources can be provided by a range of partners and from community networks

- Acknowledge that existing resources may be stretched, and that additional resources may be sought

- Understand that additional resources may only be available for a limited period, and that sustainability may need to be addressed

- Understand when and how to step back, while continuing to support individuals and the community as a whole to be more self-sufficient when they are ready, and

- Be evaluated to provide learning for future and improved resilience.

CHARACTERISTICS OF RECOVERY PROGRAMS

Collaborative

Successful recovery programs are designed and managed collaboratively.

Capability focused

Successful recovery programs recognise, utilise and grow existing recovery capabilities.

Resilient

Successful recovery programs enable the sustainable enhancement of lives, livelihoods and community resilience.

1.4.2 | Recovery outcomes

Defining and measuring recovery outcomes is an evolving practice. It is complicated by the range of impacts communities may experience coupled with emergent and pre-existing community capacity, values, expectations and priorities. Despite these challenges, it is critical for successful and sustained recovery that the focus of measurement and evaluation is on recovery outcomes, rather than the tracking of output-based activity and investment

A **Monitoring and Evaluation Framework for Disaster Recovery Programs** was nationally endorsed in May 2018 and has been developed to ensure that disaster recovery programs can be consistently evaluated for their effectiveness. It establishes a range of recovery objectives and outcomes pertaining to community sustainability and resilience. These are organised around the four recovery environments of Economic, Social, Environmental and Built – together with a number of outcomes that are considered to be essential to all of the environments, shown here as 'overarching' outcomes.

It is recommended that the *Monitoring and Evaluation Framework for Disaster Recovery Programs* be used when developing recovery programs and initiatives to help specify the objectives and outcomes of each, and to guide how programs are monitored and evaluated for their effectiveness and the degree to which they can contribute to sustainability and resilience. A summary of sustainability and resilience outcomes and objectives for recovery is included in the table below.

Sustainable Recovery	Resilient Recovery
Overarching sustainability outcomes	**Overarching resilience outcomes**
• Displaced populations can return to the community if they prefer to return • The needs of vulnerable groups are addressed in disaster recovery • The community is aware of the disaster recovery processes • The community can express its changing disaster recovery needs • Government, private sector and civil society and organisations are engaged in plans for mitigation and management of the recovery	• Community members are aware of the risks of future disasters • The community has access to insurance (covering lives, homes and other property) through insurance markets or micro-finance institutions, where appropriate and viable

Economic Recovery Outcomes	
Sustainability objectives	**Resilience objectives**
• The economy as a whole is functioning • Community members can meet their material and service needs and participate in the economy • Businesses and industries in the local economy can operate and trade in line with broader economic trends	• Business and not for profits have in place adequate mitigation practices for risks and threats • The economy is sufficiently flexible and adaptable to shocks

Built Environment Recovery Outcomes

Sustainability objectives

- Infrastructure that relates to the provision of services to the community by infrastructure owners/operators, including water, sewerage, electricity and gas, transport, telecommunications

- Infrastructure that relates to education, health, justice, welfare and any other community infrastructure/buildings that support the community (private or public owned assets)

Resilience objectives

- Infrastructure is rebuilt to reduce to a reasonable degree the impact of future disasters on communities

Social Recovery Outcomes

Sustainability objectives

- Adequate housing is available to community members at appropriate times in the recovery process

- Community members have access and can meet health needs (including mental health) arising from the disaster

- Community members have access to psychosocial support

- Households, families, and individuals can act autonomously to contribute to the recovery process

- Community members have access to education services

- Community members have access to appropriate and coordinated social services

- Community members feel sufficiently safe and secure following a disaster to engage in social activities and interactions with other members of the community

Resilience objectives

- The community has improved capacity and capability to respond to future disasters

Environmental Recovery Outcomes

Sustainability objectives

- The environment has returned to pre-disaster state, or to a state that is acceptable to the community

Resilience objectives

- The risk of adverse impacts of future disaster on the environment is minimized

Recovery Governance

Part 2 of this framework provides an outline of essential governance and legislative context for disaster recovery. General guidance, rationale and activation arrangements for national or inter-jurisdictional governance in more complex or significant events is also set out.

Accountability and responsibility for all aspects of emergency management, including disaster recovery, spans governments, individuals and communities, business and industry, and community service organisations. Generally, states and territories hold the primary legislative responsibility for coordination and delivery of recovery activities within their jurisdiction. Governance and coordination across and between multiple systems can be complex. As responsibilities vary across many groups, it is essential that governance arrangements are transparent, collective, and collaborative to best work with, and support, disaster-impacted communities.

Over time, various recovery systems, governance arrangements, plans and capabilities have been developed at all levels to respond to evolving community needs and risks . In addition, the pace of advancing recovery discipline within Australia's emergency management system means that some arrangements remain evolutionary and necessarily dynamic. Arrangements as set out below are current as of August 2022.

Disaster Risk Governance

The system of institutions, mechanisms, policy and legal frameworks and other arrangements to guide, coordinate and oversee disaster risk reduction and related areas of policy.

Annotation: Good governance needs to be transparent, inclusive, collective and efficient to reduce existing disaster risks and avoid creating new ones.

Source: UNDRR Terminology

2.1 | Authorising environment and legislative context

Commonwealth, state, and territory governments set respective legislation on responsibilities and arrangements for disaster recovery. It is important to appreciate that diverse arrangements are in place, and that all efforts to govern and coordinate must accommodate and respond to this.

Detailed arrangements, including key roles, committees and local coordination mechanisms, can typically be found in State Emergency Management Plans (or equivalent) and supporting or sub-plans.

[1] The complexity and importance of clarity in national and inter-jurisdictional roles and responsibilities for emergency management and recovery has been a regular theme arising in post-incident reviews across Australia. It was most recently identified as a key area for improvement in the 2020 **Royal Commission into National Natural Disaster Arrangements**.

2.1.1 | Jurisdictional arrangements in summary

This table summarises key instruments and arrangements in each jurisdiction.
Always defer to the respective jurisdiction for their most up-to-date information.

Jurisdiction	Information on arrangements
Australian Capital Territory (ACT)	The ACT Emergency Services Agency provides an **overview of arrangements for emergency management** under the *Emergencies Act 2004*. Detailed responsibilities and arrangements are set out in the ACT Emergency Plan, an instrument prepared under this legislation. Responsibility for community recovery is assigned to the Minister for Community Services. The Director General, Community Services Directorate is responsible for Community Recovery and for the development and maintenance of the Community Recovery Plan.
Commonwealth (Cwlth)	The **National Emergency Management Agency** (NEMA) supports recovery at a national level in leadership, policy and in coordination of Commonwealth capability by: • Leading Australian Government efforts to improve national resilience to crisis • Enhancing national capabilities, coordination and capacity across the full disaster continuum • Supporting in all hazards and all disasters. The **Australian Government Crisis Management Framework** (AGCMF) outlines the Australian Government's approach to preparing for, responding to and recovering from crises. The AGCMF provides ministers and senior officials with guidance on their respective roles and responsibilities. It also sets out the arrangements that link ministerial responsibility to the work of key officials, committees and facilities. The AGCMF includes arrangements on tools and mechanisms for Crisis Recovery and has recently been updated to reflect machinery of government changes and the establishment of NEMA. See also: **National Emergency Declaration Act 2020** and emergencies of **nationally significant harm** (below).
New South Wales (NSW)	**Resilience NSW** is the lead agency responsible for recovery in NSW. The **State Emergency and Rescue Management Act 1989** (SERM Act) provides the principal legislation of relevance. The NSW **State Emergency Management Plan** (EMPLAN) sets out detailed emergency management, governance and coordination arrangements and roles and responsibilities of agencies. The Plan is supported by sub plans and supporting plans, including the **NSW Recovery Plan**. In NSW, the State Emergency Management Committee (SEMC) provides leadership, direction and advice for strategic and operational emergency management. The State Emergency Recovery Controller (SERCON) function and responsibilities are held by Commissioner, Resilience NSW.

Jurisdiction	Information on arrangements
Northern Territory (NT)	The Territory Emergency Management Council approves the **Territory Emergency Plan** (prepared by NT Emergency Service) in accordance with the **Emergency Management Act 2013**, sections 9-10. The Act reflects an all-hazards approach and provides legislative authority for emergency management activity spanning prevention, preparedness, response and recovery. The Plan describes NT's approach to emergency and recovery operations, governance and coordination arrangements, and roles and responsibilities of agencies. The Minister for Police, Fire & Emergency Services has overall responsibility for the Act. Functionally, the Chief Executive Officer of the Department of the Chief Minister and Cabinet (DCMC) coordinates and directs recovery operations in the NT as the Territory Recovery Coordinator.
Queensland (QLD)	Queensland's comprehensive approach (Prevention, Preparedness, Response and Recovery) to disaster management is outlined in the **Queensland State Disaster Management Plan** (QSDMP). This plan is approved by the Queensland Disaster Management Committee (QDMC) in accordance with the **Disaster Management Act 2003**. The QSDMP outlines Queensland's strategic approach to disaster recovery. To support this, Queensland's disaster recovery arrangements are contained within the Queensland Recovery Plan – a sub plan to the QSDMP. The **Queensland Recovery Plan** provides detailed information on Queensland's approach to disaster recovery, roles and responsibilities, recovery planning and operations, with a focus on collaboration between disaster management groups, agencies and stakeholders. Through these arrangements disaster recovery is coordinated at local, district and state levels, with priority given to impacted communities and the lead role of Local Disaster Management Groups (LDMGs) and Local Recovery Groups (LRGs). The Queensland Reconstruction Authority (QRA), which is established under the **Queensland Reconstruction Authority Act 2011** is responsible for disaster recovery and resilience policy and ensuring the effective and efficient coordination of recovery and reconstruction efforts following a disaster.
Victoria (Vic)	The **State Emergency Management Plan** (SEMP) is authorised through the **Emergency Management Act 2013** and sets out Victoria's emergency management arrangements, roles and responsibilities at state, regional and local levels. Victoria's Emergency Management Commissioner is responsible for coordination of the activities of organisations, including agencies, having roles or responsibilities under the SEMP in relation to recovery from all emergencies. Under the SEMP, **Emergency Recovery Victoria**, is responsible for State and Regional Recovery Coordination, with municipal councils responsible for local recovery coordination. The SEMP also identifies lead agencies for various recovery services.

Jurisdiction	Information on arrangements
South Australia (SA)	SA's legislative arrangements for emergency management are outlined in the **Emergency Management Act 2004**. The **State Emergency Management Plan** (SEMP) sets out SA's comprehensive emergency management arrangements. The **SA Disaster Recovery Coordination Framework** is a sub-plan of the SEMP which details recovery arrangements. The Premier is responsible for The Act and chairs the Emergency Management Cabinet Committee (EMCC). The State Emergency Management Committee (SEMC) is responsible for the SEMP and is chaired by the Chief Executive, Department of the Premier and Cabinet. The SEMC reports to the EMCC. State-led recovery is coordinated through the Department of the Premier and Cabinet and led by the State Recovery Coordinator. See **Recovery SA** for further information.
Tasmania (Tas)	Emergency management roles, responsibilities and powers in Tasmania are established by the **Emergency Management Act 2006** and the **Tasmanian Emergency Management Arrangements**. The Department of Premier and Cabinet (DPAC) is responsible for whole-of-government recovery planning, preparedness and coordination. Under the **Emergency Management Act 2006** (s. 24A), the Secretary responsible to the Premier is the State Recovery Advisor. The roles and powers of this role include ensuring recovery plans and arrangements are prepared and maintained and advising government on recovery needs and issues. These powers may be delegated. On behalf of the State Recovery Advisor, the Department of Premier and Cabinet (DPAC) maintains **Tasmania's State Recovery Plan** and arrangements, supports municipal and regional coordination efforts, and leads the coordination and management of longer term recovery efforts through a Recovery Unit or Taskforce. Tasmanian local governments deliver relief and recovery activities as described by the State Recovery Plan. **TasALERT** is the Tasmanian Government's official emergency information source.
Western Australia (WA)	The **State Emergency Management Plan** details arrangements for recovery in WA. The Plan is prepared by the State Emergency Management Committee (SEMC) under the **Emergency Management Act 2005** (s18). SEMC is the peak emergency management body in Western Australia. Members are appointed by the Minister for Emergency Services. The SEMC Recovery and Community Engagement Subcommittee oversees the planning and review of state-level recovery arrangements. The Fire and Emergency Services (FES) Commissioner is delegated to appoint a State Recovery Coordinator. The State Recovery Coordinator coordinates state recovery arrangements and plans. While in some circumstances the state government may play an increased role, local governments hold functional responsibility under the *Emergency Management Act 2005* (s36) to manage recovery in their districts following an emergency.

2.1.2 | Role of local government

Local governments hold an integral role in disaster recovery and resilience. Legislative arrangements, roles and responsibilities, and capacities vary significantly, and this must be factored into national or multi-jurisdictional recovery policies, plans and decisions. Arrangements, roles and representation of local government in recovery are set out (where applicable) in respective state emergency management plans (**See 2.1.1** for particulars of each jurisdiction).

Community-led and context specific recovery can be most effectively upheld by the level of government closest to communities. Local governments hold existing local relationships and knowledge and can readily provide invaluable context on local community strengths and needs, local service providers and key stakeholder groups.

The scale or significance of a disaster does not diminish the respective legislated and critical roles that local governments play before, during and after an event/s. It is important to acknowledge however, that few local governments have the inherent capacity to sustain a major disaster recovery effort, and that an integrated and coordinated recovery approach will plan for and respond to this.

2.1.3 | Australian Government non-financial assistance (including ADF support)

The **Australian Government Disaster Response Plan** (COMDISPLAN) is the plan for provision of Australian Government non-financial assistance to Australian states and territories in an emergency or disaster. It includes detail on plan activation, the scope of assistance available, and processes to request and authorise support.

The Australian Defence Force (ADF) is one such area of specialist support which has been called upon in large or high impact disasters. State and Territory governments may request assistance under COMDISPLAN; however this action has typically been associated with response rather than recovery efforts. Requests for Australian Government support are to be directed to the Department of Home Affairs and NEMA and are approved by the Australian Government's minister responsible for emergency management.

Deployment of the ADF has previously occurred for disaster relief, humanitarian assistance, clean up, logistical and technical support. Additionally, the Defence Legislation Amendment (Enhancement of Defence Force Response to Emergencies) Act (2020) enables the Australian Government to engage the support of the ADF to support communities during and after disasters.

Further information:

- **Australian Government Crisis Management Framework**
- **COMDISPLAN**
- **Defence Assistance to the Civil Community** (DACC) arrangements.

2.1.4 | Emergencies of nationally significant harm

Where an event may be, or is, of 'nationally significant harm' the **National Emergency Declaration Act 2020** ('the NED') enables Australia's Governor-General to make a national emergency declaration on advice from the Prime Minister, following assessment of certain circumstances. This legislation spans all-hazards. A National Emergency Declaration Aide-Mémoire outlines the procedures for administering this legislation.

The NED does not 'exclude or limit the operation of a law of a State or Territory that is capable of operating concurrently with this Act' (Part 1, Div 1 (9)) and is not designed to replace or restrict the responsibilities or activities undertaken by individual jurisdictions under their respective legislation and arrangements.

The NED enables Australian Government ministers to suspend, vary or substitute administrative requirements in the legislation they administer in certain circumstances. It also enables the Prime Minister to require Commonwealth entities to report on available stockpiles, assets and resources, including options for and recommendations to respond to a national emergency.

Further information:

*   **National Emergency Declaration Act 2020**

*   **Australian Government Crisis Management Framework** (AGCMF)

Nationally significant harm means harm that:

a)   has a significant national impact because of it's scale or consequences; and

b)   is any of the following:

> i. harm to the life or health (including mental health) of an individual or group of individuals.
>
> ii. harm to the life or health of animals or plants.
>
> iii. damage to property, including infrastructure.
>
> iv. harm to the environment.
>
> v. disruption to an essential service.

Source: National Emergency Declaration Act (2020) Div 2(10) at 25 July 2022

[2] A copy of the Aide Memoire is held by the Prime Minister's Office, the Commonwealth Attorney-General's Office and the offices of ministers responsible for Home Affairs, Emergency Management and Defence, and appropriate senior officials.

23

2.2 Australia's standing emergency management committees

Standing governance arrangements provide year-round national fora for emergency management. The Australia-New Zealand Emergency Management Committee (ANZEMC) is the senior officials committee responsible for emergency management. ANZEMC is responsible for informing, influencing and advocating for national policies and capabilities that reduce disaster risk, minimise the potential for harm and uphold public trust and confidence in emergency management arrangements. ANZEMC reports to the National Emergency Management Ministers' Meeting.

ANZEMC consists of senior officials from each Australian, state and territory government, plus a member from New Zealand and the Australian Local Government Association. It is co-chaired by the Director General Emergency Management Australia, Department of Home Affairs (it is anticipated this role will shift to a senior official within the National Emergency Management Agency), and a jurisdictional ANZEMC member on a one-year, rotational basis.

ANZEMC is supported by two sub-committees, the Mitigation and Risk Sub-committee (MaRS) and the Community Outcomes and Recovery Sub-committee (CORS). The Social Recovery Reference Group (SRRG) reports to CORS and drives the application of human and social services perspectives in all recovery efforts, including place-based, community-centric approaches throughout disaster recovery.

See 2.1.1 Jurisdictional arrangements for state and territory specific governance arrangements
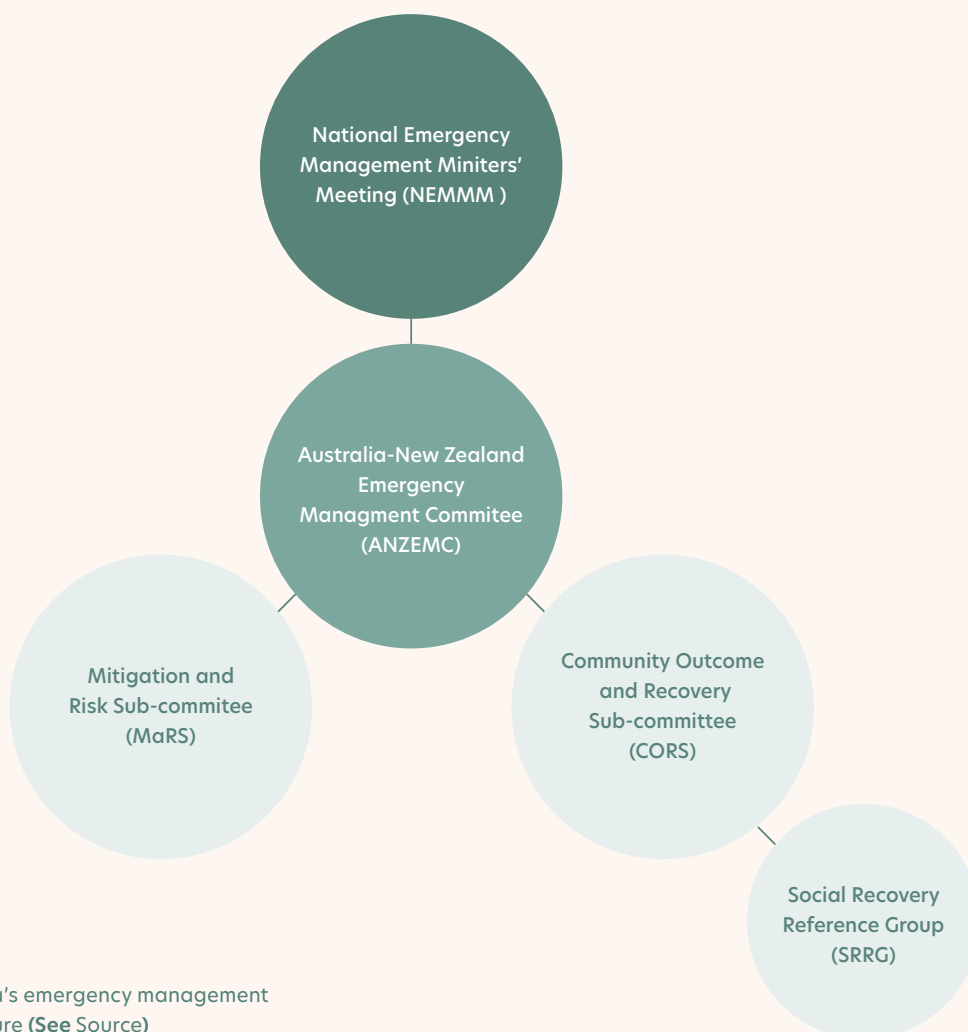

Figure 3: Australia's emergency management committee structure **(See** Source**)**

2.3 Rationale for activating collaborative governance arrangements

This section of the framework focuses on guidance for activating event-specific governance for disaster recovery where extraordinary jurisdictional inter-dependencies and strategic national issues arise. As guidance, it is not binding unless specified.

Our disaster recovery experiences, backed by research and evaluation, consistently confirm that communities experience recovery needs holistically. Successful recovery outcomes cannot be achieved by any single organisation or service. Effective coordination of collective capability is a critical success factor.

In local recovery efforts, governance can often be managed through existing structures, authority, roles and responsibilities. In some scenarios, the significance or complexity of community consequences will warrant enactment of extraordinary governance and/or coordination at a national or inter-jurisdictional level.

The rationale to activate collaborative governance of disaster recovery efforts should consider emerging or current need for:

1. Greater clarity of accountabilities across multiple parties in immediate or long term recovery.

2. A more comprehensive picture of impacts, consequences, requirements, and activities occurring.

3. Improved planning, coordination and consistency of decision-making and resourcing across multiple communities and recovery programs. For example, there may be increasing complexity around prioritisation, financial resources, and coordination of volunteers or offers of aid.

4. Reduced duplication and unnecessary administrative burden across collective efforts.

5. Expanded and expedited access to necessary resources to sustain or scale recovery activities or access specialist expertise.

6. Improved inter-organisational and public communication to minimise the occurrence of conflicting or confusing information and sustain public trust and confidence in programs and services.

7. Mitigation of avoidable consequences for individuals and communities arising due to compounding stressors, uncertainties, or burden navigating complex support and service systems.

2.4 Guidance for national recovery governance

Precedent events and existing mechanisms provide a frame for recovery governance, however detailed standing arrangements for national or inter-jurisdictional disaster recovery governance are not fixed. Disaster recovery governance demands a flexible approach on the part of organisational leaders, to sufficiently accommodate different contextual requirements and authorising environments.

The following general guidance should be considered:

1. Governance arrangements should take a holistic view of recovery (see **Section 1.3** for guidance).

2. Joint governance arrangements should aim to improve coordination and collaboration in effort and decision-making.

3. Governance arrangements should uphold and support the principle of community-led recovery and aim to build on (rather than replace) existing local jurisdictional governance arrangements.

4. Where joint fora are established, they must respect the sovereignty, independence and responsibilities of respective governments and organisations. Membership should be extended to relevant jurisdictions and major stakeholders, suitably reflecting jurisdictional governance structures and including explicit consideration for how all levels of government are represented.

5. Major disasters routinely see swift government decision-making and action. Organisations involved in disaster recovery should be designed and resourced in anticipation of the need to rapidly integrate or adapt functions to operate collaboratively with other jurisdictions and organisations.

6. Organisations providing or operating various recovery programs remain responsible for their respective internal governance, including their work with partners and stakeholders.

7. The design of any new governance arrangements should set out clear:

    a. authority, roles and responsibilities for all members

    b. governance leadership, including the appointment of individuals and establishment of organisations (if/as required) to facilitate effective recovery governance

    c. (existing or new) policies, mechanisms and legal arrangements guiding recovery program development, delivery, monitoring and evaluation

    d. oversight, risk, compliance and assurance arrangements.

2.5 Activation of national collaborative governance arrangements

Where national coordination of recovery is sought, model arrangements at a Ministerial level are as follows:

- The Prime Minister and the affected Premier or First Minister(s) will consult as necessary to coordinate the response to and recovery from the emergency, in relation to policy, strategy and public messaging in support of the affected communities.

- The Prime Minister and the affected Premier or First Minister(s) will consult on and deliver the key leadership messaging to be conveyed to the public.

- All interested jurisdictions will communicate, as appropriate, with all other jurisdictions, sharing key information and public messages across jurisdictions through appropriate arrangements.

- The Prime Minister and the affected Premier or First Minister(s) will work through relevant agencies to deliver appropriate and co-ordinated recovery plans for the impacted region(s) / communities.

- If required, a formal, temporary function for the national coordination of relevant disaster event-specific recovery initiatives and programs will be established.

Note that the *National Emergency Declaration Act 2020* (Part 2 Section 11(2)) provides exceptional advice to the above where a national emergency declaration is being considered by the Prime Minister **(See Section 2.1.4)**.

2.5.1 | National Coordination Mechanism

The **Australian Government Crisis Management Framework** (AGCMF) is a longstanding framework outlining the Australian Government's approach to preparing for, responding to and recovering from crises. It provides ministers and senior officials with guidance on their respective roles and responsibilities. With an all-hazards scope, the focus of the AGCMF is near-term crisis preparedness, immediate crisis response and early crisis recovery arrangements, where national coordination is required.

The AGCMF sets out the role of National Cabinet, the Australian Government Crisis and Recovery Committee (AGCRC) and details the National Coordination Mechanism (NCM): a committee-based format to provide whole-of-government leadership and coordination during crises. It explains that:

> *The NCM "brings together relevant Australian Government, state and territory government and private sector representatives for coordination, communication and collaboration during response and recovery to domestic crises. The AGCRC and the NCM remain the primary mechanisms for whole-of-government leadership and coordination." (AGCMF v3.1 page 33)*

A senior NEMA official activates and chairs the NCM with arrangements in place to co-chair or delegate. If the NCM is activated (whether during response or early recovery), this would likely be the sole such coordination forum at a national level and encompass recovery coordination needs.

To date, the NCM has not been utilised to coordinate long-term recovery efforts nationally, and its suitability to do so is untested. At present (August 2022), a tailored national coordination mechanism for sustained disaster recovery does not exist. **Appendix B** offers conceptual (only) arrangements which seek to build upon those within the AGCMF. They are included here as general support for agents responsible for establishing extraordinary or temporary national recovery governance arrangements.

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[3] As of August 2022, the AGCMF is being updated to reflect machinery of government changes to establish the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA). Refer to the latest version of the AGCMF directly for the latest authoritative advice.

2.6 Resource sharing arrangements

Inter-jurisdictional resource sharing arrangements for recovery continue to develop in Australia.

The **Social Recovery Reference Group (SRRG)** has established Guidelines for Interjurisdictional Assistance (Community Recovery). These detailed Guidelines support member jurisdictions to request and receive timely community recovery human resources during major or catastrophic disasters. Endorsed by CORS upon their establishment in 2015, the arrangements are regularly reviewed by SRRG and have been utilised in multiple events.

There are also resource sharing arrangements in place for response and relief through the Australasian Arrangements for Interstate Assistance (AIA). These arrangements, endorsed by the Ministers Council for Police and Emergency Management, are regularly utilised for resource sharing between Australian jurisdictions (and New Zealand) fire and emergency services organisations. The arrangements do not extend to recovery but provide further precedent to extend development of resource sharing arrangements to recovery. For more information on the AIA, see the **AFAC National Resource Sharing Centre**.

2.7 Working with recovery partners

Successful recovery is underpinned by effective partnerships between a broad range of groups and organisations extending well beyond government departments and agencies. For the best outcomes, everyone involved in recovery efforts should work collaboratively to deliver recovery programs and services.

Detailed exploration on stakeholders and recovery partners can be found in the **Australian Disaster Resilience Community Recovery Handbook** (AIDR 2018). A brief description of some key recovery partners is outlined below. Note that while sub-groups are set out, people commonly identify with more than one group.

2.7.1 | Communities

In planning for recovery, communities need to be considered in different ways:

Communities of PLACE

Communities of INTEREST

Communities of IMPACT

A particular geographical area or areas.

A group or groups of people sharing similar interests, professions, affiliations, identities, religious or cultural backgrounds.

A way of describing a group of people who have been affected by a disaster but who have limited or no other affiliations or connections.

When assessing who is affected by a disaster, be aware that disasters have complex and far-reaching 'ripples', with impacts extending well beyond those most obviously affected. In addition to addressing tangible impacts, recovery plans and programs should consider the needs of people who may not appear to be directly affected but may nonetheless experience serious consequences of a disaster.

Disasters can also generate intense community attention well beyond areas of impact. These broad communities are important recovery partners in appreciating community impacts, understanding what is and what is not helpful for communities as they recover, and supporting organisations or individuals who have been impacted or who are involved in local recovery. Those working in the areas of communication and public information, coordination of aid and donations, and volunteering, need to consider how best to harness the potential of these groups as recovery partners.

2.7.2 | Non-government organisations (NGOs)

NGOs, including community and social service organisations, not-for-profit and local community groups, faith organisations, and service clubs are critical partners in effective recovery. These groups can contribute to the development of recovery policy and practice, respond to immediate and longer-term recovery needs, and provide a wide range of services for affected communities. NGOs may exist within an affected community prior to a disaster and/or provide specialist relief and recovery support after a disaster.

Effective partnerships need the roles, responsibilities and capabilities of NGOs to be included in local, jurisdictional and national emergency management plans. (**See also 2.1.1**).

2.7.3 | Private industry

The private sector plays an integral role in recovery planning and management. Within affected communities, the private sector is embedded in many forms including as electricity or telecommunication providers, insurance companies, the banking sector, local media, food and retail outlets, health providers, education providers, as major employers, small businesses and so on. Ideally, these providers are engaged in recovery plans and processes to support whole-of-community recovery prior to a disaster.

Private industry outside the affected communities is also an important recovery partner as the provider of services, products, logistics, and as supporters or donors in diverse recovery initiatives.

2.7.4 | Volunteers

Volunteers play a significant part in any recovery operation, particularly after large-scale disasters. There are different types of volunteers. Volunteers who are affiliated with a specific organisation (such as service clubs, statutory and community agencies, and other NGOs) will generally be directed by that organisation and are likely to have specific skills to undertake assigned roles.

Members of the public who are not affiliated with an organisation playing a planned role in emergency management and who offer their services during or after an event are sometimes referred to as 'spontaneous volunteers'. Spontaneous volunteers are community members, often from outside disaster affected communities, who want to help, especially in the days and weeks directly after an event.

The Australian Disaster Resilience Handbook **Communities Responding to Disasters: Planning for Spontaneous Volunteers** explores this topic in depth.

2.7.5 | Media organisations

Local and national media organisations play an important role in disaster recovery. This includes sharing information about impacts and services available, informing the broader community about the disaster, and in advocacy for disaster affected communities. In the same way that public information and media liaison roles are a key part of disaster response, a proactive partnership with the media is a critical element of recovery management.

2.7.6 | Philanthropic organisations

Philanthropic organisations provide grants, funds and other support for disaster affected communities. Their services can include coordination and distribution of appeal funds, individual and community grants and investment in or support for community projects. Relationships between philanthropic organisations may form directly with communities or be with recovery agencies. They may be pre-existing or emergent and their area of focus may be issue specific or broad.

There are many other partners and stakeholders and this complexity is to be expected and can be harnessed. From those in academia and research, to prominent community leaders, or to communities with their own history of disaster, every disaster will see a unique network develop. See the **Australian Disaster Resilience Community Recovery Handbook** for more.

Recovery Doctrine and Policy

This section of the framework provides summary information and links to doctrine and policy that is nationally endorsed or in development.

3.1 Recovery capability

Australia's capability and expertise in disaster and emergency management has continually matured through the course of responding to diverse crises. Arrangements and practice continue to evolve.

Capability is the collective ability to deliver and sustain an effect within a specific context and timeframe. The Australian Disaster Preparedness Framework (ADPF) identifies twenty-one national capabilities required for all jurisdictions to prepare for severe to catastrophic disaster events.

The framework provides a method for all jurisdictions to assess and develop the required capabilities, spanning five elements:

- governance
- systems
- processes
- people
- resources

Capacity is the key determinant of how long a capability can be sustained for at a particular level of ability. Each jurisdiction has established dedicated recovery systems, governance and capability incrementally over time to meet their evolving needs and risk profiles, and each jurisdiction has varying levels of capacity.

All jurisdictions recognise that interoperability between jurisdiction resources is an essential element of building national recovery capability and is an important focus of future disaster recovery planning.

Currently (2022) work is underway across jurisdictions to assess capability for recovery, including from catastrophic disasters, and to articulate critical recovery roles through the development of a National Recovery People Capability Framework. Project outcomes will provide a fulsome national assessment of collective recovery maturity and capability.

3.2 Data sharing protocols

The importance of effective data sharing protocols has been well established in Australia. Multiple post disaster reviews have highlighted the importance of agencies sharing information on disaster impacts and reducing duplication of effort for those affected as a way of improving disaster recovery efforts.

In 2021 the **Intergovernmental agreement on data sharing between Commonwealth and State and Territory governments** was adopted by National Cabinet, committing all jurisdictions to share data as a default position, where it can be done securely, safely, lawfully and ethically.

Currently (2022), work is underway with states and territories to establish agreed data sharing principles in relation to disaster impacts and recovery data, intended to sit under the Intergovernmental agreement on data sharing.

Additionally, there is work being undertaken by the Australian Government to investigate how improvements can be made to the way personal information of disaster affected people can be shared between agencies. This work aims to better understand the legislative, technical and safety challenges of data sharing in order to reduce the burden on disaster affected people to repeatedly provide the same information to multiple agencies.

3.3 Needs assessments

Needs assessments are a critical component of managing recovery programs. Needs assessments identify specific impacts, needs, available services and gaps. They must be dynamic to keep pace with the evolving situation. Effective needs assessments support recovery programs to be evidence based and tailored to the context and needs of disaster affected communities. This includes consideration of pre-event context such as community profile, demographics and vulnerabilities. These assessments form part of an ongoing process of monitoring recovery programs.

CORS is currently (2022) undertaking work to develop national guidance for recovery needs assessments.

For more information on needs assessments, contact the National Emergency Management Agency or see the **Australian Disaster Resilience Community Recovery Handbook**.

3.4 Lessons management and continuous improvement

Lessons management is an overarching term that refers to collecting, analysing, disseminating and applying learning experiences from events, exercises, programs and reviews.

Lessons management is an essential component in the improvement of recovery operations. It provides a method to identify contributing factors, to share experiences, capture evidence, and unpack the impacts and consequences of disasters so that measures can be taken to improve practice and reduce the likelihood or consequence of poor outcomes or experiences. Lessons management processes are generally undertaken at a jurisdiction level, and there are a range of approaches used around the country.

The Australian Disaster Resilience Lessons Management Handbook provides advice on lessons management that is designed for use by a wide range of organisations. Additionally, the handbook presents information on knowledge management, interoperability and legal issues relating to lessons management.

Monitoring and evaluation is one element of lessons management. **The Monitoring and Evaluation Framework for Disaster Recovery Programs** was nationally endorsed in 2018 and has been developed to ensure that disaster recovery programs can be consistently evaluated for their effectiveness.

3.5 Mental health and wellbeing

The mental health and wellbeing impacts of disasters are well recognised. They include impacts to those who are directly impacted by the disaster, people who support response and recovery efforts, and the broader community.

Many jurisdictions have established arrangements for mental health and wellbeing support that are appropriate for their local and regional contexts. There are two national documents relating to disasters and mental health and wellbeing in different stages of development. These are:

The National Disaster Mental Health and Wellbeing Framework

Developed by the National Mental Health Commission, the National Disaster Mental Health and Wellbeing Framework provides guidance to support governments, communities and multi-sectoral recovery partners to work together in a coordinated manner. This was endorsed by all jurisdictions in June 2022.

National Mental Health Plan for Emergency Services Workers

This plan is now being developed to improve mental health outcomes and lower suicide.

3.6 Funding, financial assistance and donations

Financial investment in recovery efforts, including provision of financial assistance following disasters is a multifaceted component of recovery.

3.6.1 | Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA)

The Australian Government supports states and territories through cost sharing arrangements to alleviate the financial burden associated with provision of emergency relief and recovery services and activities. The DRFA sets out the agreement for funding provisions to support disaster impacted communities once specific activation criteria and thresholds are met. More information is available at **disasterassist.gov.au**

3.6.2 | Government financial assistance

Governments may provide direct financial assistance to disaster affected individuals or businesses through standing or disaster-specific arrangements and programs. Some jurisdictions have established processes regarding financial assistance during and after disaster events. For details, refer to State and Territory arrangements.

Two standing national arrangements include the **Australian Government Disaster Recovery Payment** and **Disaster Recovery Allowance**.

Further support can be offered through measures that pause or alleviate financial stressors in recovery, such as freezing of income tax liabilities, debt recovery activities or provision of financial counselling.

3.6.3 | Disaster appeals and donations

Following disaster events, there is typically a surge in community interest and motivation to offer assistance to affected individuals and communities. Offers of financial support may be made in a range of ways, including government or NGO-led appeals, direct donations to local organisations or groups and grants from domestic and international NGOs, community organisations, private business and philanthropic organisations. Effective coordination and transparency of appeals is essential to maintain the trust of both donors and disaster affected communities. In 2022, the Australian Government and the Fundraising Institute of Australia released a **Practice Note** regarding the reporting of charitable fundraising during natural disasters.

Some jurisdictions have established processes relating to financial appeals during disasters. For details regarding jurisdiction processes relating to donation and appeals management, refer to state and territory arrangements.

3.6.4 | Donated goods

In the immediate aftermath of a disaster, affected communities are frequently inundated with donations of material aid. Effective coordination, assessment, stakeholder management and communication around donations and offers of assistance can be a significant and long-term recovery activity. Some jurisdictions have established processes and agreed or preferred service providers to help with management of offers and donations in recovery. For details regarding jurisdiction processes relating to management of offers and donated goods, refer to state and territory arrangements.

3.6.5 | Clean up

Following a disaster event, significant clean up efforts including debris removal, demolition and management of hazardous waste may be required. Some jurisdictions have established processes and agreed preferred service providers to assist with this. For detail regarding jurisdictional processes refer to state and territory arrangements.

3.7 Recovery training

In 2021, the Australian Government commenced the National Recovery Training Program to develop nationally recognised competencies in recovery and training pathways to support interoperability and sharing of human and physical resources across the country.

In June 2022 new competencies for recovery were added to the Australian Public Safety training package and endorsed by the Commonwealth Minister for Skills and Training. A list of the **approved qualifications, skill sets and new units** is available. Information about the training program can be found at **training.gov.au**

3.8 AIDR Knowledge Hub

The **Australian Disaster Resilience Knowledge Hub** (the 'Knowledge Hub') is a national, open-source platform that supports and informs policy, planning, decision making and contemporary good practice in disaster resilience. The Knowledge Hub highlights current and emerging themes in the resilience sector, linking national guidelines with research and fostering collaboration among leading agencies and organisations. The Knowledge Hub also houses information on recent and historical Australian disasters.

The Knowledge Hub is managed by the Australian Institute for Disaster Resilience on behalf of the Australian Government.

The Knowledge Hub recovery section hosts a wide range of resources, including:

- handbooks
- National Monitoring and Evaluation framework and database
- professional development webinars
- case studies
- National Principles for Disaster Recovery
- an extensive selection of recovery resources from a wide range of organisations.

3.8.1 | National handbook collection

The **Australian Institute of Disaster Resilience oversees the Australian Disaster Resilience Handbook Collection**. These handbooks provide a source of knowledge about disaster resilience in Australia with a focus on promoting the adoption of good practice in building disaster resilience in Australia. Additionally, the handbook series aims to improve interoperability between jurisdictions, agencies, the private sector, local businesses and community groups by promoting use of a common language and coordinated, nationally agreed principles.

Handbooks especially relevant to disaster recovery include:

- Community Recovery
- Community Engagement for Disaster Resilience
- Australian Emergency Management Arrangements
- Communities Responding to Disasters: Planning for Spontaneous Volunteers
- Lessons Management handbook.

Appendix A: Characteristics of Successful Recovery Programs

Responsive and accessible

Successful recovery programs reflect the specific context of the event and unique history, values, dynamics and needs of affected communities.

Responsive and accessible recovery addresses the need for:

- flexible and tailored recovery initiatives to address the increasing complexity of recovery
- interoperability across national partners and stakeholders to give effect to these solutions.

Whole-of-community

Successful recovery programs actively include those more vulnerable in disasters and respect the role of Australia's culturally diverse communities throughout recovery.

Inclusive recovery programs must be responsive to the specialised and evolving needs of all individuals affected by a disaster. This supports:

- ongoing advancement of Australia's vulnerable communities, ensuring our strength through cultural diversity
- recovery being reflective of our national values, acknowledging the value of each individual and their unique contributions
- recognition of each community as its own ecosystem with associated interdependencies, with a need to focus on concurrent recovery for all those affected.

Dynamic

Successful recovery programs anticipate and are responsive to the complex, dynamic disaster context.

Dynamic recovery programs are responsive to the context of the disaster and the community in order to meet current, emergent and future recovery needs. This includes:

- addressing the evolving needs of individuals and communities throughout all stages of recovery
- anticipating and mitigating the impacts of compounding events / consequences
- effectively managing the increase in community vulnerability following the impact of a disaster
- adapting approaches and systems to a complex and constantly evolving stakeholder environment.

Needs and evidence-based

Successful recovery programs are designed, managed and adjusted on the basis of needs and evidence from diverse sources, including community input and lessons learned.

Needs and evidence-based recovery programs reflect the advantages of scientific and analytical approaches, in order to achieve:

- greater accuracy, effectiveness and efficiency in the design and management of recovery programs

- enhanced community recovery experiences and outcomes.

Community-led

Successful recovery programs respect the role of communities in recovery and seek to engage and enable communities throughout all stages of recovery.

Community-led recovery programs prioritise engagement with, and enablement of, impacted communities to achieve:

- greater accuracy in the design and management of recovery programs, through leveraging local knowledge and aspirations as the basis of some aspects of planning

- sustainability of outcomes, through capability development within the community.

Demand-driven

Successful recovery programs address and reflect community needs, priorities and aspirations.

Successful recovery programs periodically analyse and reflect on the specific needs of communities throughout recovery. This includes:

- consideration of local, regional and state priorities

- analysis of the needs and benefits of potential recovery projects / activities, and subsequent assessment of their priority.

Interoperable

Successful recovery programs require compatibility of functions and resources, assuming the need for combined action throughout recovery.

Recovery programs premised on effective interoperability provide for:
- the reception and provision of mutual aid
- collaborative and co-ordinated partnerships between all levels of government, communities and the private sector and therefore
- deliver better, more integrated recovery outcomes for individuals and their communities.

Scalable

Successful recovery programs are flexible and scalable in the face of unknown and potentially compounding consequences.

A scalable approach to recovery provides:
- rapid activation of key recovery activities in the face of potentially compounding consequences
- flexibility through the recovery process, acknowledging that needs and intended outcomes can vary over time
- viable application to disaster events that vary in type, severity, geographic location and temporal nature.

Collaborative

Successful recovery programs are designed and managed collaboratively.

A collaborative approach to recovery supports:
- equity amongst stakeholders working together on any given recovery program
- a collegiate approach to understanding and responding to community need holistically
- exploration of context-driven formal (e.g. memoranda of understanding, governance structures) and informal (relationship-based) mechanisms that promote the sharing of capability, data, insights and resources to deliver integrated outcomes.

Capability-focused

Successful recovery programs recognise, utilise and grow existing recovery capabilities.

A capability-focused approach to recovery ensures:
- existing strengths within governments, partner agencies, communities and individuals form the cornerstone of recovery efforts
- a sustained focus on building and deepening existing capability as part of the recovery process, enhancing community resilience.

Resilient

Successful recovery programs are designed, managed and adjusted on the basis of needs and evidence from diverse sources, including community input and lessons learned.

Embedding resilience in recovery practice provides:

- a unique opportunity to rebuild a stronger, more resilient Australia
- ongoing, entrenched support across the four recovery environments
- the opportunity to leverage recovery activities and lessons to reduce the impact of future disasters.

Appendix B: Conceptual model – a national coordination mechanism for recovery

This *Australian Disaster Recovery Framework* presents arrangements for any and all stages of disaster recovery and seeks to align with the AGCMF. Below, some *conceptual* (only) arrangements are set out, drawing from equivalent settings outlined in the AGCMF and adapted for recovery. To reiterate, any such arrangements would necessarily and respectfully acknowledge standing state and territory legislative responsibilities and arrangements (**see 2.1**).

This concept has been shared with CORS members and stakeholders involved in development and review of Version 3 of this framework (2022). It was widely supported as a useful inclusion here, in lieu of formally agreed and detailed arrangements for coordination of sustained national crisis recovery efforts.

Conceptually, a National Coordination Mechanism for Recovery (NCM-R) may provide a suitable committee-based forum where there is a need for longer-term, sustained coordination of recovery efforts spanning multiple jurisdictions, or attending to consecutive or compounding events with severe to catastrophic consequences. This would be a temporary forum. Where the NCM has not been in place during response and early crisis recovery, a recommendation for initiation of an NCM-R could be made by or to NEMA by any jurisdiction.

When convened, invitation to participate should be tailored to needs and also evolve over time.

Relevant state and territory representatives could be invited via First Ministers' departments and these invitations forwarded to relevant officials at the discretion of jurisdictions. Invitations could also be extended to key recovery stakeholders, industry and community leaders to develop a suitable, holistic representation of recovery knowledge, impacts and needs. A NEMA senior official could chair the NCM-R or delegate this role to another member of the NCM-R where appropriate.

The concept of a Coordination Mechanism in recovery is not necessarily limited to taking a national form. Two or more jurisdictions might elect to initiate a Coordination Mechanism based on a need for inter-jurisdictional recovery coordination. Such fora are still to be trialled and matured in recovery, and so good practice arrangements will advance over time.

A Recovery Coordination Mechanism is envisaged as enhancing coordination and responsiveness of activities such as:

- strategic planning

- resource management

- joint capability acquisition, development, and management

- joint communications

- ongoing impact assessments, monitoring and evaluation of recovery.

Appendix C: CORS membership at endorsement

The following members have supported the development of this framework and its endorsement.

Jurisdiction	CORS Member
Chair	**Julia Waddington-Powell** R.N MH MIPH Chief Executive Officer South Australian Fire and Emergency Services Commission
Deputy Chair	**Alison Sommerville** Acting Executive Director, Recovery Operations Branch National Recovery and Resilience Agency
Commonwealth	**Bronwen Sparkes** Director, Recovery Policy and Reforms National Recovery and Resilience Agency
	Sandy Whight (Advisor) General Manager, Decision Support Services Bureau of Meteorology
	Dr Anthony Budd Community Safety Branch Head, Place, Space and Communities Division, Geoscience Australia
New South Wales	**Rosemary Hegner** ASM Interim Chair Social Recovery Reference Group Director, Learning and Capability Resilience NSW
Victoria	**Sharon MacDonnell** Director Recovery & Regional Support Emergency Management Victoria
	Dean Purkis Executive Director Recovery Strategy and Policy Bushfire Recovery Victoria
South Australia	**Miriam Lumb** Manager Policy and Strategy, Emergency Management Office South Australia Fire and Emergency Services Commission
	Kirsten-Leigh Barr Acting Director, Security, Emergency and Recovery Management, Intergovernmental and Diplomatic Relations Department of the Premier and Cabinet

[Correct as at 30 June 2022]

Jurisdiction	CORS Member
Western Australia	**Deputy Commissioner Melissa Pexton** Deputy Commissioner Strategy and Emergency Management Department of Fire and Emergency Services
Queensland	**Kyla Hayden** Executive Director, Law and Justice Policy, The Cabinet Office Department of the Premier and Cabinet
	Jimmy Scott General Manager, Resilience & Recovery Queensland Reconstruction Authority
	Cheryl-Lee Fitzgerald ESM Acting Assistant Commissioner, Emergency Management & Community Capability Queensland Fire and Emergency Services
Tasmania	**John Harkin** Assistant Director, Recovery Tasmania Department of Premier and Cabinet
Australian Capital Territory	**Bren Burkevics** Executive Branch Manager, Justice and Community Safety, Security and Emergency Management Division Justice and Community Safety Directorate
	Jessica Summerell Executive Branch Manager, Social and Community Inclusion, Inclusion and Participation Team, Community Services Directorate Justice and Community Safety Directorate
Northern Territory	**Robert Evans** Deputy Director Northern Territory Police, Fire and Emergency Services
	Scott Perry Assistant Director, Emergency Recovery, Security and Emergency Recovery Team Department of the Chief Minister and Cabinet
Australian Local Government Association	**Monica Telesny** Senior Policy Adviser Australian Local Government Association
New Zealand	**Jenna Rogers** Manager, Analysis & Planning National Emergency Management Agency
Australian Red Cross	**Andrew Coghlan (Advisor)** Head of Emergency Services Australian Red Cross - Emergency Services