



Project Brief

Community Resilience Mentorship Initiative (CRMI) Scoping Project

May, 2013

1. Project Rationale

The concept of the CRMI is based on the success of the 'Pigs Might Fly' project- a flood recovery initiative in the Central Victorian town of Carisbrook that leveraged the experience and capacity of a number of other towns across the state to support its recovery and development following the January 2011 floods. In this instance, twelve months after the flood event, Carisbrook was struggling to recover and a cycle of inertia was starting to take hold. The community, with the support of the Central Goldfields Shire Council, reached out to other disaster-affected communities for help. Community members previously affected by emergencies (most notably the 2009 Victorian bushfires) responded positively and agreed to work with Carisbrook to share their experiences and provide much needed enthusiasm and skills to inspire the community to take control of their own recovery process. This inter-community engagement resulted in a locally-developed community recovery and development program called "Pigs Might Fly".

The model of inter-community mentorship, support and advice encapsulated in the Pigs Might Fly program was greatly appreciated by local residents and proved successful in shifting the trajectory of recovery efforts toward community-defined priorities and projects. In both Carisbrook and in the communities that provided support and mentoring services, the longer-term legacy of the program has been positive. Anecdotal evidence from individuals who provided mentoring and supporting services suggests that their experience assisted them, and by extension their communities, in their own recovery journey. In Carisbrook itself Pigs Might Fly catalysed the formation of "Carisbrook Projects Inc." a locally-managed not-for-profit body now directing numerous projects of local significance, including a community-based emergency planning program.

The success of the Pigs Might Fly community recovery approach has been recognised in a number of forums including a recommendation to the Victorian State government in the Bushfires Royal Commission Implementation Monitors report and through the receipt of both the National and the Victorian Resilient Australia Awards.

The CRMI scoping project has been established to research the effectiveness of the inter-community resilience mentorship model that was used in the Pigs Might Fly program as well as in other similar projects operating across Victoria and Australia. This project will identify and assess learnings from these experiences in order to develop and propose a model that aims to build on, enhance, and complement existing projects in this field, as well as proposing mechanisms for capitalizing on the skills and experience that exists in communities that have survived emergencies and natural disasters.

2. Project Goal

To build a network of communities to learn from and support each other to lead their own recovery and enhance their own capacity for psychosocial resilience following an emergency.

The aim of the CRMI Scoping Project is to design and develop a CRMI model that will facilitate this goal across Victoria.

3. Project Description

The CRMI Scoping Project will be undertaken in the following 9 key steps:

Phase One – Designing the CRMI Community Engagement Model

1. Desk-top and field-work based scan of existing examples of inter-community mentoring and engagement from around Victoria (including Pigs Might Fly) and, where appropriate from across Australia, with a view to identifying the mechanisms and processes that could be adopted in the Victorian emergency services context to facilitate increased utilisation of the experience and knowledge of recovery and resilience embedded in local Victoria communities.
2. The development of a draft CRMI community engagement model (including Monitoring and Evaluation plan).
3. A forum bringing together community members from across Australia who have been affected by emergencies to gain community input into, test, validate and refine the draft CRMI model.
4. Refining the CRMI community engagement model in response to the outcomes of the forum.

Phase Two – Designing the CRMI Implementation Model

5. A mid- project review by the steering committee and appropriate stakeholders to address key issues raised in Phase one and to design formulate phase two. Key issues to be resolved in phase two may include:
 - a. the appropriate organisational structure for the initiative, and;
 - b. where that structure should sit within the larger emergency services sector, and ;
 - c. how the initiative should be funded, and;
 - d. how the initiative should interact with local communities and with individual mentors, and;
 - e. how the initiative should interact with the emergency services delivery organisations in Victoria, and;
 - f. how Victorian Emergency services sector organisations should be engaged in phase two of the scoping project.

6. Desk-top research of national and international literature with a view to identifying appropriate mechanisms for integrating the CRMI community engagement model into the existing Victorian emergency services organisational structures and service delivery framework.
7. A second forum primarily with stakeholders in the Victorian emergency services sector to review, test and refine the CRMI model. The two goals of this forum are to:
 - a. ensure that the design of the CRMI model is integrated effectively into the existing emergency services sector processes and/or organisational structures and provides, and;
 - b. generate organisational support and buy-in from within appropriate Victorian Emergency services organisations for the eventual implementation of the initiative.

Phase Three – Reporting and Stakeholder Engagement

8. Final CRMI report printed including proposed:
 - a. CRMI organisational design and budget, and;
 - b. CRMI funding mechanism and sources, and;
 - c. CRMI community and emergency services engagement mechanisms, and;
 - d. CRMI monitoring and evaluation program.
9. Stakeholder engagement to ensure appropriate uptake of the report's recommendations.