

Resilience Compendium: Strategies to Reduce Communities' Risk to Disasters

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Abstract : Objectives: The evolution of the Victorian Compendium of Community-Based Resilience Building Case Studies and its capacity to help communities implement activities that encourage adaptation to disaster risk reduction and promote community resilience in rural and urban locations provide this paper's objectives. Background: Between 2012 and 2019, community groups presented at the Monash University Disaster Resilience Initiative (MUDRI) 'Advancing Community Resilience Annual Forums', provided opportunities for communities to impart local resilience activities, how to solve challenges and share unforeseen learning and be considered for inclusion in the Compendium. A key tenet of the Compendium encourages compiling and sharing of grass-roots resilience building activities to help communities before, during, and after unexpected emergencies. The online Compendium provides free access for anyone wanting to help communities build expertise, reduce program duplication, and save valuable community resources. Identifying case study features across the emergency phases and analyzing critical success factors helps communities understand what worked and what did not work to achieve success and avoid known barriers. International exemplars inform the Compendium, which represents an Australian first and enhances Victorian community resilience initiatives. Emergency Management Victoria provided seed funding for the Compendium. MUDRI matched this support and continues to fund the project. A joint Steering Committee with broad-based user input and Human ethics approval guides its continued growth. Methods: A thematic analysis of the Compendium identified case study features, including critical success factors. Results: The Compendium comprises 38 case studies, representing all eight Victorian regions. Case studies addressed emergency phases, before (29), during (7), and after (17) events. Case studies addressed all hazards (23), bushfires (11), heat (2), fire safety (1), and house fires (1). Twenty case studies used a framework. Thirty received funding, of which nine received less than \$20,000 and five received more than \$100,000. Twenty-nine addressed a whole of community perspective. Case studies revealed unique and valuable learning in diverse settings. Critical success factors included strong governance; board support, leadership, and trust; partnerships; commitment, adaptability, and stamina; community-led initiatives. Other success factors included a paid facilitator and local government support; external funding, and celebrating success. Anecdotally, we are aware that community groups reference Compendium and that its value adds to community resilience planning. Discussion: The Compendium offers an innovative contribution to resilience research and practice. It augments the seven resilience characteristics to strengthen and encourage communities as outlined in the Statewide Community Resilience Framework for Emergency Management; brings together people from across sectors to deliver distinct, yet connected actions to strengthen resilience as a part of the Rockefeller funded Resilient Melbourne Strategy, and supports communities and economies to be resilient when a shock occurs as identified in the recently published Australian National Disaster Risk Reduction Framework. Each case study offers learning about connecting with community and how to increase their resilience to disaster risks and to keep their community safe from unexpected emergencies. Conclusion: The Compendium enables diverse communities to adopt or adapt proven resilience activities, thereby preserving valuable community resources and offers the opportunity to extend to a national or international Compendium.

Keywords : case study, community, compendium, disaster risk reduction, resilience

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