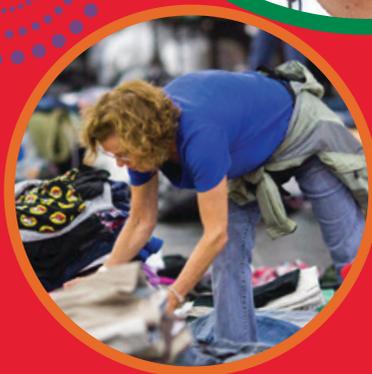
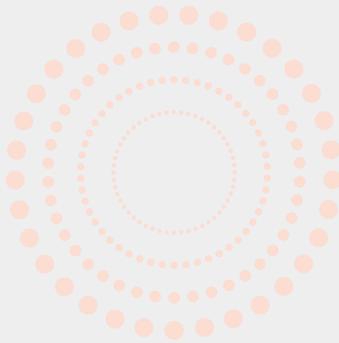


# Making it happen

A Volunteering Queensland project

Good practice in building local capability to manage  
spontaneous disaster volunteers





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# Making It Happen

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The *Building Local Capability to Manage Spontaneous Disaster Volunteers* project is a joint initiative of Volunteering Queensland, the Australian Government and the Queensland Government.

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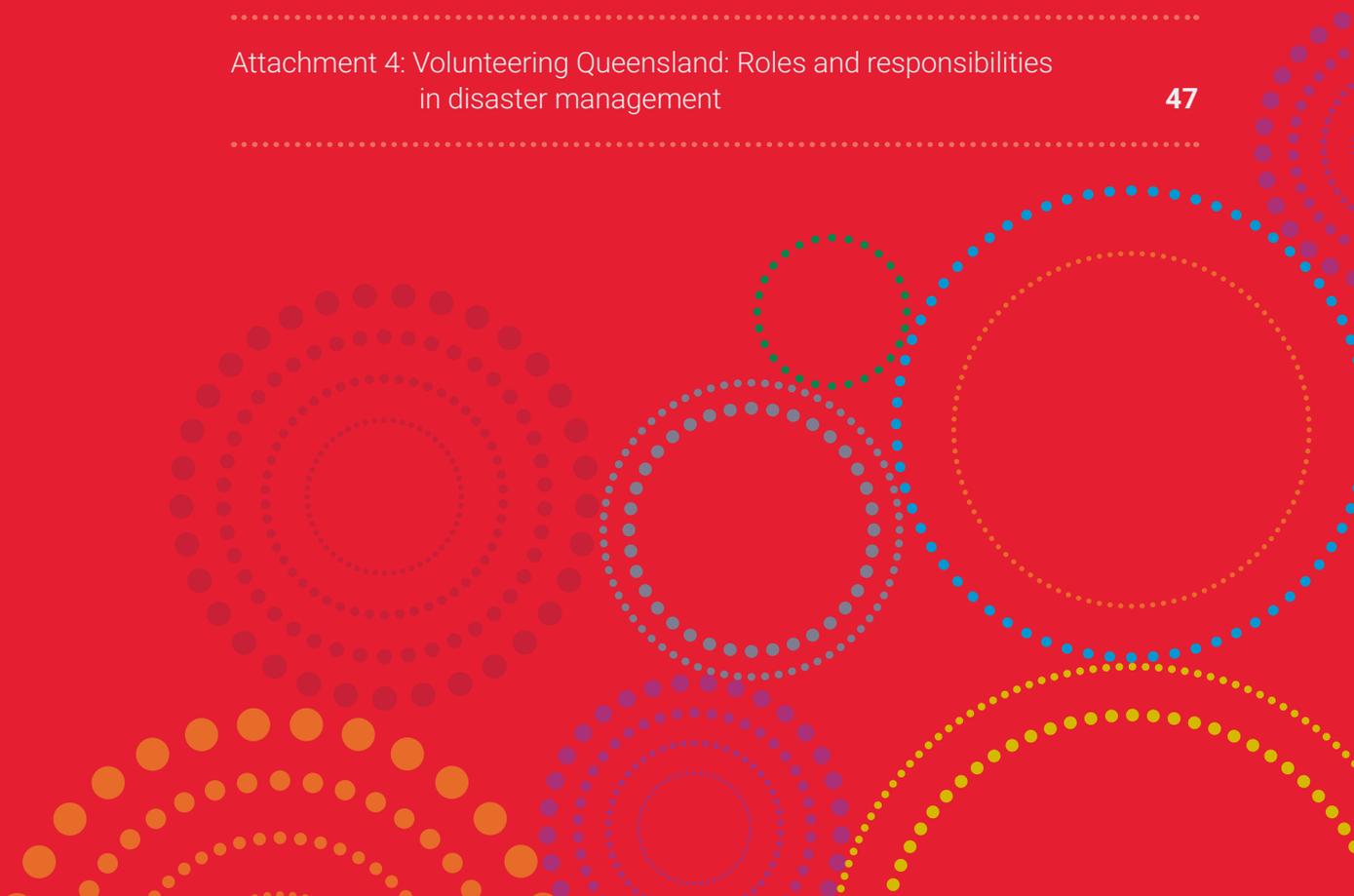
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## Making it Happen: Toolkit

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Volunteering Queensland has developed a variety of generic tools and templates to use when planning to utilise spontaneous disaster volunteers. These have been collected into a separate Toolkit which is associated with this report and includes:

- Resource 1:** Guidance and adherence to existing good practice standards, policies and plans
- Resource 2:** Managing spontaneous volunteers—insurance and liability considerations
- Resource 3:** Building capability survey
- Resource 4:** Summary of the training for team leaders and coordinators of spontaneous disaster volunteers
- Resource 5:** Sample sign on/off sheet
- Resource 6:** Induction/briefing of spontaneous disaster volunteers—points to consider
- Resource 7:** Sample SMEAC and form
- Resource 8:** Sample shift log
- Resource 9:** Debriefing spontaneous disaster volunteers—points to consider
- Resource 10:** Sample operational report format: SITREP
- Resource 11:** Sample memorandum of understanding
- Resource 12:** Sample MOU for council managers of spontaneous disaster volunteers



Summary

1

Findings of the Project better inform future practice, policy and planning.

---

### **Building local capability to manage spontaneous disaster volunteers**

When disasters occur, people offer their assistance to help affected communities. Coordinating and managing these offers of assistance including spontaneous volunteering can be challenging.

In the past while the activities of spontaneous disaster volunteers have produced positive results for the community, they have also at times unfortunately caused additional stress for communities, as well as significant challenges for the effective coordination of the response and recovery processes.

In recognition of the difficulties faced by Local Governments (LGs), Local Disaster Management Groups (LDMGs) and their partners in managing and coordinating spontaneous disaster volunteers, Volunteering Queensland developed the project; Building local capability to manage spontaneous disaster volunteers. From here on referred to as the *Project*.

The Project has been a joint initiative of Volunteering Queensland, the Australian Government and the Queensland Government with funding through the National Disaster Resilience Program (NDRP). It was implemented for a 12 month period and has benefited from the strong support of many stakeholders including LGs, State Government agencies and the community sector.

Most notably the LGs that contributed to this Project were:

- Livingstone Shire Council
  - Logan City Council
  - Tablelands Regional Council
  - Somerset Regional Council
  - Moreton Bay Regional Council
  - Redland City Council
- 

### **Utilising existing strengths and capturing learnings**

The Project adopted an 'action learning' approach which helped to develop creative and flexible strategies to identified problems.

This approach meant that the Project respected and incorporated previous work and implemented new activities while continuing to reflect and incorporate new learnings.

The models and approaches to manage spontaneous disaster volunteers were therefore being constantly modified to accommodate these new learnings.

---

### **The Project built upon the previous work of:**

- Volunteering Queensland's partnership with the Queensland Government to register and deploy spontaneous volunteers through its Emergency Volunteering Community Response to Extreme Weather (*EV CREW*) program. Volunteering Queensland has developed extensive experience and partnerships over the past 10 years through implementing the EV CREW program as well as community disaster resilience projects.

- The LGs involved in the Project that have extensive experience in disaster prevention, preparedness, response and recovery.
- Queensland Emergency Management agencies and community organisations in building disaster resilience.
- Australian Institute for Disaster Resilience (AIDR) 2017 – *Communities Responding to Disasters: Planning for Spontaneous Volunteers Handbook 12*.
- International and national standards for managing volunteers.

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### Spontaneous disaster volunteers

Nationally there has been considerable work done in further defining spontaneous disaster volunteers. Volunteering Queensland supported the development of the *Communities Responding to Disasters: Planning for Spontaneous Volunteers: Handbook 12* (AIDR) 2017.

The Project and this report have extensively utilised *Handbook 12* to further mature this work.

It was identified that the main focus for the Project and this report are those *spontaneous volunteers* described as individuals or groups who are not skilled or trained to perform specific roles in disasters and are usually not affiliated with a nominated emergency or other community organisation, but are motivated to help.

The Project and this report provide learnings as to how spontaneous disaster volunteers can be directed to work under the established Work, Health and Safety structure, insurance cover and protection of nominated community groups/agencies.

This does not include volunteers outside of this structured environment, such as people who know and trust each other; these being friends, family and neighbours helping each other. More details are explained within *Section 2 – Mobilisation approaches for voluntary assistance in disaster response and recovery*.

---

### Identifying challenges

It has been the management of 'on the ground' spontaneous disaster volunteers which has been the main issue for most LGs with a number of perceived barriers being noted, including:

- Breadth of roles and responsibilities of LGs.
- Identification of potential partners to manage spontaneous disaster volunteers.
- Insurance, legal responsibilities and accountabilities.
- Awareness of good practice and standards for managing spontaneous disaster volunteers.
- The need for effective communication and coordination.

## Evolving models

LGs initially were quite diverse in the types of models they chose for the management of spontaneous disaster volunteers. These included:

- **Model 1** (Figure 3.): LG led management of spontaneous disaster volunteers.
- **Model 2** (Figure 4.): appointing one key partner to have the responsibility of managing spontaneous disaster volunteers.
- **Model 3** (Figure 5.): using a consortium of partners. This consortium model has evolved as the most popular model which most LGs are adopting.

---

## Building local disaster resilience

All stakeholders understood the interrelationship between the role of local and linked social capital in building communities' disaster resilience.

Building local disaster resilience was foremost in the minds of all stakeholders; therefore all LGs were committed to utilising local resources first.

The Project recognised that LGs differ in their size, capacities, existing arrangements and flexibilities. Despite these differences, it was agreed across most localities that when support for a disaster affected community is required (for small to medium size disaster events) the existing local groups, clubs, community organisations and agencies will primarily provide that support.

It was acknowledged that for more significant impacts from disasters, additional external support may be required. All LGs were encouraged to identify a broader range of agencies/groups/organisations as potential partners to manage spontaneous disaster volunteers.

These agencies/groups/organisations were then surveyed to gain knowledge of their legal and insurance coverage, existing volunteer management practices and their capabilities and commitment to become a partner to manage spontaneous disaster volunteers.

From the range of surveys undertaken, it is noted that at this point of time, there is not one organisation that has demonstrated capacity to independently manage on-the-ground large scale operations. The Project team believes this is where a group of organisations and groups could come together to form a consortium to support the effective management and coordination of volunteers in a larger scale event.

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## Training for Team Leaders to manage spontaneous disaster volunteers

The training was developed by Volunteering Queensland and delivered in partnership with LGs, Queensland Fire and Emergency Services (QFES) and Australian Red Cross (QLD).

LGs and their potential partners who participated in this training have given excellent feedback reporting that the training included all topics required for Team Leaders to effectively manage spontaneous disaster volunteers. The training also created a strong commitment for cooperation and coordination between all potential partners within emerging models.

It also highlighted the role of Volunteering Queensland EV CREW for the recruitment and management of spontaneous disaster volunteers. See [Attachment 3 – Evaluation of all training for Team Leaders within the Project](#).

## Toolkit

Volunteering Queensland has developed a range of generic tools and templates that have been collected in a separate Toolkit, which accompanies this report.

These resources are designed to assist LGs and their partners in planning for and establishing shared good practices for the management and coordination of spontaneous disaster volunteers.

---

### **This report provides descriptions of the shared understanding about:**

- Types of community mobilisation following a disaster.
- Levels of management and coordination required for the differing community mobilisation types.
- Issues of insurance and legal liabilities that need to be addressed within all arrangements.
- Foundations for the development of locally led models for implementation by LG, LDMGs and their nominated partners which are applicable to other localities.
- Agencies that carry the accountabilities and responsibilities for managing and coordinating spontaneous disaster volunteers.
- Considerations, challenges and opportunities to take into account when planning to utilise spontaneous volunteers.

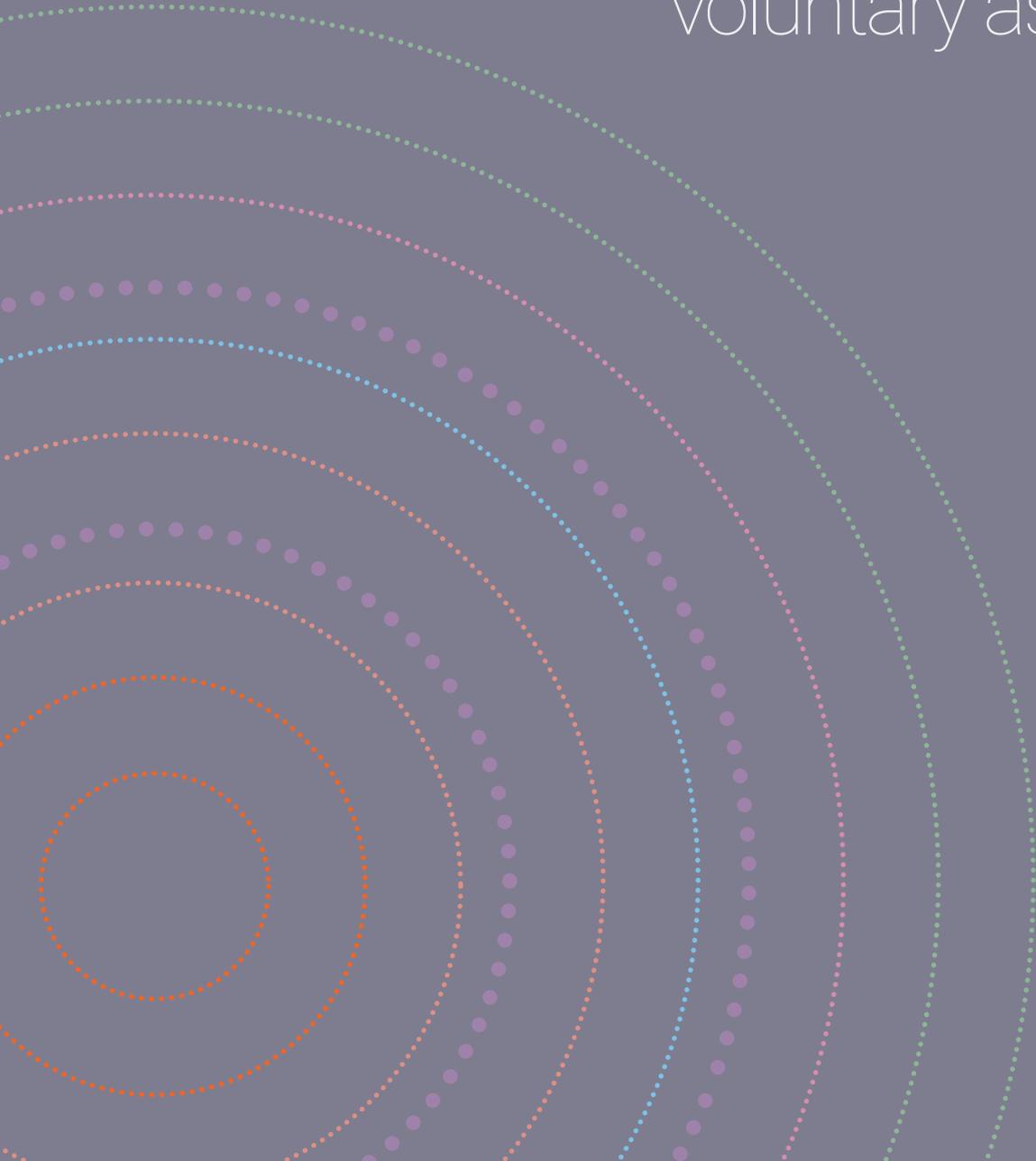
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### **The audience for this report and Toolkit includes all partners and stakeholders involved within the Project including:**

- LGs
- LDMGs
- District Disaster Management Groups (DDMGs)
- Human and Social Recovery Committees (H&SRCs)
- Queensland Government Emergency Management agencies
- Non-Government Organisations (NGOs)
- Alternative nominated community and corporate partners
- Queensland and Australian Government funders; and
- Stakeholders who are best placed to take on future roles in managing and coordinating spontaneous volunteers.

# 2

## Mobilisation approaches for voluntary assistance



## The different types of mobilisation approaches

The following diagram (*Figure 1.*) illustrates the different types of mobilisation approaches that can be taken by communities, organisations and clubs as well as emergent groups that may utilise spontaneous disaster volunteers.

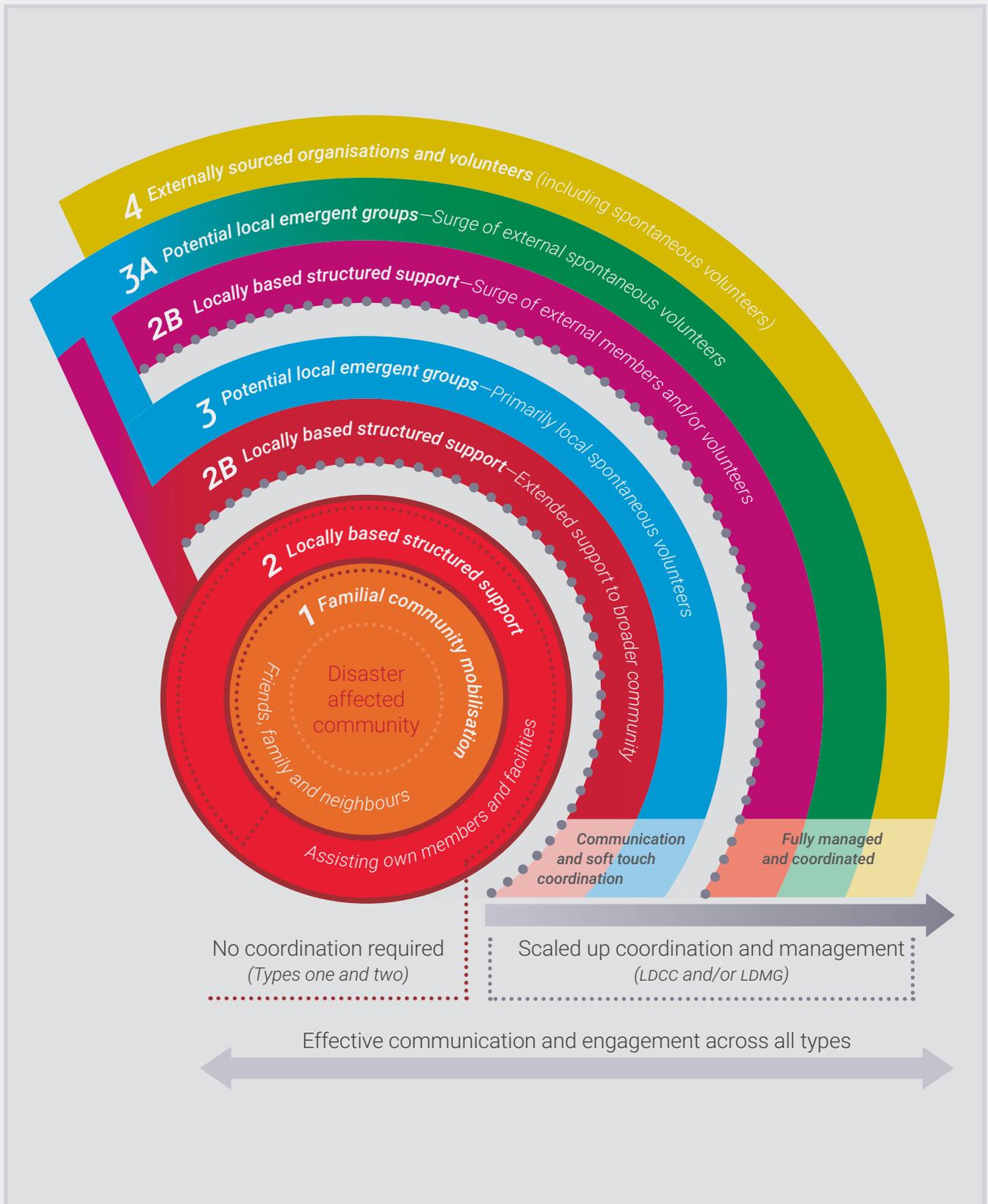
The diagram illustrates the need for effective communication, engagement and coordination for the different types of mobilisation to be successfully provided by the Local Disaster Coordination Centre (LDCC) and/or Local Disaster Management Group (LDMG). The proposed engagement and coordination levels provide a buffer of protection for disaster affected communities from well-meaning intent that may not suit the communities' needs.

---

## Understanding the types of mobilisation approaches

Community members are renowned for becoming first responders and providing assistance. The table below describes the various types of informal and formal, non-structured and structured approaches, as well as potential emergent groups for mobilising people and resources that can provide support for disaster affected communities.

The table also describes the levels of communication, engagement and coordination required for these different mobilisation approaches, which can include the use of spontaneous disaster volunteers.



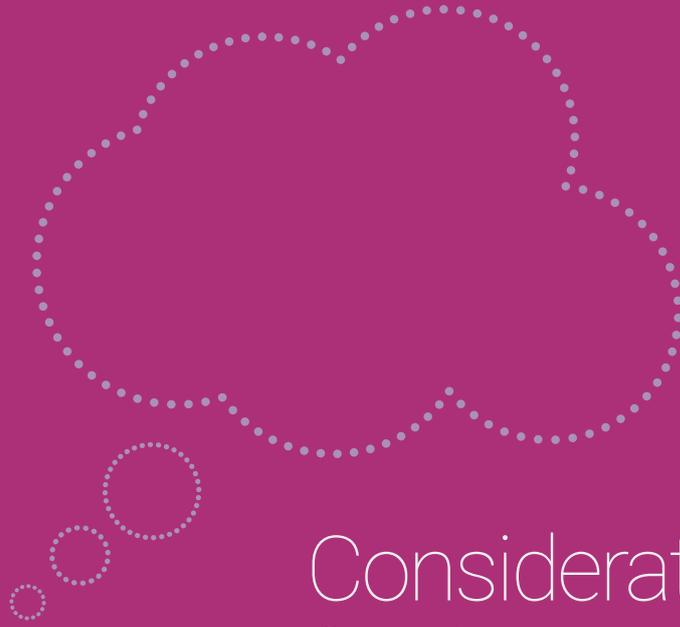
**Figure 1.** Diagram showing different types of mobilisation approaches

Type	Description	Communication, coordination and management
<p><b>1</b></p> <p>Familial community mobilisation—people helping people</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TYPE 1 is the social capital/connectedness that is the backbone of communities. This type does not require any coordination.</li> <li>• People who know and trust each other—friends, family and neighbours. Communities helping themselves, provision of mutual, informal assistance based upon interpersonal, social and local economic relationships.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Effective two way communication supported by LDCC and/or LDMG.</li> <li>• Does not require coordination and not informed by the priorities of the local disaster managers.</li> <li>• Primarily informed by existing community communication processes as well as spontaneous notice boards such as social media. These are most likely ‘under the radar’ of disaster managers.</li> </ul>
<p><b>2</b></p> <p>Locally based structured support that is well connected to the disaster affected community</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TYPE 2 and 2A represent existing local social connectedness/social bonds. This type does not require any coordination. Potentially not linked into, or aware of, the local disaster management arrangements.</li> <li>• This can consist of locally based community services, agencies, faith based groups, corporates, recreation and interest groups, as well as service and sporting clubs. This mobilisation consists of groups providing support to their own members and facilities based upon responsibilities and trusted connections.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Effective two way communication and engagement supported by LDCC and/or LDMG.</li> <li>• Does not require coordination and not informed by priorities of the local disaster managers.</li> <li>• Primarily informed by existing community communication processes as well as spontaneous notice boards such as social media. These are most likely ‘under the radar’ of disaster managers.</li> </ul>
<p><b>2a</b></p> <p>Locally based structured support (that is well connected to the disaster affected community) now extending that assistance to broader community residents</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When groups, agencies and clubs (as identified above in TYPE 2) start to extend their support beyond their own membership and facilities.</li> <li>• This may include the provision of support services to the wider disaster affected community who may know of these groups, agencies and clubs, but have not had previous contact with them. This support may include cold calling affected homes and properties and door knocks, to ascertain needs, distribution of goods and services.</li> <li>• Potentially not linked into, or aware of, the local disaster management arrangements. <i>Soft touch</i> coordination is required at this level to ensure disaster affected people are not receiving visits from multiple groups.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Effective two way communication and engagement, as well as soft touch coordination.</li> <li>• Provided through the LDCC and/or LDMG.</li> <li>• <i>Soft touch</i> coordination begins here to ensure LDCC and/or LDMG are aware of the extent of support being provided and the possible need for strategies for the prevention of duplication of efforts.</li> </ul>

Type	Description	Communication, coordination and management
<p><b>2b</b></p> <p>Locally based structured support that is well connected to the disaster affected community, utilising surge members and volunteers sourced externally from the affected community</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When groups, agencies or clubs (as identified above in TYPE 2) commence utilising surge members and/or volunteers, who are sourced externally from the disaster affected community, to provide assistance across the broader disaster affected community.</li> <li>• These may be volunteers from other clubs—for example Rotary members from other areas who are already integrated within Rotary. Or, locally based groups, agencies and clubs can (if they take on the legal and insurance responsibilities) incorporate spontaneous volunteers from within and/or external to the disaster affected community.</li> <li>• Potentially not linked into or aware of the local disaster management arrangements.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Effective two way communication and engagement as well as formally managed and coordinated.</li> <li>• Provided through the LDCC and/or LDMG.</li> <li>• Needs to be fully managed and coordinated.</li> </ul>
<p><b>3</b></p> <p>Potential local emergent groups</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Drawn from the local disaster affected area. Primarily may be known to each other, or drawn together from their shared experience. Spontaneous local volunteers become members of this new group. They are now assisting each other and forming into an informal group.</li> <li>• No previous structure or communication hierarchy would have been established so they need to form and learn how to function as a group. People in the group may be providing support just to each other—or beyond their group to the wider local community.</li> <li>• It could be assumed that an emergent group most likely will not have any legal/ incorporated status. Therefore they will not be able to take on the legal and insurance responsibilities for volunteers.</li> <li>• Not linked into, or aware of, the local disaster management arrangements.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Effective two way communication, engagement and also soft touch coordination.</li> <li>• Provided through the LDCC and/or LDMG.</li> <li>• Can be informed by impromptu social media groups.</li> </ul>

Type	Description	Communication, coordination and management
<p><b>3a</b></p> <p>Potential emergent groups: surge</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This may be a locally based emergent group, or may be a group that emerges externally to the disaster affected community.</li> <li>• Within this surge description the group is now utilising extensive numbers of spontaneous volunteers/members from internally and/or primarily externally to the community. In this type they are now broadly applying their support across the wider disaster affected community.</li> <li>• It could be assumed that an emergent group most likely will not have any legal/ incorporated status. The group will therefore not be able to take on the legal and insurance responsibilities for volunteers.</li> <li>• Not linked into, or aware of, the local disaster management arrangements.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Effective two way communication and engagement, as well as formally managed and coordinated. Provided through the LDCC and/or the LDMG.</li> <li>• Can be informed by impromptu social media groups.</li> <li>• May also develop media or quasi political profiles (both positive and adverse).</li> </ul>
<p><b>4</b></p> <p>Externally sourced organisations, corporates and volunteers (including spontaneous volunteers)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• These groups, agencies and people are usually external to the disaster affected communities; they may have some 'light' linkages to affected communities or no connections.</li> <li>• This can include the mobilisation of spontaneous volunteers from within the communities as well as from other locations. It may also include structured support from state, national and international organisations, groups, and clubs. The disaster affected communities may or may not know of these groups, agencies and clubs, and may not have had any previous contact with them.</li> <li>• Potentially not linked into, or aware of, the local disaster management arrangements.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Effective two way communication and engagement, as well as formally managed and coordinated.</li> <li>• Provided through the LDCC and/or LDMG.</li> </ul>

# 3



Considerations  
for the  
utilisation of  
spontaneous  
disaster  
volunteers



The following considerations were explored by the Project team, LGs and partners involved in the Project. These considerations also apply to the future work of other localities when developing locally based models and approaches.

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### **Current international, national and jurisdictional standards, policies and plans**

Volunteering Queensland has applied both international and national standards for managing volunteers for the implementation of the Project and development of this report and Toolkit.

This report recommends that all volunteering organisations incorporate best practice principles of volunteer management into their volunteering programs. For further information see *Resource 1: Guidance and adherence to existing good practice standards, policies and plans*.

---

### **The key role of Local Governments**

Local level capability is recognised as the frontline for disaster management, primarily due to the benefits of localised knowledge and networks.

As per the *Queensland Disaster Management Act 2003* (section 4A. C): “local governments should primarily be responsible for managing events in their local government areas”. This is provided through their LDMGs.

LGs have a broad breadth of roles and responsibilities across disaster management arrangements. LGs are identified as the primary agencies to take on the responsibility for ensuring the effective deployments of spontaneous disaster volunteers.

---

### **Initial concerns raised by local government authorities**

- In the early round of engagements for this Project LGs expressed concerns regarding:
- Their ability to undertake the role of managing spontaneous volunteers. At the time of a disaster their capacity can become stretched by the extent of competing roles and responsibilities they have to undertake.
- The complex legal, insurance and financial responsibilities to directly manage spontaneous disaster volunteers.
- The time required to plan and prepare for the deployment of spontaneous disaster volunteers given the low frequency of activation.
- The perception that the management and coordination of spontaneous disaster volunteers should be a state government responsibility.

## Volunteering Queensland's EV CREW processes for managing spontaneous disaster volunteers

Volunteering Queensland's EV CREW program:

- Partners with Queensland Government to register, activate, maintain and manage spontaneous volunteers through EV CREW.
- Provides a database and management system that supports the pre-registration, management and activation of prospective emergency volunteers at any time, if it is safe to do so.
- Places volunteers with LGs, government agencies, and/or NGOs requesting volunteer assistance.
- Provides information, advice, training, coordination and support to LGs, government agencies and/or NGOs to support their operations.
- Develops resources and delivers services to support community resilience, preparedness, response and recovery.

See [Attachment 5 – Volunteering Queensland: roles and responsibilities in disaster management](#).

**\*Please note:** *To enable Volunteering Queensland to manage its resources this process operates most effectively when pre-planning is undertaken with relevant LGs and ideally an MOU is in place. More information can be found later in this Section.*

EV CREW is currently utilised in the response and recovery for a variety of activities that can address issues across the recovery pillars of social, economic, and environment. Through registering and maintaining spontaneous volunteers in EV CREW, there are also opportunities to keep in contact with these volunteers and continue to utilise them in the longer term recovery and/or to encourage and promote them to join existing volunteer groups or organisations in their communities.

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## Insurance and legal responsibilities and accountabilities

Volunteering Queensland strongly recommends that all volunteer-involving organisations (VIOs) carry Public Liability Insurance and Personal Accident Cover for their volunteers. Insurance and legal liabilities can be complex. There were some general misunderstandings about the requirements to protect:

- Disaster affected community members, their property and livelihoods
- The spontaneous disaster volunteers
- The organisations/groups who are managing the spontaneous disaster volunteers

It was noted that in some previous deployments of spontaneous disaster volunteers it had been assumed all parties were covered for insurance and legal liabilities. However, upon further scrutiny it was discovered that not all parties had been protected.

It was also observed from engagements with LGs, that there were differences in interpretations regarding the LGs' insurance coverage.

A range of community services and groups assumed that the insurance coverage of LGs, was automatically extended to cover them when they were managing volunteers on behalf of LG. Upon advice from LGs insurers, this assumption was not always correct as it is dependent upon the LGs insurance arrangements.

LGs highlighted challenges to cover the insurance and legal responsibilities for the management of spontaneous disaster volunteers. Insurance providers gave guidance to LGs regarding the actions they should undertake to demonstrate reasonableness on their part in dealing with these volunteers.

These actions related to how the volunteers are appointed, managed and supervised, as well as how they were provided with relevant inductions and training including Work, Health and Safety practices. LGs have different approaches and flexibilities for how they implement these requirements of their insurers.

For spontaneous disaster volunteers to be covered by LGs insurance and legal liability policies, volunteers are required to be inducted into LGs Workplace Health and Safety and Code of Conduct as per staff requirements and within agreements. For most LGs this is extremely difficult to achieve at the time of a disaster event when they are experiencing restricted time and resources. It was noted however, that a number of LGs were reviewing and developing plans to support how they could take on the insurance and legal responsibility for managing spontaneous volunteers within their existing processes.

Given these issues, it was agreed that in most situations (especially in surge requirements) that spontaneous disaster volunteers could more readily be managed by community partners. These partners have demonstrated more flexibility in covering the required insurance and legal liabilities. For further information, refer to *Attachment 4 – Managing spontaneous volunteers – insurance and liability considerations*.

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## Effectively utilising spontaneous disaster volunteers

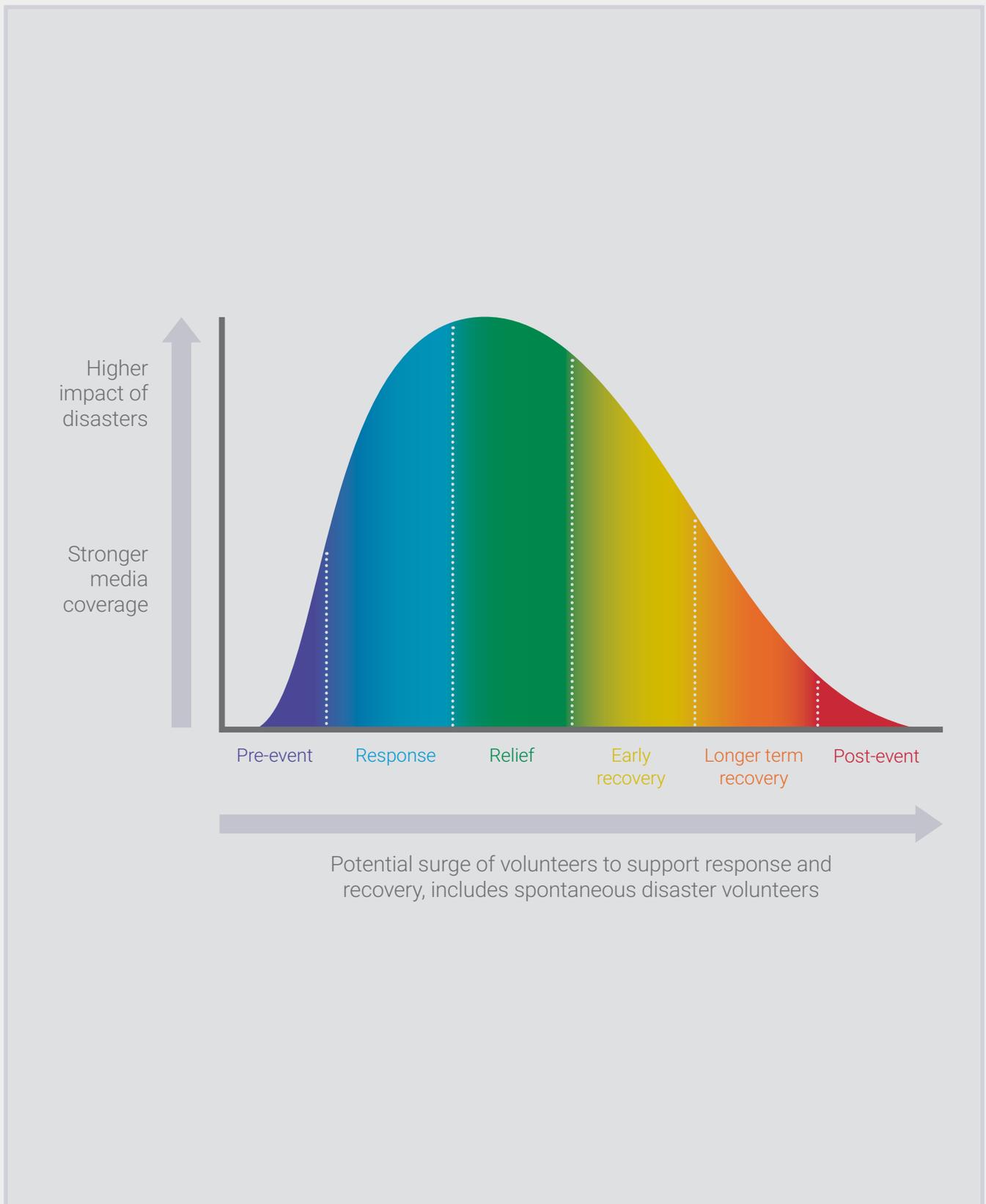
For this Project and development of this report it was recognised that volunteers can be found in many forms including: individuals, groups (existing structured as well as non-structured emergent groups), formal disaster management agencies, organisations, businesses, education providers, faith based groups and clubs, (including staff time offered by corporate and professional entities). More detail and language was constructed around these types of community mobilisation as explained within *Section 2 – Mobilisation approaches for voluntary assistance*.

As per the bell curve below (*Figure 2.*), for planning purposes it can be assumed that smaller, low scale events usually attract fewer spontaneous disaster volunteers whereas larger impact disasters attract higher numbers of spontaneous disaster volunteers.

Within the *Communities Responding to Disasters: Planning for Spontaneous Volunteers Handbook 12*, AIDR 2017, it states:

According to research and experience, the first week following a disaster is the period in which many spontaneous volunteers will seek to offer their support. This poses a challenge in that while there will be preliminary recovery activities underway, many people who have been impacted may not be ready to accept assistance from volunteers at this early stage. In addition, community groups and organisations who could accept volunteers may still be developing their respective responses and evaluating their existing capacity and needs. (p.37)

LGs and volunteering agencies/groups need to consider the above anticipated level of interest of spontaneous disaster volunteers into their planning, as well as continue to work with Volunteering Queensland EV CREW to be able to message and retain volunteer interest until a community is ready for that assistance.



**Figure 2.** Diagram showing potential surge of spontaneous volunteers

## Building disaster resilience

Strengthening communities' disaster resilience was strongly considered within the locally led planning process. This included initiatives for local agencies and groups to become managers of spontaneous disaster volunteers.

Like risk, resilience also has its origin in the social order... Social networks and social capital form the basis for resilient response and recovery but those advantages are often in short supply within vulnerable populations. When disaster strikes, resilient responses reflect the capacity for creativity and innovation, but that capacity can be thwarted when groups lack resources or are unable to act.

Tierney, K.J. (2014) *The social roots of risk: producing disasters, promoting resilience* (p. 227, SUP)

Therefore local groups/agencies were viewed as most relevant to manage spontaneous disaster volunteers, however some had limitations of inadequate insurance and legal coverage that could prevent their participation. Linking these local groups with larger groups that have the required coverage could alleviate that issue (linking social capital).

It was acknowledged that when more significant impacts from disasters occur, the existing community agencies, clubs etc. may require further support and coordination, and that additional external support may also be required.

Partnerships with a range of larger and/or external support agencies (to provide a heightened level of community support) would therefore be beneficial to establish, either with LGs and/or with the locally based community services/groups. LGs involved in this project were encouraged to explore a broad range of partnerships to support communities experiencing more significant impacts from disasters. Refer to *Level 2, Mobilisation Approaches* table.

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## Survey on the capabilities of potential partners

Following the identification of partners, a survey was developed. All potential organisations/groups were surveyed and mapped to ascertain their insurance and legal capabilities, as well as their willingness to take on the management of spontaneous disaster volunteers. For more details please refer to *Attachment 1 – Summary of surveys of organisations on their capabilities to manage spontaneous disaster volunteers* and the *Making it Happen Toolkit: Resource 3 – Building capability survey*. These surveys were shared with all LGs for their consideration.

---

## Emerging Models

All three models outlined in this report have both strengths and challenges according to their location and the communities' capabilities. These models are primarily aiming to establish relationships with agencies, organisations and groups that have the capacity to take on the role of managing spontaneous disaster volunteers.

LGs initially were diverse in the types of models they chose for the management of spontaneous disaster volunteers.

The emerging three different models are described in the diagrams following this section. See also *Attachment 2 – Details of the evolving models with explanation of the accountabilities and responsibilities*.

Defining these models does not limit the opportunities of LGs to further modify them, but rather provides a stronger shared understanding to prompt further considerations. It is expected that these models will further evolve and change.

Although there are differences between the emerging models across the seven Project localities, there are also commonalities, similar options and a variety of choices to consider when looking to work with potential partners and larger organisations.

While a number of LGs initially preferred MODEL 1 (*Figure 3.*) and MODEL 2 (*Figure 4.*), most LGs in the Project have now moved to MODEL 3 (*Figure 5.*). This is a consortium model with a broader suite of partners.

---

## Sustainability of models

A key concern for all LGs has been their ability to sustain the emerging models and approaches.

It was recognised that LGs have varying levels of capabilities to maintain their emerging models and arrangements. Therefore, it was preferable if organisations nominated as potential partners had a regular role outside of disaster response, i.e. longer term recovery, resilience, or community events, which could be extended during disaster events. Their purpose to exist was therefore based upon their usual core role.

It was believed that if agencies or groups only exist to undertake a role at the time of disasters, and are not utilised frequently, their interest, skills and abilities may diminish quickly over time. When a version of MODEL 1 (*Figure 3.*) was developed as a standalone community response (Redland City Council 'Community Champions') it was acknowledged by LG and Australian Red Cross (QLD) that continual involvement with this group of volunteers was necessary to keep them engaged and motivated.

This locality based model is suitable for unique communities and geographic locations, such as island communities separated by water from the mainland and who can experience time delays for additional services to reach them. For smaller LGs with fewer resources, this model may not be sustainable.

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## The costs of managing spontaneous disaster volunteers

It is frequently acknowledged that the act of volunteering and the assistance and support provided by volunteers is free and contributes significantly to communities, however there is limited acknowledgement that the management of volunteers comes at a cost to VIOs.

While the act of volunteering is given freely and without financial gain to the volunteer, this does not diminish the responsibilities or accountabilities a VIO has to its volunteers and to the people their volunteers are assisting.

Similar to the ongoing management of paid staff, the ability for an organisation to ensure its volunteers can undertake their activities in a safe and supported environment, is an ongoing cost.

Across this project it was noted that most organisations and groups mapped for the management of spontaneous disaster volunteers advised that they had the capacity to undertake this work within their existing roles. Regardless of this capacity, they also required assistance at the time of an event to support the work being undertaken.

This included provision of resources ranging from transport for volunteers, to provision of equipment and as PPE required. The ability to be able to recoup expenses incurred by the organisation that for the role undertaken on the LGs behalf was also required. It is acknowledged that LGs have the capacity to recoup these funds through NDRRA.

One organisation identified ongoing costs involved to ensure they had the capacity to meet their requirements formed under any agreement. They proposed an annual fee to cover their ongoing capacity to recruit, retain, train and exercise their Team Leaders for the management of spontaneous volunteers.

The engagement of an organisation and the provision of an annual fee for 'just in case' activities was not viewed as a viable option for many LGs. One LG highlighted that if they were to negotiate such an arrangement they would need that organisation to undertake a broader scope of activities. It was suggested that these broader activities could have a focus on disaster preparedness and longer term recovery activities within the LG. LGs could potentially have to undertake a tender process to comply with their procurement requirements.

It was understood that there is nil capacity for associated costs connected to this preparatory work to be recouped through NDRRA. LGs would be required to fund this work, which could compete with other council budget priorities.

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## Training for Team Leaders

It was recognised early in the Project that training for Team Leaders was required to expand the skills of all partners in managing spontaneous disaster volunteers on the ground.

This training was developed by Volunteering Queensland and delivered in partnership with LGs, QFES and Australian Red Cross (QLD), to a variety of partners in both rural and urban settings.

Participating organisations provided excellent feedback on the training indicating that the information included (regarding local and state level Disaster Management arrangements in Queensland) ensured they gained excellent knowledge of how their role as Team Leaders contributed to the overall response and recovery of affected individuals and communities.

The training was developed to ensure it was relevant to the diversity of stakeholders, and could be delivered flexibly as a group of modules. The modules catered for the differing levels of skill, knowledge and experience of the participants, and acknowledged that people are often time poor. For further description refer to the *Making it Happen Toolkit: Resource 4 – Summary of the training for Team Leaders of spontaneous disaster volunteers*.

The training at each location entailed all partners participating in the consortium model to attend combined training. This has resulted in establishing stronger levels of collaboration, a greater understanding and respect of their complimentary roles, and an understanding that they will be required to depend upon and support each other when activated.

It also established a stronger understanding of the need for all partners to be coordinated through the LDCC, especially those agencies and groups which had prior limited knowledge of the local emergency management arrangements.

Many of these agencies and groups had (prior to the training) demonstrated a strong motivation to “get out there and fix things” for disaster affected communities. The training assisted them in further understanding that their LGs, LDCCs and/or LDMGs will activate them according to the communities’ needs. And, that all activations will be based on a ‘pull in’ model (using the strengths, skills and availability of relevant volunteers) to address identified communities’ needs, not from an agency’s motivation to provide services. See [Attachment 3 – Evaluation of training for Team leaders within the Project](#).

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### **Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs)**

Dependent upon the models finally selected, it is recommended that MOUs be established between:

- LGs and their nominated partners to manage spontaneous disaster volunteers;
- LGs and Volunteering Queensland EV CREW program; as well as
- Some larger organisations identified within the Project (who are committed to managing spontaneous disaster volunteers) with Volunteering Queensland EV CREW.

# 4

Emergence of  
three models



# Model 1

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Managed by a LG, which is accountable and responsible for the management and coordination of spontaneous disaster volunteers.

Some Project LGs are considering taking on the role to self-manage, be responsible and accountable for the management of spontaneous disaster volunteers. Given the differences between LGs, as well as the potential size of LDCCs for larger disaster events, the placement of the Coordinator may change. The Coordinator's role may be placed within the LDCC, or may be external to the LDCC and have direct communication with a liaison role within the LDCC.

As an example for MODEL 1 (*Figure 3.*): Redland City Council has implemented a Community Champions model of volunteers across the islands off the coast of the Redland City Council region. These volunteers were nominated by existing community groups across the islands and have accepted roles to manage the Evacuation Centres as Red Cross Volunteers and/or as Team Leaders to manage teams of spontaneous disaster volunteers in clean up duties as Redland City Council volunteers. These Community Champions as Team Leaders will need to be incorporated in LG insurance and legal liability, as well as the teams of spontaneous disaster volunteers they manage at the time of a disaster.

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## Duties: Model 1

	Lead role
	Coordination
	Registering, referring and holding volunteers
	Team leader's managing team of volunteers



**Figure 3.** Model 1. Diagram shows reporting and communication lines.

# Model 2

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Managed by one key nominated agency or organisation, which is then accountable and responsible for the management and coordination of spontaneous disaster volunteers.

Some Project LGs are selecting an 'outsource' model whereby they are nominating a local community agency, or larger external key organisation, that can take on the role to manage, and be responsible and accountable for the management of spontaneous disaster volunteers.

The team leaders would be incorporated into this key agency's or organisation's legal and insurance liabilities; as will the teams of spontaneous volunteers activated to work with them at the time of a disaster.

Given the differences between LGs, as well as the potential size of LDCCs for larger disaster events, the placement of the Coordinator may change. The Coordinator's role may be placed within the LDCC, or may be external to the LDCC and have direct communication with a liaison role within the LDCC.

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## Duties: Model 2

Lead role
Coordination
Responsible and accountable for spontaneous volunteers
Registering, referring and holding volunteers
Team leader's managing team of volunteers



**Figure 4.** Model 2. Diagram shows reporting and communication lines.

# Model 3

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Managed by a consortium of agencies or organisations that are accountable and responsible for the management of spontaneous disaster volunteers.

The diagram shows reporting and communication lines.

Several Project LGs are engaging a consortium of local agencies. These consortia may work in complement with larger organisations, and can be pulled in if required according to communities' needs. The Team Leaders would be incorporated into their agency's or organisation's insurance and legal liabilities, as will the teams of spontaneous volunteers at the time of a disaster.

Coordinators for spontaneous volunteers may be selected from the LGs or from key nominated organisations. It is recommended that LGs meet with their consortia to decide on the coordination processes and the selection of Coordinators. Through agreement it could be decided that a consortium become a subcommittee of the LDMG.

Given the differences between LGs, as well as the potential size of LDCCs for larger disaster events, the placement of the Coordinator may change. The Coordinator's role may be placed within the LDCC, or may be external to the LDCC and have direct communication with a liaison role within the LDCC.

For more details on the models, refer to *Attachment 2 – Details of the evolving models with explanation of the accountabilities and responsibilities*.

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## Duties: Model 3

Lead role
Coordination
Responsible and accountable for spontaneous volunteers
Registering, referring and holding volunteers
Team leader's managing team of volunteers



**Figure 5.** Model 3. Diagram shows reporting and communication lines.

The background is a solid yellow color. On the left side, there is a vertical dotted line that forms part of a grid. Several horizontal dotted lines cross this vertical line, creating a series of rectangular boxes. The number '5' is positioned within the second box from the top. In the bottom right corner, there are several overlapping circles of varying sizes, each composed of a dotted line. The circles are colored in shades of pink, light blue, and purple. The overall design is clean and modern, with a focus on geometric patterns and a bright color palette.

# 5

Next steps  
to further build local  
capabilities to  
manage spontaneous  
disaster volunteers

## Working in partnership

Volunteering Queensland is releasing this report to provide support for LGs, LDMGs and partners in further progressing arrangements to manage spontaneous disaster volunteers. This report further complements the work being undertaken by AIDR for the *Communities Responding to Disasters: Planning for Spontaneous Volunteers: Handbook 12*, (AIDR) 2017.

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## Considerations for LGs and LDMGs in continuing the development of models and approaches

It is recommended that LGs and their LDMGs ensure they have a shared understanding of the proposed models being planned and the resulting implications for the accountabilities, responsibilities and sustainability of these models for managing spontaneous disaster volunteers.

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## Building a state-wide consortium

Volunteering Queensland has been working to further establish a strong, collaborative approach between partners. On a state-wide basis Volunteering Queensland can assist partners to function within a collaborative model from the ground up. This can involve developing more formal relationships between existing partners and the Volunteering Queensland EV CREW program.

Volunteering Queensland will also aim to work with all participating local, state and/or national level partners, to operate as a state consortium for the management of spontaneous disaster volunteers. This is proposed to be a similar model to the successfully implemented model within the USA: [nvoad.org](http://nvoad.org)

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## Further promotion of this work

Volunteering Queensland sees great value in further developing this work under the EV CREW program by continuing to seek funding and/or fee for service arrangements, to further support LGs to establish effective locally based models for the effective engagement and management of spontaneous disaster volunteers.

Volunteering Queensland notes that there are untapped opportunities to further utilise EV CREW to support disaster preparedness/resilience building activities. Volunteering Queensland will continue to encourage partners to link into and utilise pre-registered and event specific EV CREW volunteers for this purpose.

### Subject to funding:

- Volunteering Queensland can continue to promote the mapping (through an agreed survey) of potential partners to manage volunteers as nominated by LGs.
- Following LGs identifying their partners, these groups and organisations can then be provided with combined training to support them to manage spontaneous disaster volunteers.

## EV CREW program

This NDRP Project has initiated several valuable and strong partnerships with the targeted LGs and their implementing partners. This has been achieved by further clarifying the limited and often inaccurate perceptions of the EV CREW program and exploring the potential options and models for managing spontaneous disaster volunteers.

Pending funding, and/or fee for service agreements, Volunteering Queensland can continue to work across a broad range of LGs to change these perceptions and further establish processes to effectively recruit, engage, deploy and manage spontaneous disaster volunteers at times of need pre, during and post disasters.

Volunteering Queensland has established arrangements with several other State and Territory Peak Volunteering Bodies for the use of and provision of training and support for their use of the EV CREW program.

Continued further training, and the offer to support these formal and recognised leaders and providers, in the pre-registration, engagement, deployment and management of spontaneous disaster volunteers will be continued.

Volunteering Queensland will continue to advocate for:

- Recovery of costs incurred by a recognised VIO in the engagement, deployment and management of spontaneous volunteers in a disaster.
- The inclusion of costs for volunteer mobilisation (to work across the medium to longer term recovery) within future funding applications, including Cat. C NDRRA Community Development applications.

For further details refer to *Attachment 5 – Volunteering Queensland: roles and responsibilities in disaster management*.

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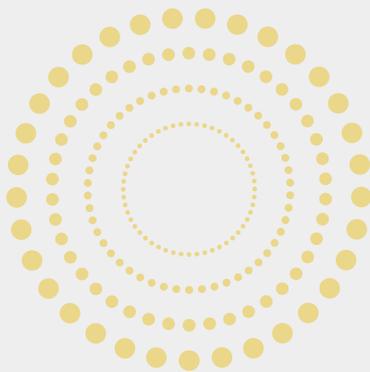
## Monitoring and evaluation

Volunteering Queensland will seek to establish monitoring and evaluation processes by developing relationships between tertiary providers with:

- EV CREW program
- LGs
- Implementing partners; and
- LDMGs

The monitoring and evaluation process will involve the disaster affected communities, to assess the effectiveness of the support provided by spontaneous disaster volunteers following a disaster. This process will also engage with the spontaneous volunteers through the EV CREW program, to assess their experiences. Furthermore, monitoring and evaluation should include the organisations and groups that carry responsibilities on the ground.

Through this monitoring and evaluation process, LGs can gauge if communities are receiving the support required and if the models are sustainable.



# Summary of surveys of organisations on their capabilities to manage spontaneous disaster volunteers



## Considerations

Volunteering Queensland though this Project worked closely with local governments (LGs) to assist them to identify which organisations and/or groups are most suitable and capable to take on future roles in managing spontaneous disaster volunteers.

As a result of ongoing engagement with the LGs, it has been evident that they all have a strong commitment to utilise local groups and agencies as much as possible in the first instance, which is in keeping with the Queensland Resilience Strategy.

A key concern for all LGs is their ability to establish their preferred models and approaches to address community needs in small, to more significant disaster events, and to maintain these arrangements into the future.

LGs recognised that they have varying levels of capabilities to maintain their preferred arrangements into the future. Therefore it was considered that partners nominated for the roles to manage spontaneous disaster volunteers need to have an ongoing reason to exist, and that this disaster role is an adjunct and extension to their existence. It was believed that if nominated partners (agencies or groups) only exist to undertake a specific role in disasters, and not utilised frequently, their skills and abilities will diminish quickly over time.

LGs considered a variety of larger organisations/groups to potentially establish partnerships with (for more significant disaster events) noting that these groups may have limited connections to the local communities. It was understood that these additional partners will not negate nor replace the role of local agencies/organisations. They could become complementary partners as a component in a suite of partnerships to engage and use in more significant disaster events.

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## Process

Following LGs identifying groups/organisations, etc. as potential partners, a survey was developed to create a similar comparison of these organisations and/or groups. The template for this survey is included in the *Making it Happen Toolkit: Resource 3 – Building capability survey*.

The project team conducted a survey of these organisations/groups to map their insurance and legal liability coverage, their ability to undertake the management of spontaneous disaster volunteers, identify the focus of their proposed work, as well as their willingness to participate as a key partner with LGs within the disaster management arrangements. The results of the surveys were shared with all LGs.

The majority of the larger nominated partners fitted within TYPE 4 mobilisation approach identified as: *Externally sourced organisations, corporates and volunteers (which can include spontaneous disaster volunteers)*.

## Summary of surveys of organisations to date

It was noted that a number of these locally nominated organisations also have the capacity to support other communities across the state.

Some of the originally nominated larger organisations/groups removed themselves from further consideration, or were not able to commit. In some cases, these organisations were so disparate in their operations across Queensland and/or Australia that it would have been impossible within the scope of this Project to reach agreements and include them as key partners.

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### The surveys identified that:

- There are a range of organisations that have the expertise, capacities and willingness in certain locations to take up roles related to the management of spontaneous disaster volunteers.
- The understanding of issues such as insurance, risk management, disaster management arrangements, volunteer management, self-care of volunteers and other accountabilities varies across these organisations.
- While different organisations have different strengths, not one organisation has demonstrated greater capacity over another to support the management of spontaneous disaster volunteers.
- Organisations have acknowledged that there are costs associated with ensuring that their organisation is ready to support the management of spontaneous disaster volunteers. Volunteer management practices such as maintaining adequate levels of insurance, regular training and ongoing recruitment of team leaders were acknowledged as an integral part of readiness for their organisation to undertake work in this area.
- Although organisations can demonstrate their management expertise and capacities across a number of locations, they do not have the ability to respond to larger multiple events or have a presence across a broader range of locations across the state.
- At this point of time, no organisation can demonstrate the presence, connections or capabilities across Queensland to be nominated as a standalone able to respond to larger multiple events, or to aspire to be a state-wide model.

Based on the above findings, the Project worked from a local level analysis to develop the most appropriate partnerships and models to suit each LG, with a particular focus on those that could be sustainable beyond the completion of the Project.

Models are designed to directly link into Volunteering Queensland's EV CREW program, which can provide registered volunteers to nominated organisations appointed to manage clean-up and recovery activities after a disaster. These agreed organisations will take on full responsibility to manage, induct, supervise and insure the spontaneous disaster volunteers.

# Details of the three models with explanation of the accountabilities and responsibilities



The tables below explain the three emergent models. These models outline where the accountability and responsibilities are held for managing and coordinating spontaneous disaster volunteers. Within the Project and this report, the emphasis is on spontaneous disaster volunteers who can be directed to work with a LG and/or agency/group/club etc. It is important to note that liability applies to whichever group takes on the responsibility and accountability for managing spontaneous disaster volunteers. It is also worth noting that the issue of liability continues to exist (and is not covered within these arrangements) for 'random volunteers' not working within any organisation.

It is recognised that all three Models can be equally applicable to different communities and locations.

Examples	Who owns insurance and liability	Who manages and coordinates
<p><b>Model 1</b> (Figure 3.)            Managed by LG, which is accountable and responsible for the management of spontaneous disaster volunteers.</p>		
<p><i>Description</i>            LG managed program. Managers/Team Leaders of spontaneous volunteers are staff of LG.</p>		
<p>Existing LG staff are trained prior to the disaster event as team leaders for the management and coordination of spontaneous disaster volunteers.</p> <p>These staff then undertake key roles within the response and recovery process to manage and coordinate spontaneous volunteers.</p>	<p>LG</p>	<p>LG</p> <p>LDCC and/or LDMG to guide decisions regarding the activation, messages and priority areas for volunteer engagement.</p>
<p><i>Description</i>            Managers/Team Leaders of spontaneous volunteers are existing volunteers of LG. Model may be a mixture of staff and existing volunteers of LG.</p>		
<p>Many LGs have identified they have existing volunteers across portfolios within LG, such as within libraries, parks and gardens, etc. These volunteers are already inducted into LG for workplace Health and Safety, Code of Conduct, etc., so are already covered under LGs insurance policies.</p> <p>Existing LG volunteers are trained prior to the disaster event as team leaders for the management and coordination of spontaneous volunteers. These volunteers then undertake key roles within the response and recovery process to manage and coordinate spontaneous volunteers.</p>	<p>LG</p>	<p>LG</p> <p>LDCC and/or LDMG to guide decisions regarding the activation, messages and priority areas for volunteer engagement.</p>

Examples	Who owns insurance and liability	Who manages and coordinates
<p><i>Description</i> Recruitment of volunteers—e.g. ‘Community Champions’.</p>		
<p>Similar to existing LG volunteers model—key community leaders can be recruited to undertake the role of managers of spontaneous volunteers.</p> <p>Trained as team leaders prior to the disaster event in management of spontaneous volunteers.</p>	<p>LG</p>	<p>LG</p> <p>LDCC and/or LDMG to guide decisions regarding the activation, messages and priority areas for volunteer engagement.</p>

## Model 2 (Figure 4.)

Managed by one key nominated agency/organisation. This agency/organisation is accountable and responsible for the management and coordination of spontaneous disaster volunteers.

### *Description*

Local based or affiliated community group/organisation to take responsibility for and manage the spontaneous disaster volunteer program. Staff/volunteers of the nominated organisation/group manage/coordinate the activities of the spontaneous disaster volunteers.

<p>Small, medium or large locally based organisation/group. Undertakes role of managing and coordinating spontaneous volunteers within the response and recovery process.</p> <p>Managers of spontaneous volunteers would be volunteers or staff of that organisation/group.</p> <p>Capacity to manage scale of event will be reliant on size of organisation and access to staff/volunteer/membership.</p> <p>A variety of community groups and/or organisations have been considered, e.g:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Neighbourhood Centres—capacity to manage small scale events up to 200 volunteers. May have limited connections to other communities to draw on additional trained workforce.</li> <li>• Local faith-based organisations—ability to meet needs of small scale events. Can potentially draw on neighbouring congregations for additional team leaders to manage medium scale event.</li> <li>• Locally based organisations or service clubs (Lions, Rotary) that have strong linkages to other organisations at a local, state wide/national level to support large scale events. Can readily pull additional staff to suit surge requirements.</li> </ul>	<p>The organisation and/or group managing the volunteers.</p> <p>Similar to a contract services arrangement—Key nominated organisations/groups need to provide evidence of their insurance and legal liability coverage to LG.</p>	<p>Organisation or group has lead responsibility.</p> <p>LG, LDMG and/or LDCC will guide decisions regarding the activation, messages and priority areas for volunteer engagement.</p>
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Examples	Who owns insurance and liability	Who manages and coordinates
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*Description*

Externally sourced group or organisation to take on the responsibility and management of the spontaneous disaster volunteer program.

<p>Externally sourced organisation, corporate, and/or volunteering organisation.</p> <p>The nominated group/agency/ organisation may have some local connections, but are usually external to the disaster affected communities, e.g. Conservation Volunteers Australia, Lions, and Team Rubicon. Can potentially pull in resources from other locations for surge requirements.</p>	<p>The organisation and/or group managing the volunteers.</p> <p>Similar to a contract services arrangement— Key nominated organisations/groups need to provide evidence of their insurance and legal liability coverage to LG.</p>	<p>Organisation or group has lead responsibility.</p> <p>LG, LDMG and/or LDCC will guide decisions regarding the activation, messages and priority areas for volunteer engagement.</p>
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### Model 3 (Figure 5.)

Managed by a consortium of agencies/organisations, that are accountable and responsible for the management of spontaneous disaster volunteers.

*Some LGs are selecting a consortium across a range of local agencies, clubs, etc., which may take on a collective role, with potential complementation by larger external organisation(s) that can be pulled in according to demands and/or community needs. More detail and questions have been posed for this model.*

*Description*

Consortium of organisations and community groups. Managers of spontaneous volunteers are staff/volunteers of the individual organisations or groups represented in the consortium.

LGs have identified a range of local partners within the *mobilisation approaches* as described in TYPE 2 of the *Mobilisation Diagram (Figure 1.)*

- 2) Locally based structured support that is well connected to the disaster affected community**, providing support to their own members and facilities based upon known and trusted connections.
- 2a) Locally based structured support (that is well connected to the disaster affected community)** now extending that assistance to broader community residents.
- 2b) Locally based structured support (that is well connected to the disaster affected community)** utilising surge members and volunteers sourced externally from the affected community.

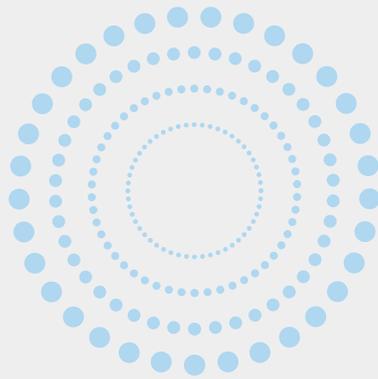
<p>Identification of partners. These include locally based community services, agencies, faith-based groups, corporates, recreation and interest groups, as well as service and sporting clubs etc.</p> <p>Potentially not linked into, or aware of, the local disaster management arrangements at this stage.</p> <p>Agreed understanding of the role of the consortium and the role it plays in the management of spontaneous disaster volunteers at a local level.</p>	<p><i>Each of the groups or organisations managing the volunteers.</i></p> <p>Similar to a contract services arrangement— Key nominated organisations/groups need to provide evidence of their insurance and legal liability coverage to LG.</p>	<p><i>The individual group or organisation managing the volunteers.</i></p> <p>Consortium ensures the work of all groups is coordinated.</p> <p>Established mechanisms for communication and guidance between LDMG and consortium.</p>
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Examples	Who owns insurance and liability	Who manages and coordinates
<p>It is recommended to establish a way for this consortium of agencies to meet, understand their different roles and agree on the management and coordination processes required.</p> <p>This consortium may be a sub-committee of LDMG or Human and Social Recovery Committee and support coordinated efforts. Consortium to ensure the work of all groups is coordinated within the Local Disaster Management arrangements, e.g. membership of Community Services Network which consists of over 20 local community service groups or organisations.</p>	<p>It is currently assessed that key partners undertaking TYPE 2B (Figure 1.) do not have insurance coverage, or management practices for incorporating spontaneous volunteers.</p>	
<p><i>Description</i></p> <p>Managers of spontaneous volunteers are staff/volunteers of the individual organisation/ group represented in the consortium. For larger events it is recommended that LGs consider a partner for TYPE 4 within the Mobilisation diagram (Figure 1.) identified as: <i>Externally sourced organisations, corporates and volunteers (including spontaneous volunteers).</i></p>		
<p>These groups/agencies/people are usually external to the disaster affected communities; they may have some 'light' linkages to communities or no connections.</p> <p>Can include the mobilisation of spontaneous disaster volunteers from within and external to communities, i.e. fostered from other locations.</p> <p>Potential partnerships could be with organisations included in the Project such as: ADRA, Australian Conservation Volunteers Australia, Team Rubicon, Lions, Rotary, Global Care, BlazeAid, etc. This is not an exhaustive list and LGs may be aware of other potential partners.</p>	<p><i>The individual group/ organisation managing the volunteers.</i></p> <p>Similar to a contract services arrangement—Key nominated organisations/ groups need to provide evidence of their insurance and legal liability coverage to LG.</p> <p>It is currently assessed that key partners that could undertake TYPE 4 (Figure 1.) approach, already have, or are actively seeking, appropriate insurance coverage and management practices for incorporating spontaneous volunteers.</p>	<p><i>The individual group/ organisation managing the volunteers.</i></p> <p><i>Coordination:</i> Consortium ensures work of all groups is coordinated.</p> <p>Established mechanisms for communication and guidance between LDMG and consortium.</p>

It is anticipated that identified models will continue to change and that there may be a mix of these models that emerges. For example, the Tablelands region, a consortium model appeared to emerge: i.e. MODEL 3 (Figure 5.). This model involved a number of faith-based agencies working together, with one faith-based agency nominating to take on the legal and insurance responsibilities for other groups, as well as the spontaneous volunteers included under their own coverage. If one agency is carrying all responsibilities and accountabilities, then it could be viewed as more of a MODEL 2 (Figure 4.) than MODEL 3 version.

# Team leader training: Combined evaluation report





The NDRP *Building Local Capability* project focused on working closely with LGs and Local Disaster Management Groups to assist them in identifying which agencies and groups were best placed to take on future roles in managing spontaneous disaster volunteers.

Once these key organisations were identified, training was developed by Volunteering Queensland and delivered in partnership with LGs, Queensland Fire and Emergency Services (QFES) and Australian Red Cross (QLD) across rural and urban locations.

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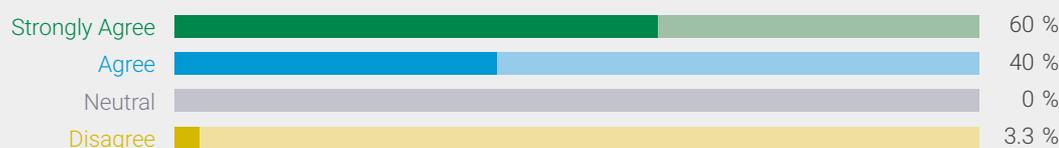
### **Process of collecting evaluations**

Evaluation forms were presented to all 104 participants who attended the training across the seven Project locations, with 60 evaluations completed by participants.

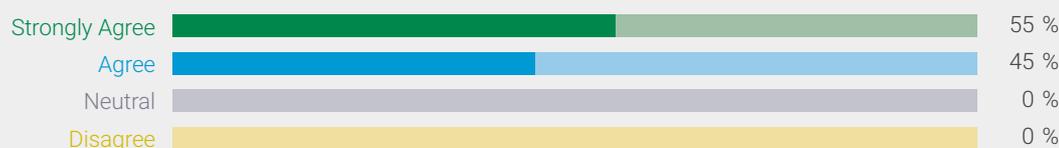
Completed forms were collected by Volunteering Queensland staff at the end of each training session and the following information was captured.

## Participant responses to questions

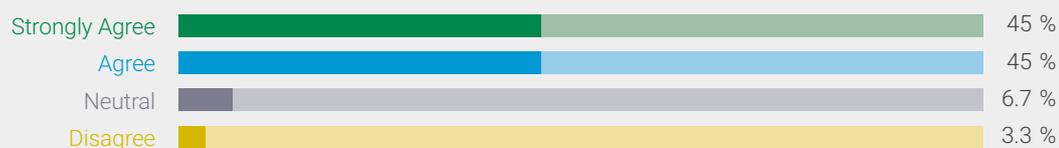
1. You have a good understanding of your role as a Team Leader of spontaneous volunteers



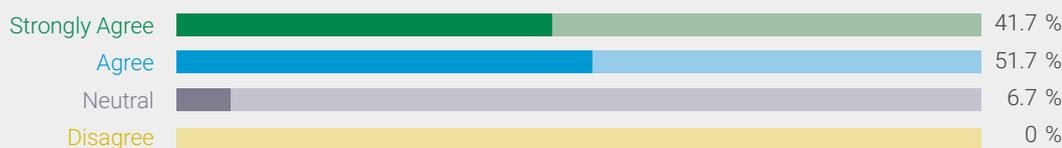
2. You have a good understanding of how to look after yourself and your team when deployed



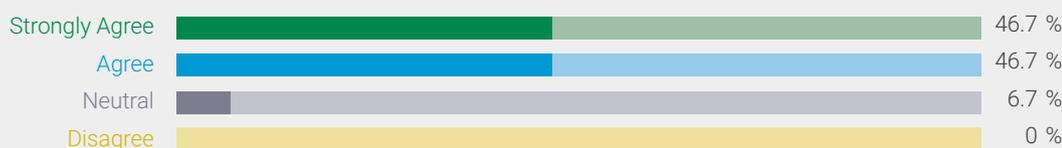
3. You have gained greater knowledge of key emergency services within your local area and the role they play in disaster management



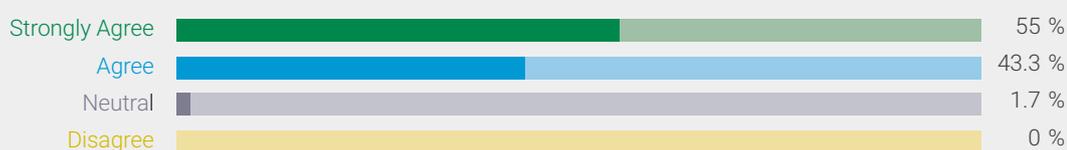
4. You have a greater understanding about the local disaster arrangements and capacity of emergency and disaster support services



5. You are confident in your ability to manage teams of spontaneous volunteers



6. The tools and information provided will be useful in disaster planning in my organisation



Participants were also asked to identify any information they believed was missing and provide overall comments. These included:

Loved the scenarios and the practical group work; the great thing is this will be ongoing as long as it moves forward it will grow in this area; excellent presentation and good level of interaction of audience, fantastic, informative, wonderful presentation, I learnt so much; even though I have gained a lot of knowledge I doubt my ability to be a good team leader. In saying that I am willing to have a go!



Great presentation – perhaps make this part of a suite of recommended programmes including recovery; the overall course was excellent and all presenters were very engaging and knowledgeable; Excellent programme for training bodies and coordinators; the group exercises were terrific and especially liked the exercises where each group had a different scenario; This event was so worthwhile and I would recommend it; All bases were covered. Great session, was most informative.

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## Observations made by the Project team

As a result of Volunteering Queensland delivering and participating in this training, the following observations are provided:

- The attitude of participants and organisations has changed across the duration of the Project FROM: *what can we do to help people affected by a disaster?* TO: *what do individuals and communities need to support them in their recovery?*
- Participants by the end of the training were considering how their actions could make a real difference in longer term recovery. They also developed a sound understanding that there is potential to do further harm if they are not clear about their actions and methods of engagement.
- The Project team also saw a change in attitude of the participants FROM: *what does my organisation do?* TO: *how can we work as a collective team utilising certain skills set and connections within the community, to ensure that necessary tasks are completed in a timely manner and organisations are not duplicating effort?*
- The training highlighted the vital linkages, key messaging and communication required between, LGs, LDCCs, nominated partner organisations and groups and Volunteering Queensland's EV CREW program.
- EV CREW is the primary program to recruit, message, hold, and allocate spontaneous disaster volunteers to the nominated management agencies.
- All nominated partner organisations and groups now acknowledge that locally based models are preferred and the most effective way to support disaster affected communities.
- Participants expressed their commitment to assisting their organisations and groups to understand this imperative, and ensure required and appropriate assistance is available and occurs through further establishing and strengthening local partnerships and strategies.



Managing spontaneous  
volunteers—Insurance  
and liability considerations

Insurance and legal liabilities can be complex and may be subject to differing interpretations.

There are some general misunderstandings in the use of spontaneous disaster volunteers and the requirements to protect:

- Disaster affected community members, their property and livelihoods.
- Spontaneous disaster volunteers.
- Organisations/groups who are managing the spontaneous disaster volunteers.

Volunteering Queensland has a strong understanding of the overarching risk issues for the management of spontaneous disaster volunteers, including workplace health and safety and insurance issues.

Volunteering Queensland recommends that all volunteer-involving organisations (VIOs) consider Public Liability Insurance and Personal Accident Cover for their volunteers.

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## Liability

The Queensland State Government passed a *Civil Liability Act 2003* which has a volunteer protection clause included. Volunteers working in registered not-for-profit organisations engaged in voluntary activities defined by the organisation are protected from legal action provided they are not acting outside the law or contrary to their organisation's own rules.

While the *Civil Liability Act 2003* protects volunteers from liability in terms of acts or omissions while they are volunteering (some exemptions apply). The *Civil Liability Act 2003* does not specifically state that an organisation the volunteer works for will avoid liability where their volunteer is not liable. It is possible liability will transfer to the organisation.

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### Public Liability Insurance

Public Liability Insurance covers the organisation's legal liability to pay a third party for personal injury or property damage accidentally caused by a member (in this case the *volunteer*) of the organisation. It is important that a VIOs volunteers are endorsed on this type of policy.

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### Personal Accident

Personal Accident Insurance covers volunteers for certain out-of-pocket expenses following accidental injury, disability or death while carrying out their work on behalf of the organisation.

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### Other types of Insurance to consider

Motor Vehicle Comprehensive Insurance, Property and Contents Insurance, Professional Indemnity and Directors and Officers Liability Insurance and Directors and Officers Liability Insurance.

## Work Cover

Work Cover normally does not apply to spontaneous volunteers but has been applied to certain types of volunteers in previous disaster events. It is recommended that any organisation utilising spontaneous disaster volunteers ensures Personal Accident Insurance is in place. This insurance is similar to the State Government's compulsory work cover for paid employees and covers volunteers for certain out-of-pocket expenses following accidental injury, disability or death while carrying out their work on behalf of the organisation

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## Risk Management

Risk management is a process used to identify the extent and nature of the risks involved in the activities carried out by an organisation and to determine the best ways of controlling those risks. This process is designed to prevent or reduce the level of risk to an organisation. It is also the best way to identify the most appropriate insurance cover or covers for an organisation.

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## Work Health and Safety

The *Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (QLD)* provides for the safety, health and welfare of persons at work in Queensland. The Act together with the *Work Health and Safety Regulation 2011 (QLD)* (the Act) sets up health and safety duties to provide protections from hazards and risks in the workplace. The duties fall not only on the employer running a business and their officers, but also on individual workers.

Not-for-profit organisations who employ workers are considered to be a 'person conducting a business or undertaking' (PCBU) under the Act. They will have a duty of care to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health and safety of their employees and volunteers at work and that the health and safety of other people is not affected by the way in which the organisation conducts its business or undertaking.

A volunteer is not a 'worker' under the Act, if they carry out volunteer work for a 'volunteer association' that is run entirely by volunteers (i.e. with no paid staff). However, whether managing volunteers within a PCBU or a non-PCBU, it is imperative to ensure the health and safety of your volunteers.

This includes developing sound policies and procedures and effectively informing your volunteers of the policies and procedures of the organisation as well as putting in place effective training and supervision. These do not need to be onerous and some of the publications listed in the Toolkit accompanying this report have simple check lists for this purpose. It is also important to investigate other forms of protection for your volunteers. These can include insurance coverage to protect them for personal injury and liability.

*Volunteering Queensland recommends that organisations involving volunteers should always seek professional legal advice in determining what cover is available and most appropriate for their needs.*

# Volunteering Queensland: Roles and responsibilities in disaster management



## General role statement

Volunteering Queensland is the peak body for volunteering, developing, promoting and advocating for the interests of all volunteers and the organisations that involve them.

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## Roles relating to disaster management include:

- Disaster preparedness, recovery and resilience building: a history of implementing projects across sectors.
- The Emergency Volunteering (EV) CREW program: a 10 year contribution and partnership with Queensland Government, the business sector, disaster management agencies, and communities to develop, maintain, operate and serve the state before, during and in the aftermath of disasters.
- Representing the interests of the volunteering sector: on local, state and national level committees.
- Queensland Emergency Volunteer Advisory Forum: Forum Chair.
- Undertake and support research in Australia and internationally: to source and develop models, tools and evidence based findings to inform disaster resilience work involving volunteers. This included the *Communities Responding to Disasters: Planning for Spontaneous Volunteers: Handbook 12*, (AIDR) 2017. Then utilised the information and research resulting from the Handbook within this Project.
- QFES Volunteerism Strategy: work closely with QFES to ensure alignment.
- Provide advice and input: into the *Queensland Disaster Management Plan*, *Queensland Disaster Management Guidelines* and other frameworks on the role of Volunteering Queensland, the EV CREW program, and spontaneous volunteer management.

As per *Figure 6.*: Volunteering Queensland has engagement and partnerships with a broad range of stakeholders across the disaster management cycle.



**Figure 6.** Volunteering Queensland's engagements and partnerships with stakeholders across the disaster management cycle

## EV CREW—Emergency Volunteering Community Response to Extreme Weather

Volunteering Queensland, through its EV CREW program, acts as the primary partner engaged by the Queensland Government for the registration, referral and management of spontaneous disaster volunteers in a disaster management setting. Under these arrangements EV CREW may also be utilised by local government if required.

This is done by:

- Activating the EV CREW system—which then becomes the central coordinating point for incoming requests from organisations who are seeking volunteers, as well as from individuals who have or are pledging their time and assistance. The EV CREW program contains a digital platform/database that supports the pre-registration, messaging, holding and activation of prospective spontaneous disaster volunteers.
- Placing spontaneous disaster volunteers with LGs, government agencies and/or insured not-for-profits requesting volunteer assistance.
- Acting as an information provider and a gateway to easily disseminate up to date information to the general public and registered spontaneous disaster volunteers about the disaster response and areas where assistance may be needed, or not needed.
- Providing information, advice and support to LGs, Queensland Government agencies and not-for-profits to support their operations.
- Working closely with volunteer organisations, LGs and government agencies across the course of their volunteer engagement and operations.
- Developing resources and delivering services to support community resilience, preparedness, response and recovery.

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The following support services were included at no cost within the scope of the Project. These services will now be on a fee for service basis, or cost recovery arrangements following a disaster.

Upon request, Volunteering Queensland can provide additional services.

These include:

- Providing Volunteering Queensland staff on the ground when spontaneous disaster volunteers are requested. These staff can provide advice, support and guidance to LGs and their partners in the recruitment, management and coordination of spontaneous disaster volunteers and programs.
- Establishing partnerships with LGs, and their partners, including local volunteer-involving organisations for the management and coordination of spontaneous disaster volunteers.
- Providing expert advice and support on the planning for and management and coordination of spontaneous disaster volunteers across all phases of disasters.
- Assisting LGs and their partner agencies to have appropriate local agreements established for the engagement, management and coordination of spontaneous disaster volunteers.
- Training to LGs and their nominated partners in readiness for the engagement, management and coordination of spontaneous disaster volunteers.

### **Forward thinking—Volunteering Queensland is currently:**

- Training other State and Territory Volunteering Peak Bodies to enable them to access and use the EV CREW program and build their spontaneous disaster volunteer management capacity and capability. This partnership and training provides Queensland with surge support if required in large-scale and multiple disaster events.
- Working to establish the EV CREW program as an integrated national platform that can direct registered and willing volunteers to other volunteer opportunities within their local communities and areas of interest.
- Preparing to train and manage a Volunteering Queensland EV CREW program volunteer ready workforce. This workforce can support the management of spontaneous disaster volunteers on the ground across Queensland to build local capacities.
- Extending fee for service options for LGs and their key partners for the provision of capability audits, advice, training, planning and on ground support.
- Seeking funding to review, upgrade and develop additional functionality of the EV CREW program, which recently celebrated 10 years of service to the people, community and state of Queensland.
- Seeking funding to extend the two current resilience Projects.







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