



Living with Bushfire
Conference - 2015

Community Leadership in Disaster Recovery

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Kinglake

Who's in the room?

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LITTLE WAY
SCHOOL
1908



50

50

WALSH'S RESTAURANT







BOLLYGUM PARK





















In the immediate aftermath, relief centres were established by the community at Kinglake, Kinglake West and Toolangi



VILLAGE
1945

NEEDED

NAME AND CONTACT

24th St. Pitts. - 5th

Huber - 2nd St. - 5th

Compton - 1st St. - 5th

Clemson - 1st St. - 5th

Wright - 1st St. - 5th

Wright - 1st St. - 5th

Wright - 1st St. - 5th

Wright - 1st St. - 5th

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Wright - 1st St. - 5th

Wright - 1st St. - 5th

Wright - 1st St. - 5th

Wright - 1st St. - 5th

DOCTOR
1st St. - 5th

Wanted
1st St. - 5th

ON OFFER

WORK - W/ LOST PACKERS
HAY - SEED OF 1st St. - 5th

SPARK - SEEDS OF 1st St. - 5th

DPI - SEEDS OF 1st St. - 5th

Mechanic - 1st St. - 5th

Washing Machine - 1st St. - 5th

Washing Machine - 1st St. - 5th

Washing Machine - 1st St. - 5th

Washing Machine - 1st St. - 5th



Since Black Saturday...



□
It is important to emphasise...that disasters are about people and that responding to disasters – pre, during and post impact – is about managing and supporting people .

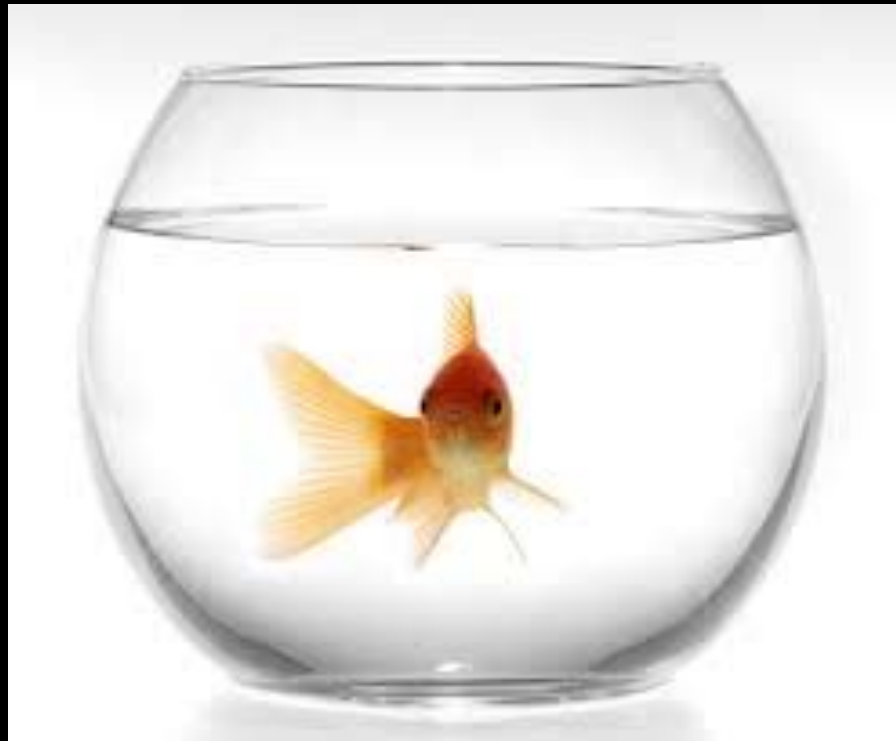
*Anne Eyre
Psychosocial aspects of recovery:
practical implications for disaster
managers*



Photo: Fire Storm: Black Saturday's Tragedy - Glenvale

The 'R' Word

'Resilience' is to communities as...





Communities are inherently resilient...





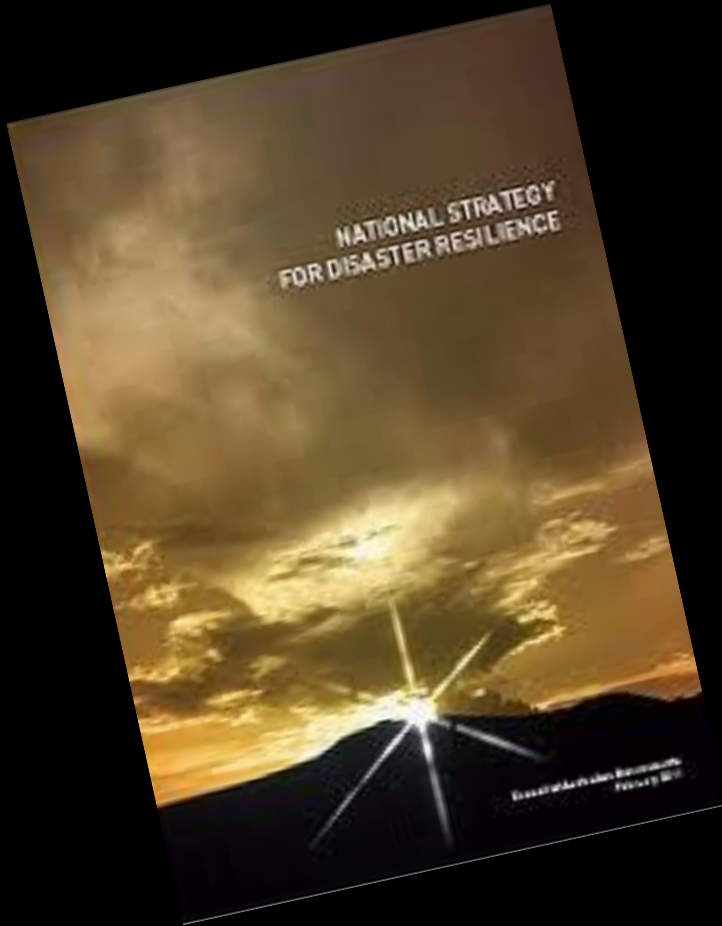
Photo: www.thebikewife.com

But we can't "make"
communities more resilient...

Council of Australian Governments (COAG)

National Strategy for Disaster Resilience

Shared responsibility...



- Report of the Inquiry into the 2002-03 Victorian Bushfires – 2003
- A Nation Charred: House of Representatives Select Committee into the recent Australian Bushfires – October 2003
- Council of Australian Governments (COAG) National Inquiry on Bushfire Mitigation and Management – March 2004
- Inquiry into the Impact of Public Land Management Practices on Bushfires in Victoria – June 2008
- Victorian Bushfires Royal Commission Final Report – July 2010
- Review of the 2010-2011 Victorian Flood Warnings and Response Final Report – December 2011
- A Shared Responsibility: The report of the Perth Hills Bushfire February 2011 Review – June 2011
- Review of the Operations of Bushfires NT – 2012
- Bushfires Royal Commission Implementation Monitor Final Report – July 2012
- Environment and Natural Resources Committee Inquiry into Flood Mitigation Infrastructure in Victoria – Aug 2012

One consistent theme which emerged during the community consultations was a strong desire for community involvement in all phases of emergency management: planning, preparation, response and recovery.

Concern was often expressed that communities had not been actively engaged in this process and invaluable local knowledge was not adequately considered.

There was a prevailing sense that local communities had been disempowered by the state within the emergency management framework.

Community Led Recovery

Reference groups, focus groups,
community recovery committees...



People get involved when they genuinely believe they can influence an outcome...



They stay involved when their knowledge and experience is valued, respected and acted upon



You must engage more than a handful of people if you want “community led” anything



Just because people don't care about the things
that I want them to care about,
doesn't mean they are
apathetic / complacent / lazy / stupid



So, what can we do?

Work with the capacity and social capital in communities – think about confidence and trust...and giving up control.

Understand that it's not business as usual and it's everybody's job.

Find and work with the natural leaders– who are the enablers and champions?

Never 'do to' or 'do for' communities when you can 'do with' - especially in recovery!!



STRATHEWEN:

Exploring community leadership in disaster recovery

Strathewen

Shire of Nillumbik

Population (pre-fire) approximately 200

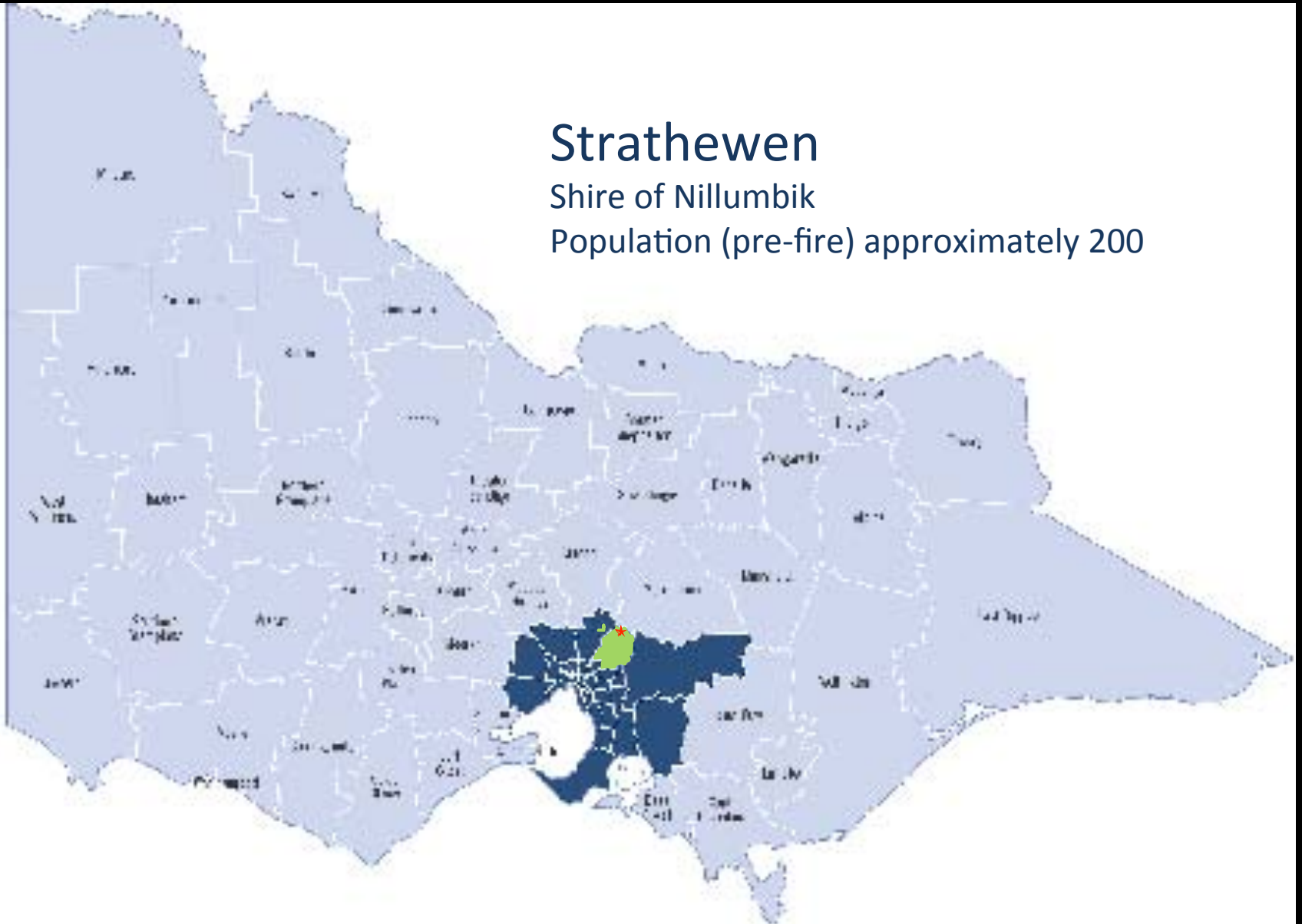




Photo: Mr D. McKinnon - Museum Victoria

Twenty-seven people died in Strathewen on 7 February 2009.
The primary school, community hall, tennis courts, cricket pavilion
and eighty-five of the district's 130 homes were destroyed.

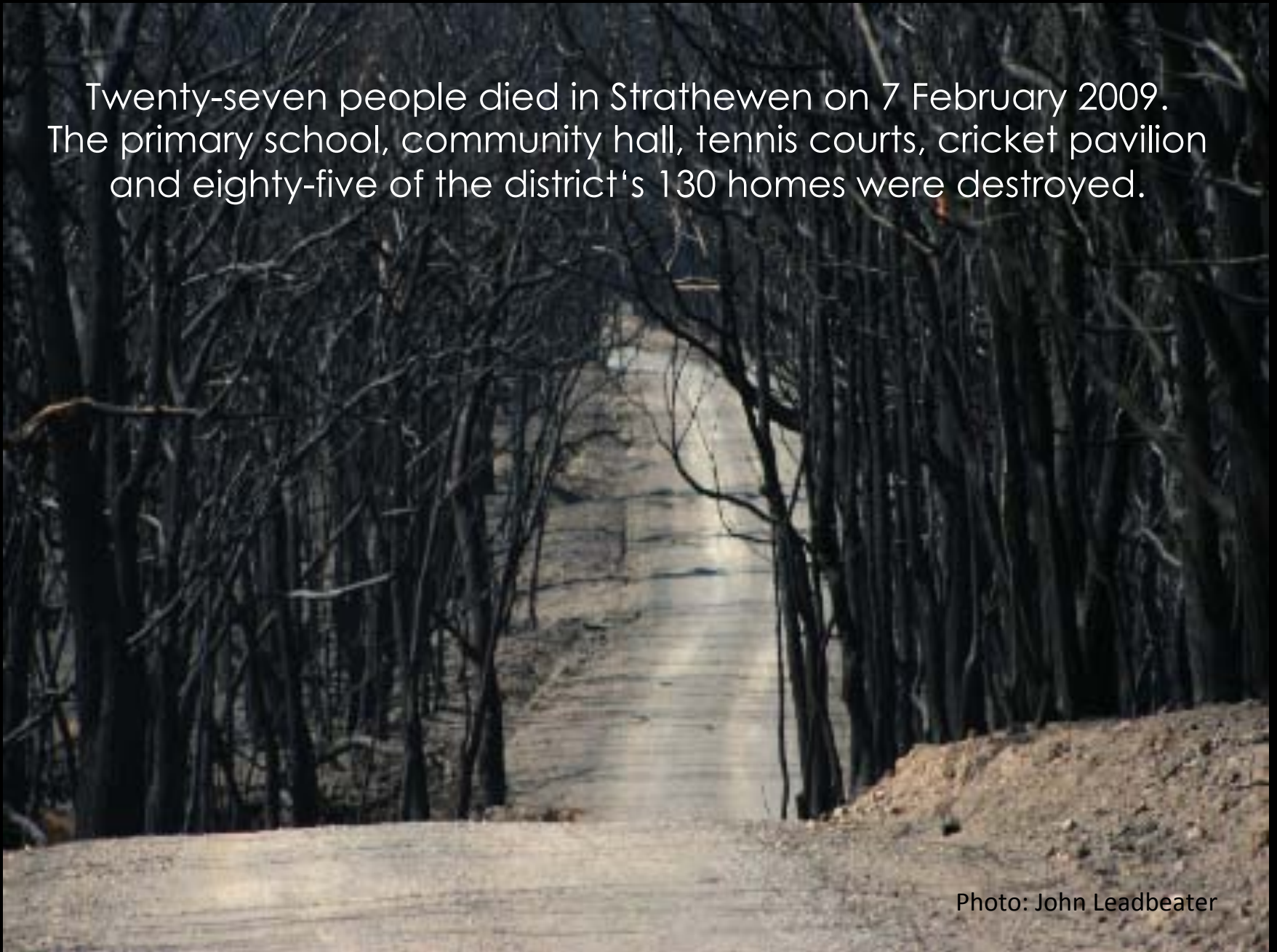


Photo: John Leadbeater





Renewin' Strathewen
Supporting the Recovery 

response & recovery emergency management **community safety** education training research response & recovery emergency management **community safety** education training research response & recovery emergency management

Volunteer



Winner



Strathewen Community Renewal Association Inc, Victoria

Renewin' Strathewen – A community led recovery after bushfire

The closely formed Strathewen Community Renewal Association, near the Kinglake Ranges north-east of Melbourne, has been responsible for coordinating and undertaking the planning and rebuilding process for their community which was devastated by the 2009 Victorian bushfires. The strong local feel of independence and self-reliance has been a major strength of their community. The Association gathered the community together for BBQs, discussion

evenings, forums and guest speaker events to heighten everyone's awareness about their neighbours – something that didn't exist before the disaster.

Malcolm Hackett,
Chair - Strathewen Community Renewal Association Inc
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Research Paper:

The role and function of community leadership in a post-disaster setting , including the establishment of community recovery committees

Strathewen and the work of the Strathewen Community Renewal Association as a case study

Data gathered through qualitative interviews with committee members, residents and recovery workers during 2010-2011

Research Findings:

Legitimate community leaders with the capacity to represent

An 'authorising' environment

Independent governance structure

Inclusivity – Accountability – Transparency

Communication – Consultation – Empowerment

Challenging the 'race to recover'

Things that start badly...

The work of renewal





Reflecting on Recovery – the crucial elements

Time

Leadership

Relationships

Local knowledge

Capacity

Communication

Celebrating the capability of even profoundly impacted communities to shape and drive their own recovery

Strathewen Community 
recovering together

Home | Strathewen Community Groups | Bushfire Recovery | We Remember | We Have learnt | Bushfire Safety

03 8910 1414



www.strathewen.vic.au

FEELER THAN YOU'D EVER WANT TO GET TO AN INTERESTING
END PLACE THAT YOU'LL FORGET YOU'RE PART OF ONE
- Michael Ondaatje, *The English Patient*


OFFICIAL SELECTION WITH PRIDE

THEN THE WIND CHANGED
Walkley Award Winner 2012




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Gentle
Profound
Ongoing
Inclusive
Strong
Independent
Effective
Resilient
Dignified
Courageous
Connected
Magnificent



Strathewen Community Bushfire Memorial

Recovery and Resilience



Recovery and
Systems Theory...

a new 'science'

Patterns of leadership and of authority in disaster impacted communities are very complex. Their complexity however, is usually misinterpreted as confusion and a panacea of strong [external] leadership is frequently offered as a solution without understanding the nature of the problem.

Dynes R. R. & Quarantelli E. L.
A Perspective on Disaster Planning (1972)

Stages of Grief





Recovery years = dog years...



Subsequent life events are experienced through the
'lens' of disaster recovery

Everyone is exhausted
and the challenges go on and on

Some practicalities...

Business and Community continuity

Help for community groups

Support for small business

Equity and transparency

Everyone is affected

Externally imposed timeframes

Disasters do not happen in a vacuum

Recovery to preparedness





Thank you

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