



ReGroup

Community-led recovery: evidence, dimensions and supports for Community Recovery Committees

18th July 2023

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Community-Led Recovery: What and Why?

What is it?

- Community-led approach (AIDR, 2018; Dibley et al., 2019)
 - Strong **community participation** and leadership in planning, implementation and evaluation
 - **Strengthening local resources**, capacity and resilience
 - Effective **community engagement and facilitation** processes
- Local governance and “Shared responsibility” for disaster recovery (McLennan et al., 2016)

Why do it?

- Involving people in the decisions that affect them is the right thing to do. (Dryzek, 2010)
- It’s more effective, too. (Rydin & Pennington, 2000)

Guiding questions for Regroup

- What are Community Recovery Committees***?
 - Diverse! Differ in Formation, Scope, Governance, Decision-making, Consultation....
 - Are there common features?
 - Is there consensus?
- What sorts of supports and resources are useful?
 - Recurring decisions
 - Relevant, tailored supports
 - In advance
 - Learnings from prior groups

*** Victorian term

The Research

Advisory Group:

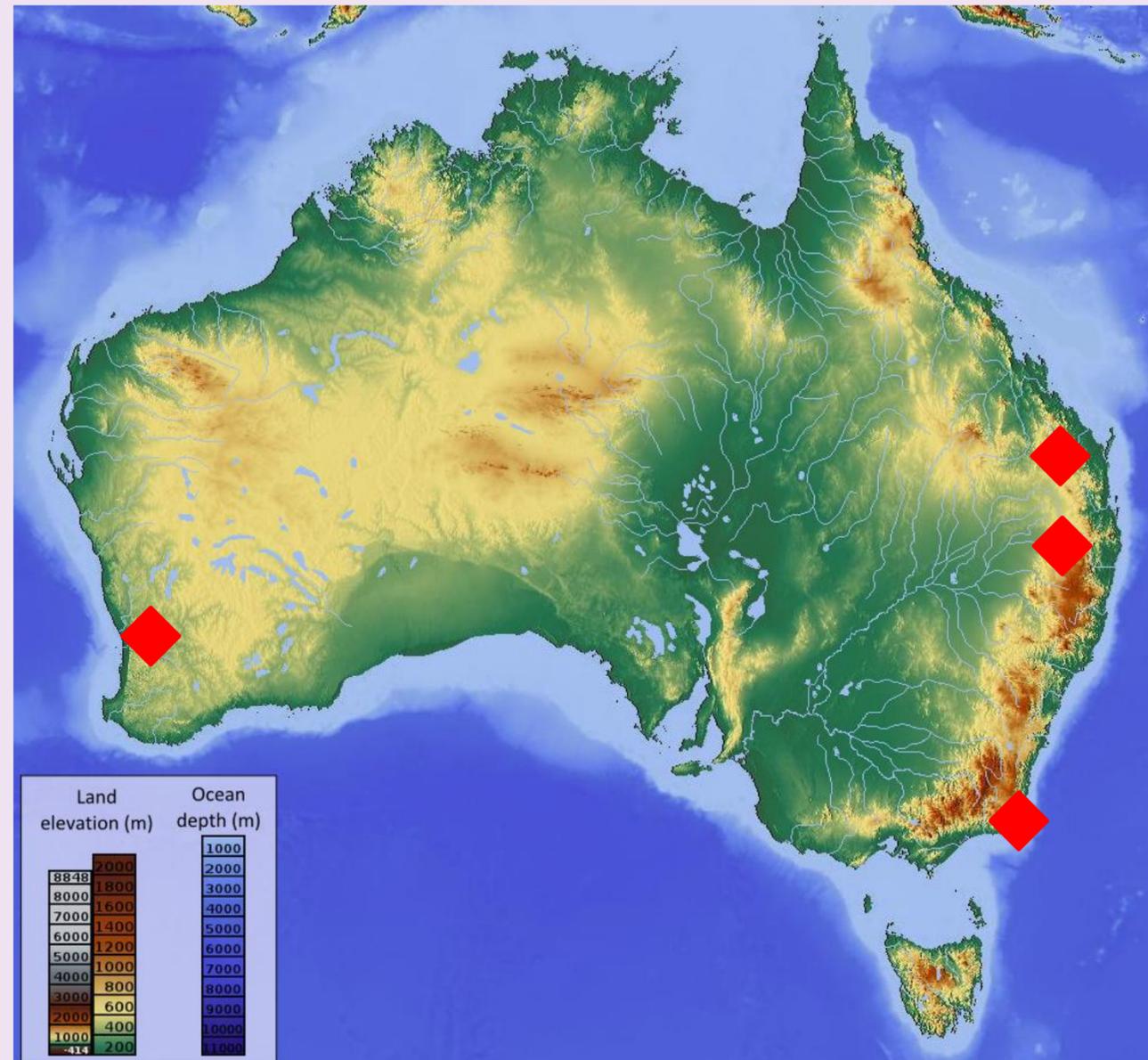
- Australian Red Cross
- Blue Mountains Community Resource Network
- BRV
- Dept Health and Human Services Tas
- Independent contractor in disaster recovery
- Leadbeater Group
- Maroondah City Council
- NHRA
- NRRRA
- Yarra Ranges Council

Aim	Data collection method
1. Develop a shared understanding of the roles of CRCs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Q-Sort Methodology survey • Qualitative notes from discussion
2. Test and refine the self-assessment tool built for CRCs that was developed in Phase 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Qualtrics 'sliding scale' questionnaire • Qualitative notes from discussion
3. Undertake a social network analysis to identify how the CRC is positioned	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social network mapping exercise <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Tangible with paper and string 2) Online • Qualitative notes from discussion

Workshops

- 4 x 1-day workshops with Community Recovery Committee/Group members
- 37 x online Q Sort with Recovery Workers

Regional interface community who had experienced significant fire event in 2021



Urban community, had experienced recent flooding event in 2022. Suburb had historic flooding.

Regional community, had experienced multiple flooding events in recent years, most recently in 2022

Remote community, had experienced significant bushfire event in 2019-20.



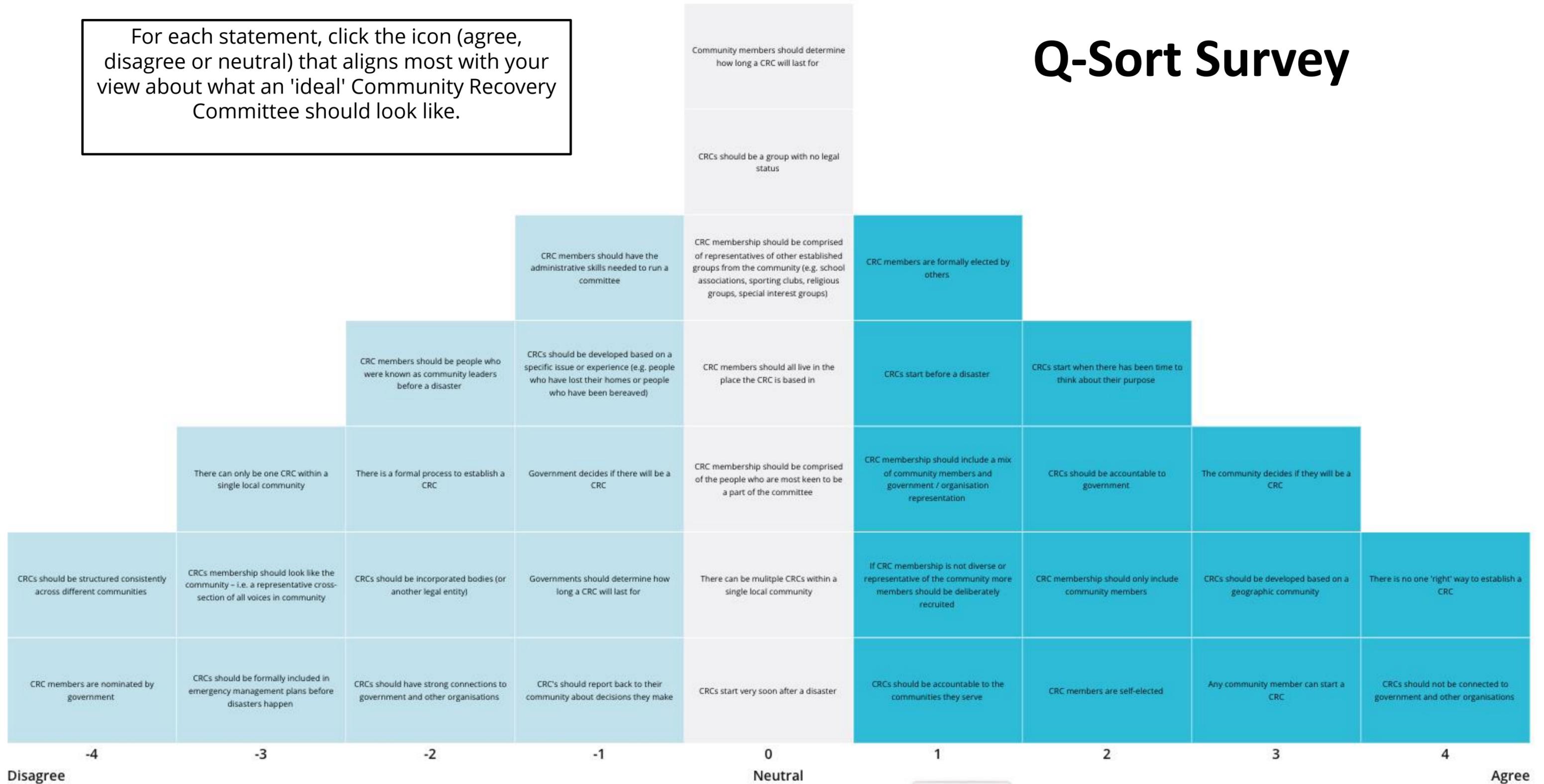
CRC members completing the tangible social network mapping exercise



CRC members discussing their results of the Self-Assessment Tool together

Q-Sort Survey

For each statement, click the icon (agree, disagree or neutral) that aligns most with your view about what an 'ideal' Community Recovery Committee should look like.



Most of you agree to these statements

Most of you agree with these statements

STATEMENT	CAMP 1	CAMP 2
There is no one 'right' way to establish a CRC	3	4
CRCs should be formally included in emergency management plans before disasters happen	4	2
CRC membership should be comprised of the people who are most keen to be a part of the committee	3	2
CRCs should be developed based on a geographic community	1	3
CRCs should be accountable to the communities they serve	2	1
CRC's should report back to their community about decisions they make	1	1

Most of you disagree with these statements

Most of you disagree with these statements

STATEMENT	CAMP 1	CAMP 2
Government decides if there will be a CRC	-3	-4
CRCs should be developed based on a specific issue or experience (e.g. people who have lost their homes or people who have been bereaved)	-3	-4
CRC members are nominated by government	-4	-2
Governments should determine how long a CRC will last for	-4	-2
CRCs should be accountable to government	-3	-3
CRCs start when there has been time to think about their purpose	-1	-2

Largest differences between Camps

Biggest differences between Camps 1 and 2

STATEMENT	FACTOR_1	FACTOR_2	DIFFERENCE
CRCs start very soon after a disaster	-0.71	1.68	2.39
CRC members are formally elected by others	0.78	-1.33	2.11
Community members should determine how long a CRC will last for	2.02	0.00	2.02
CRCs should be a group with no legal status	0.52	-1.33	1.85
CRC members are self-elected	-0.35	1.40	1.75
The community decides if they will be a CRC	0.69	-0.56	1.25

Self-Assessment Tool (SAT)

The below questions are about what you would like your Community Recovery Committee to look like.

Please select a position on the scale that reflects your views.

FORMATION AND SCOPE

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| One well defined location | <input type="radio"/> | District level, multiple locations |
| Single issue focus | <input type="radio"/> | Whole of recovery focus |
| Pre-existing group | <input type="radio"/> | Completely new group |
| Self-appointed group | <input type="radio"/> | Formal election process |
| No clear objectives for the group | <input type="radio"/> | Clear, deliberate goals and parameters of the group |
| Do not manage projects | <input type="radio"/> | Manage all projects |
| Group formed / adapted very soon after the disaster event | <input type="radio"/> | Group formed / adapted some time after the disaster event |
| No financial responsibility | <input type="radio"/> | Complex financial responsibility |
| No legal status of group | <input type="radio"/> | Clear legal status of group |
| Our group does not represent the communities views and priorities to any external bodies (e.g. government and NGOs) on all issues relating to resilience and recovery | <input type="radio"/> | Our group represents the communities views and priorities to external bodies (e.g. government and NGOs) on all issues relating to resilience and recovery |



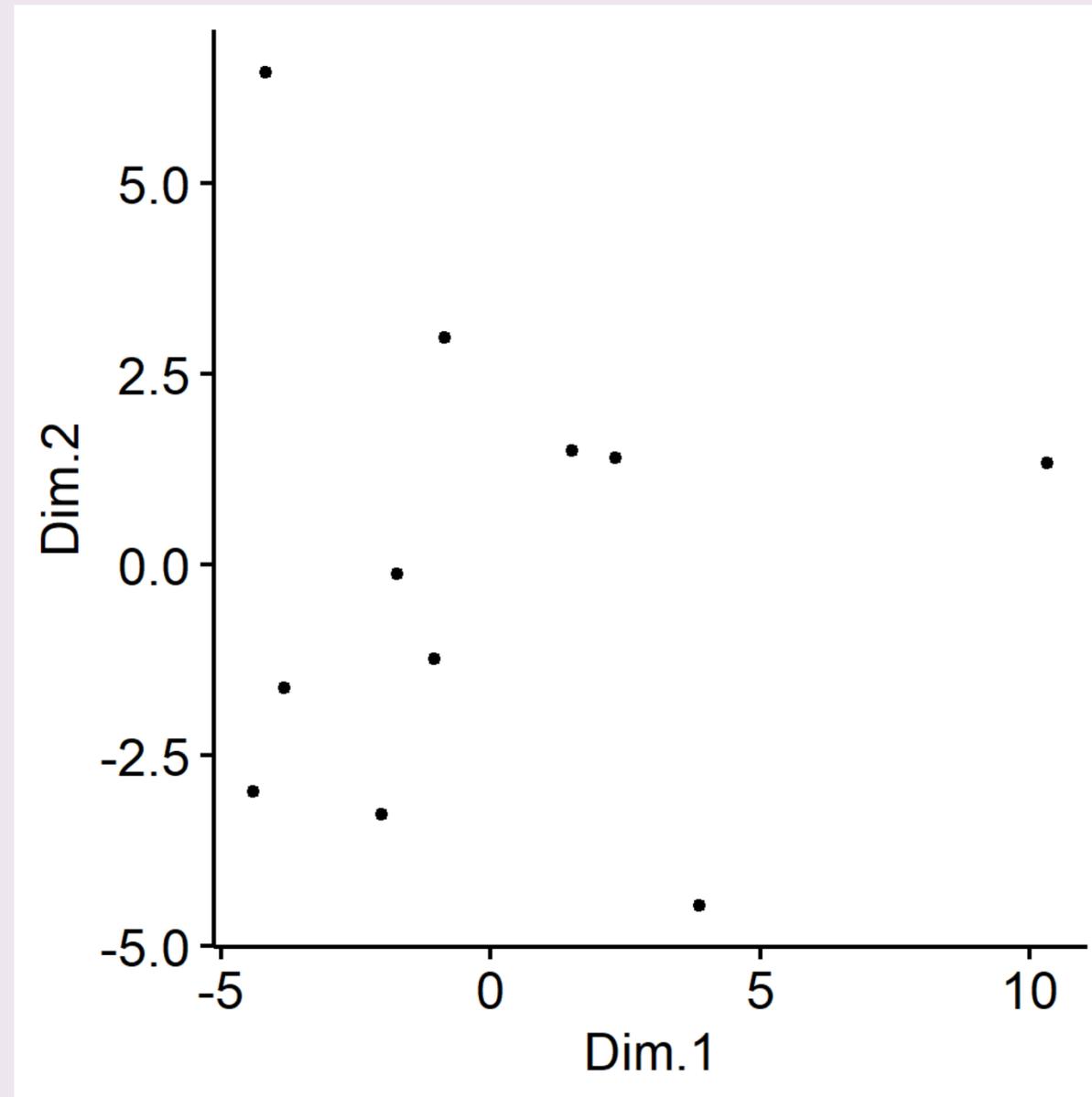
The below questions are about what you would like your Community Recovery Committee to look like.

Please select a position on the scale that reflects your views.

GOVERNANCE AND DECISION MAKING

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| Group will not exist beyond the planned government involvement | <input type="radio"/> | Group will exist beyond planned government involvement |
| Provide ideas and feedback only | <input type="radio"/> | Clear and defined decision making role |
| Loose, ad hoc group arrangement | <input type="radio"/> | Formal governance structure |
| Everyone does a bit of everything | <input type="radio"/> | Formal roles (Eg: Chair, Treasurer, Secretary) |
| No planned timeframe for the group | <input type="radio"/> | Clear sunset plan for the group |
| Individuals can stay in roles / the group for as long as they'd like | <input type="radio"/> | Clear set term for roles / individual members |
| No access to funds | <input type="radio"/> | Have funding, manage budgets |
| Diversity of group membership not prioritised | <input type="radio"/> | Diversity of group membership high priority |
| No planning around representing all sectors of the community within the committee | <input type="radio"/> | A core element of planning is consideration of whose voices in the community may be missing |
| No access to subject matter experts for advice / information on issues | <input type="radio"/> | Regularly request information from subject matter experts to help inform decision making |

Here's how you group in terms of responses.



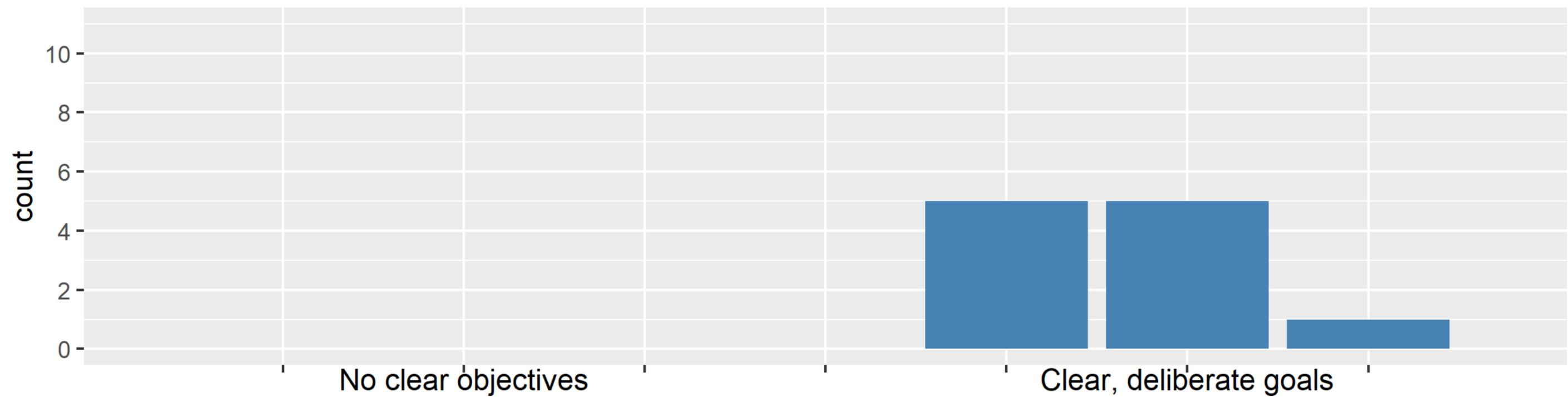
Formation & scope (Agree)

No clear objectives for the group

VERSUS

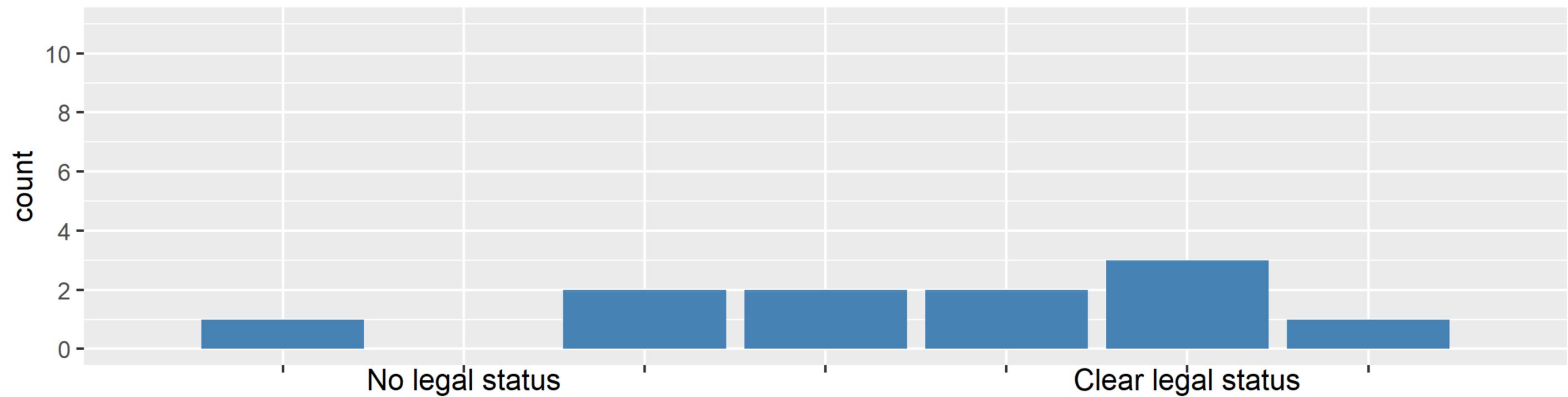
Clear, deliberate goals and parameters of the group

Std Dev: 0.67

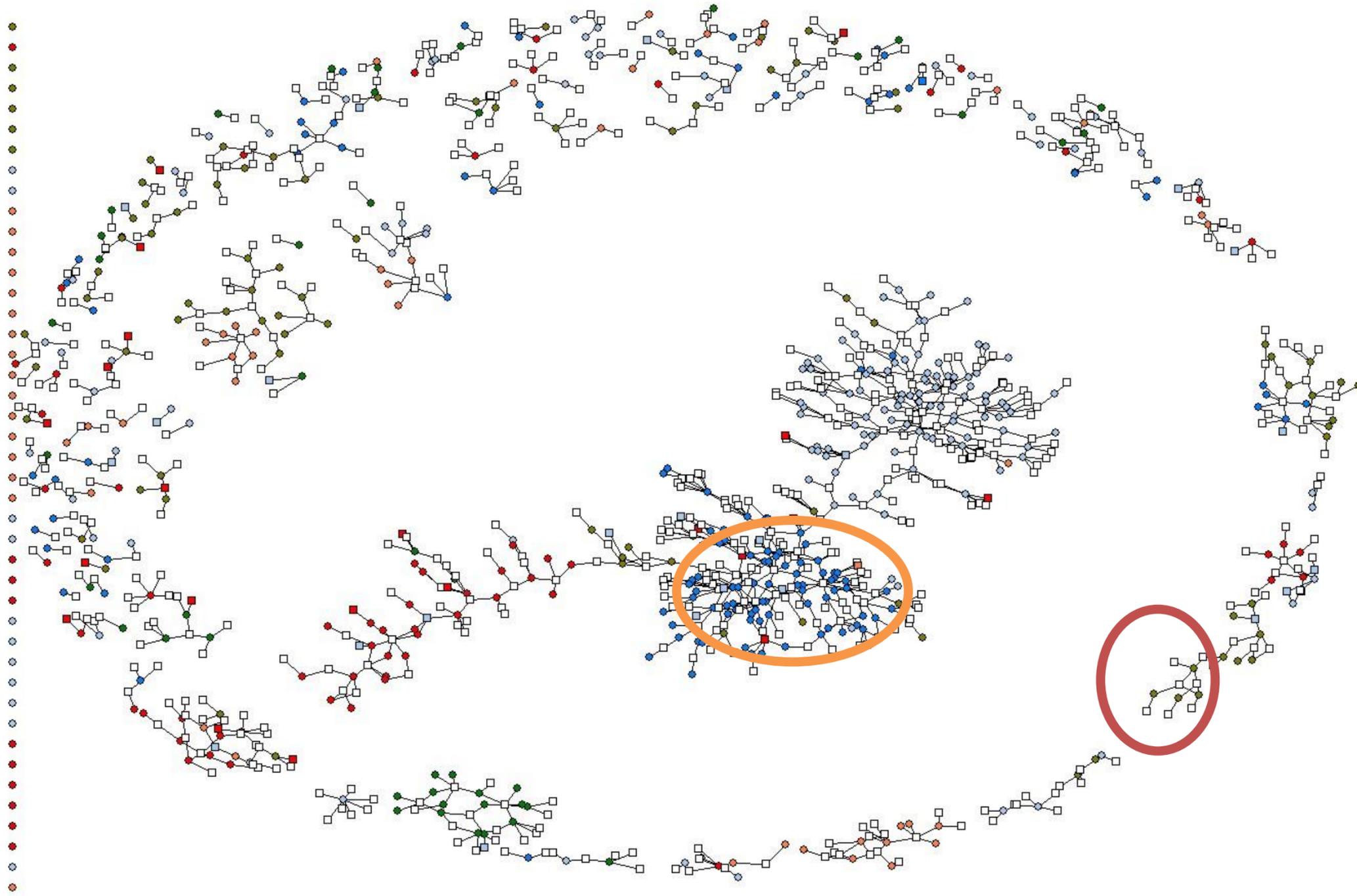


Formation & scope (Disagree)

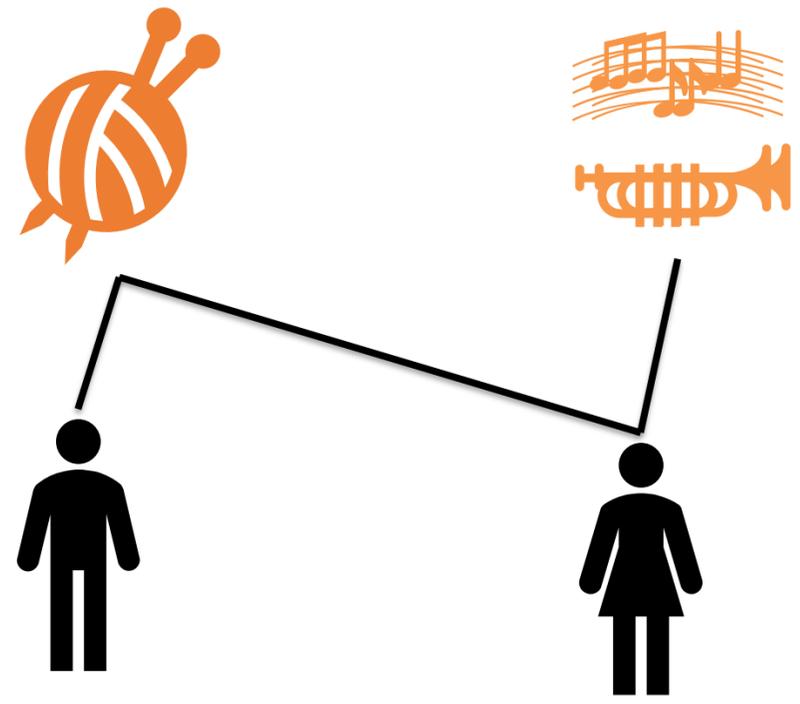
No legal status of group
VERSUS
Clear legal status of group
Std Dev: 1.75



Where is the CRC?



Community Groups

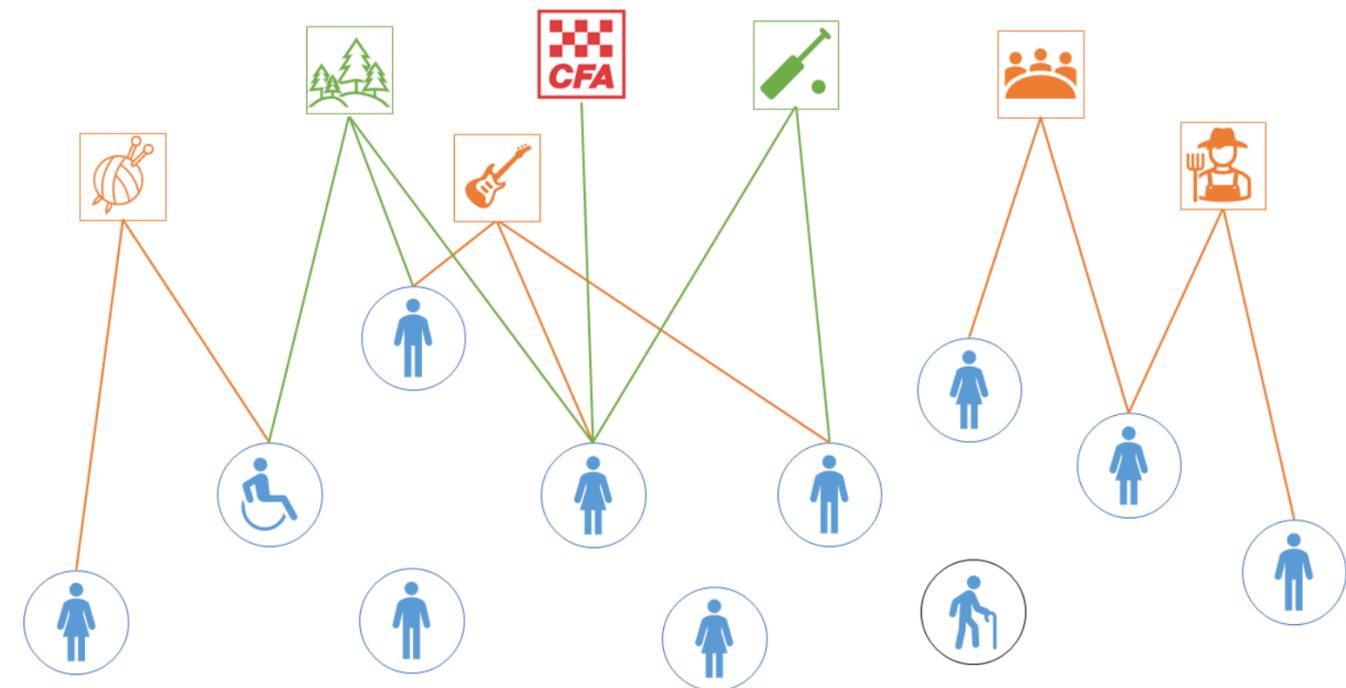


People

Community Mapping

Social networks of people and groups within a community

- A useful map of the community
- Which groups should the CRC work with...
 - To spread messages quickly
 - To bridge divides in the community
 - To reach certain demographic groups



SNAP

Social network mapping

A live mapping tool





Some Findings

Definition of a CRC

CRCs are the manifestation of public participation in local planning and policy making for disaster recovery. They are entities, formed purposefully by communities to be an active party to decision-making about recovery. These groups negotiate rules for membership and operation, their scope, their relationship to government, and their model of representation and accountability to the community.

Usefulness of tools

SAT Tool

“Working through it like this takes the emotion out of the discussions and helps you just figure out what you need to decide.” Participant, Group C.

“I like that you’re not telling us the ‘right way’, that there is food for thought and there are options.” Participant, Group A.

SNAP Tool

“The SNAP could help you identify the people in the community who would be trusted to bring together. We got that right, but it was accidental.” Participant, Group D.

Context matters

- **There is no silver bullet for effective models of Community Recovery Committees** as the context of communities before and after disasters vary too widely.
- Rather than continuing to ask ‘what is a good model for a Community Recovery Committee?’ we suggest asking ‘**what do we need to better understand the context of disaster affected communities for Community Recovery Committees to have the best chance of success?**’.

Representativeness

- Does the CRC view itself as speaking on the behalf of the community? And if so...
- How do CRC members view representation and their roles as representatives?
- How do they structure CRC operations in a way that fulfills this role?
- Could support be given? (Community mapping)

Representativeness

- Despite the importance of representativeness, some of our CRCs did not see their role as a voice for the community.
- **An orientation towards Participation**
 - Numbers! Get as many people directly involved as possible.
 - Capitalise on **initiative**
 - Making it easier to get involved and have an impact.
- Building resilience and connection
- Aligns well with social movements (e.g., climate change).

Disaster complicates participation

Higher possible individual-level payoffs...

- Restoring infrastructure, services, and amenities that make *your* life better.
- Building reputation and relationships within your community

A lot of help aimed at lowering the costs of participating





Nevertheless...

- The work is difficult.
- The work is novel for many.
- People are busy with their own recovery (including committee members themselves)
- People are traumatised.
- People are angry and feel injustice
- Special interests

Representativeness

- **Participation** is central for building resilience and connection, and building social movements around things like climate change.
- But not everyone can or will participate!
- A system of **representation** in a disaster-affected community need to account for the fact that non-participants still need to be represented.
- How the CRC responds to this challenge is important.

“If everyone has had a voice, if it is thorough and inclusive, and that means everyone, not just the people who turn up... everyone must feel like they have a voice. That takes time but that’s what you need to do, and that’s also how you get political clout. It cannot be just six people sitting around a table.”

Participant reflection

Representativeness

- **An orientation towards Deliberation**

- Quality.
- **Consensus.** What's in the community's best interest?
- Small-group forums.
- Come with an open mind, not an agenda.

An explicit emphasis in
policy documents
(Social Recovery Reference Group)

- Establishing representativeness in deliberative democracy is key (Parkinson, 2003).
 - Representing people *who aren't physically present.*
 - *But also remain open to persuasion*
- Robust, ongoing consultation with many groups (Celis, 2009)
 - Straightforward vs Technical issues

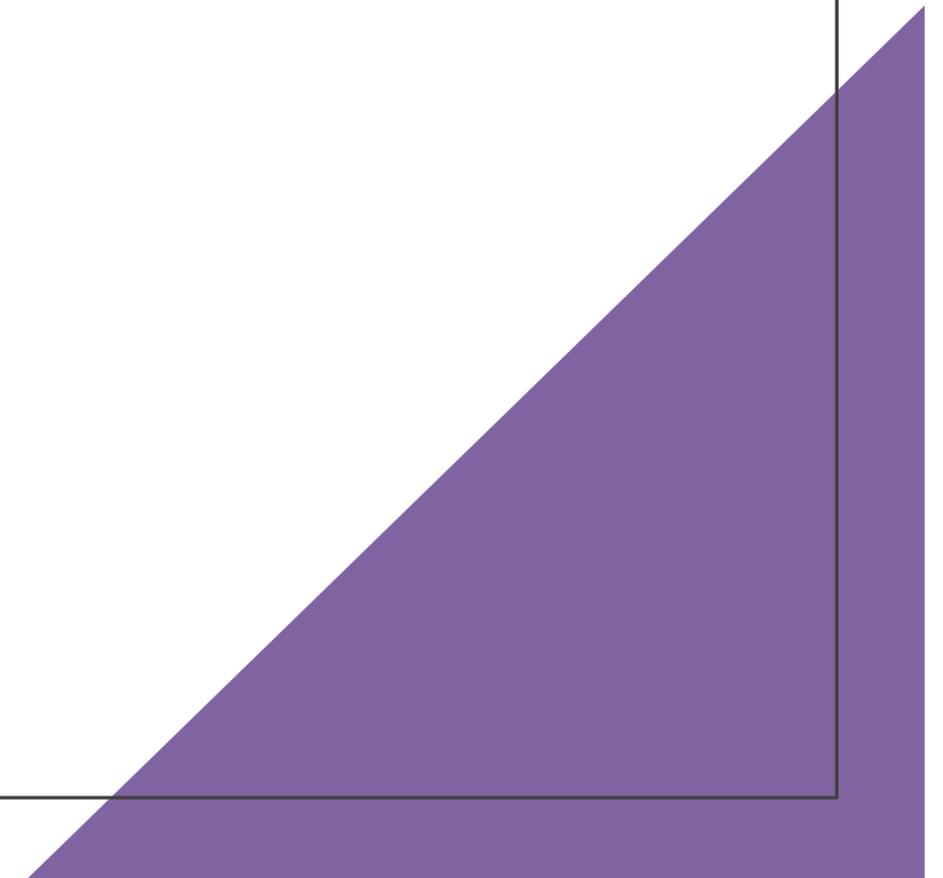
Wrapping up



Next steps : Analysis and Utilisation

“AFFIRM”

- **A**nalysis of CRC and government official opinions
- **F**it for purpose: Implementation and evaluation
- **F**oundations for collaboration on tools
- **I**ntegrate tools into stakeholder practice
- **R**epresentativeness as an issue
- **M**ore accessible and engaging platform



The Team



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Please get in touch if you would like to learn more or collaborate!