



WORKING TOGETHER IN RECOVERY

a practical guide for the
not-for-profit and public sectors



UNIVERSITY *of*
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BACKGROUND

The recovery phase of emergency management requires different agencies and organisations from the not-for-profit and public sectors to work together.

Recovery often lasts for months or years and can be a challenging environment to work in due to the sheer scale of the efforts involved.

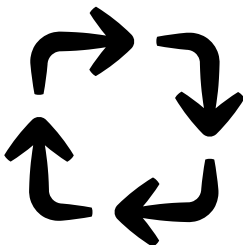
The Blake Report into the 2016 Tasmanian floods identified some challenges between the not-for-profit and public sectors working in the recovery period.

A project with the State Emergency Management Program titled,

Collaborating in emergency management: a guide for Tasmanian not-for-profit participation, sought to learn from those involved in the 2016 floods and provide advice how to enhance working relationships for future recovery efforts.

This guide is an output from the above project that was conducted by the University of Tasmania involving personnel from multiple organisations and agencies from the not-for-profit and public sectors.

The guide provides some practical advice for the not-for-profit and public sectors on how to enhance collaboration in Tasmanian recovery arrangements.



INTRODUCTION

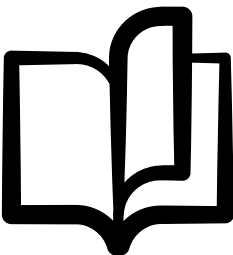
Working together in recovery: a practical guide for the not-for-profit and public sectors (2019) provides some practical information how the Tasmanian not-for-profit and public sectors can enhance collaboration during the recovery efforts.

The reason why the not-for-profit and public sectors collaborate in recovery is to benefit the affected communities.

Communities are at the very heart of any recovery efforts but often need assistance and guidance from the not-for-profit and public sectors. This requires a unified approach that is reliant on good working relationships.

Collaboration between agencies and organisations from different sectors can be challenging when working within temporary arrangements over a prolonged period. This guide is developed using research based on the learnings from those involved in the 2016 Tasmanian floods and provides a simple aide-memoire on how to enhance collaboration in recovery.

Underpinning this aide-memoire are three characteristics of collaboration that agencies and organisations can implement in recovery. Enhancing collaboration in recovery will contribute to strengthening disaster resilience.



■ HOW THIS GUIDE IS STRUCTURED

This guide identifies three characteristics of collaboration that personnel from the Tasmanian not-for-profit and public sectors can adopt in the recovery phase of emergency management (see Figure 1). This guide will provide an explanation of each characteristic and offer suggestions how it can be applied in the recovery efforts.

At the end of this guide is an aide-memoire providing questions to consider when collaborating in recovery that can serve as a prompt to both experienced practitioners and those new to emergency management.

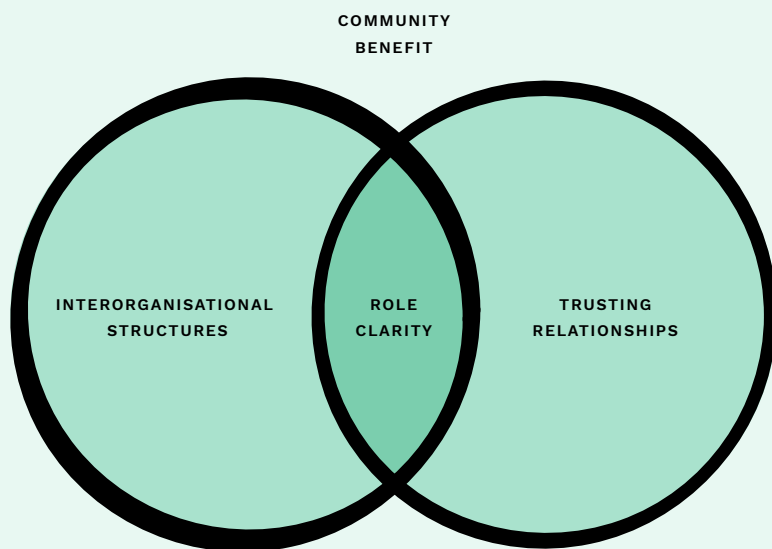


Figure 1. Characteristics of collaboration in recovery

INTER-ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURES

During the recovery many organisations and agencies will work together under a single and often temporary body or organisation.

In Tasmania at the state level, recovery activities will usually be coordinated by an event-specific body called a Recovery Taskforce or Unit which will be supported by various committees as required by the circumstances.

These temporary organisations provide overarching guidance and structures to those involved.

It is important that those involved have some understanding of the overarching documents that provide guidance on the recovery structures at the local, regional and state levels.

During the recovery phase, inter-organisational structures are used to communicate and share information.

There may be specific communication channels that you and your organisation or agency should use such as having a designated point of contact within other organisations and agencies that you are working with.

The sharing of timely information is critical in recovery. You need to be familiar with any structures to receive or provide information. This can be by word of mouth, written situation reports or via online platforms such as dedicated emergency management software like WebEOC.





■ SUGGESTIONS TO CONSIDER

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- Familiarise yourself with local, regional and state recovery plans and learn how your organisation fits into the overall recovery structure.
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- Familiarise yourself with your own organisation or agency's plans so you know how they complement the overarching recovery plan.
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- Understand how you and your organisation or agency is expected to communicate with other stakeholders during the recovery efforts.
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- Understand how you and your organisation or agency is expected to receive and provide information during the recovery efforts.

ROLE CLARITY

Every organisation and agency in the recovery phase will have a specific role. It is important that those involved know their own role and that of their organisation or agency.

Role clarity is important, so everyone understands their own and each other's capabilities and potential requirements.

Roles can be legislated and described in designated local, regional and state plans. Roles can also be documented informally in a memorandum of understanding (MOU) between organisations or agencies.

Role clarity is vital, so others can understand what you and therefore your organisation or agency can and are expected to perform in the recovery efforts. Equally important is an understanding of what you cannot do and informing other stakeholders of any potential limitations. This will help manage any unnecessary expectations.

Providing role clarity is also an important part of building trust quickly if you do not know someone and have never worked with them before.



■ SUGGESTIONS TO CONSIDER

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- Learn your role and that of your organisation or agency in the recovery phase by consulting internal documents or speaking to those with previous experience in this role.
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- Understand your organisation or agency's capabilities and importantly, any limitations in what you can offer.
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- Understand your role and that of your organisation or agency in local recovery arrangements by interacting with the relevant council.
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- If relevant, understand your role and that of your organisation or agency in regional and state recovery arrangements.
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- During the preparedness phase, inform other organisations or agencies of your role, capability and expectations. This will assist in managing any misaligned expectations and ensure alignment across agencies and organisations.

TRUSTING RELATIONSHIPS

Relationships are required for effective collaboration and are often built on trust. Trust between stakeholders from different organisations and agencies is often built up over time through working together previously.

However, it may not always be possible to build those relationships before a disaster. This is especially so in the recovery phase that may last for months or years. In these circumstances, personnel regularly involved and responsible for emergency management are often assisted by people that may have very limited involvement in this environment.

These people need to build trusting relationships quickly. This is a concept called swift trust and is reliant on two things. The first is role clarity as described on the previous page.

The second is the chance of future interaction and explaining that you will be the point of contact from your organisation or agency for certain matters. Importantly, you should inform the other stakeholders how long you will be in this role and whether it is hours, days or weeks.

Providing information that you will be involved in any future interaction can help build trusting relationships when you have had no prior interaction with this person.



■ SUGGESTIONS TO CONSIDER

- Try and establish pre-existing relationships in the preparedness phase through involvement in joint exercises, training, community events, meetings and committees with other stakeholders that will be involved in the recovery efforts.

- If you don't have an opportunity to build pre-existing relationships, think about considering swift trust.

- Provide a clear definition of your and your organisation or agency's role including capabilities.

- Explain how much future interaction you will have with that person over the course of the recovery efforts.

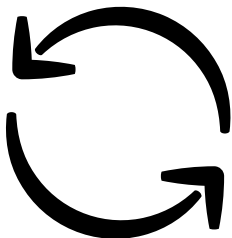
- Continue to enhance relationships after the recovery period by engaging in preparedness phase activities.

AIDE-MEMOIRE

An aide-memoire is like a checklist as it provides a summary of written prompts for you to remember. However, unlike a checklist, you do not have to answer the questions in any specific order.

You can also use whatever questions you see fit based on your previous experience. It is therefore just as relevant to those with extensive experience in emergency management as it is to newcomers.

The aide-memoire can also be used to identify areas for improvement. You are encouraged to explore ideas introduced in this guide and adopt the recommendations in the 'suggestions to consider' sections as needed.



No.	Question
1	Do you know your own role in your organisation or agency's recovery plan?
2	Do you know how your sector or organization fits into local, regional and state recovery plans?
3	Do you know what your organisation or agency's specific role is in the recovery efforts?
4	Have you made sure that other stakeholders are aware of your organisation or agency's exact role in the recovery efforts?
5	Have you informed other stakeholders who will be the point of contact for your organization or agency and how long the person will be in that role?

THE RECOVERY PARTNERS NETWORK

The Recovery Partners Network is facilitated by the Department of Premier and Cabinet. It brings together non-government and community organisations and Tasmanian Government agencies who support recovery efforts to build relationships and improve information sharing, collaboration and coordination.

The Recovery Partners Network shares information and discusses issues related to state-level recovery arrangements; aims to increase collaboration across member organisations to support capability development; and provides advice regarding Tasmanian Government relief and recovery policy development and planning activities.

The Network holds forums annually to bring together recovery partners.

The Network is open to all organisations who provide support or have an interest in relief and recovery services, programs and activities.

To be added to the Network's mailing list, please contact the Office of Security and Emergency Management on (03) 6232 7979 or recovery@dpac.tas.gov.au

