

A warm welcome to the page! We have been working hard as a community to share accurate information, look after those in need in whatever way we can, to share stories and to provide a place for people to seek assistance.

# TASSIE FIRES

*we can help*



Please follow my posts, but also the 'Recent Posts By Others'. Also be on 'information watch' – and private message me with anything you see or hear that you think is important!

If you need something posted on the main page – please private message me! Call me if you need me – 0438 330 998

I sincerely thank everyone for everything. – with love, Mel

## Tassie Fires – We Can Help

20,249 likes · 36 talking about this

✓ Liked

Message \* ▾

### Community

My name is Mel – call me on 0438 330 998 ANYTIME; if it is not urgent, feel free to click "Message" and send me a Private Message. Website: [www.tassiefireswecanhelp.com](http://www.tassiefireswecanhelp.com)

About – Fix a Problem



Photos



Likes

## The “Tassie Fires – We Can Help” Facebook page: The power and efficacy of social media in an emergency

Melanie Irons<sup>1</sup>, Prof. Douglas Paton<sup>2</sup>, Associate Prof. Jenn Scott<sup>3</sup>, Dr Angela Martin<sup>4</sup>, Prof. Libby Lester<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> PhD Candidate, University of Tasmania, School of Medicine (Psychology), <sup>2</sup> University of Tasmania, School of Medicine (Psychology), <sup>3</sup> University of Tasmania, School of Medicine (Psychology), <sup>4</sup> University of Tasmania, School of Management, <sup>5</sup> University of Tasmania, School of Social Sciences



**Melanie Irons**

January 4 

I just rang the [REDACTED] where they have about 100 people – [REDACTED] there says they are sorted for food and blankets thanks to local businesses and the SES, but tomorrow they need to cook breakfast and lunch for everyone and would happily accept some pairs of hand on deck. If anyone else is free head down there! Will ask [REDACTED] when he gets back from work if there's anything else we can do from this side of the river.

Like · Comment · Promote · Share

 27  4



**Melanie Irons**

January 4

Please post if you have something to offer/know of how we can help. Please share!



### **Tassie Fires – We Can Help**

My name is Mel Irons and I started this page on the night the fires broke out in Tasmania (Friday Jan 4th 2013). We have been working hard as a community to share accurate information, look after those in need, and to provide support.

Page: 20,144 like this

Like · Comment · Promote · Share

2 2



## Tassie Fires - We Can Help

January 6, 2013 · 🌐

Can anyone help [redacted]?

Friends at [redacted] are isolated and require basic foods and a generator. They are watching ferries passing by but apparently not stopping. If someone could drop off some food and somehow arrange a generator, they would be grateful. They are close to the beach at [redacted] and are keeping watch. Many thanks for responses to previous requests for information about people unaccounted for. [redacted] like many other areas is "a crime scene" and may remain off limits for some time yet.

Do NOT try to get in anywhere that you can't everyone - is anyone in that area?

Like · Comment · Share



## Tassie Fires - We Can Help

January 8, 2013 · 🌐

CAN WE HELP [REDACTED] NOW???

I will be so grateful if you would post this.

My mum in her seventies is at [REDACTED]. Her water tanks are on electric pumps, hence she can't get water. She needs a generator to run the pumps. Can anyone in the area please lend a generator or take one down if you're going? Her name is [REDACTED] and she is at [REDACTED]

Everyone is safe at [REDACTED] but pretty exhausted with fire fighting. But the water situation is dire.

[Like](#) · [Comment](#) · [Share](#)



## Tassie Fires - We Can Help

January 6, 2013 · 🌐

Go Tassie!

I have just been to the [REDACTED] to drop off items and I can truly say the Community is pulling together the car park was full with people donating food and clothing..What a truly inspirational thing to see Tassie pulling together at a time of need. Well done to Mel for starting this page and coordinating so much information.

Reminder that I just spoke to them 30 seconds ago and they are now good for donations. Stay tuned.

[Like](#) · [Comment](#) · [Share](#)



## Tassie Fires - We Can Help

January 6, 2013 · 🌐



### CAN YOU HELP?

Family of 7 at the City Hall (tourist from [REDACTED]) need to get up to [REDACTED] today. If you can offer a ride please post your details here - the ABC will be watching this page and will call you!

[Like](#) · [Comment](#) · [Share](#)



## Tassie Fires - We Can Help

January 6, 2013 · 🌐

**\*\*ARE YOU IN [REDACTED] PLEASE HELP\*\***

**IF YOU'RE IN [REDACTED] - a yacht laden with supplies is arriving but having trouble negotiating way to shore - requesting some "landing lights" from those on shore pls! PLEASE SHARE and get the word out - this boat is packed with food, blankets, water, clothes, toiletries, pet food etc for those in need! You can contact [REDACTED] on boat: [REDACTED]**

Like · Comment · Share





## Tassie Fires - We Can Help

January 22, 2013 · 🌐

I had two phone calls from the Red Cross today about fundraising 😊

I will have an "official" post soon BUT I just wanted to say that they are absolutely stunned at how many fundraisers have been set up for the Tasmanian Bushfire Appeal. They said it had been huge; and quite out of the ordinary.

So. Well done all of you who decided that you too could host a fundraiser!

Still plenty of time to get something happening... Just gotta fill out the form!

<http://www.redcross.org.au/fundraise-for-us.aspx>



## Tassie Fires - We Can Help

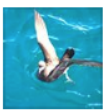
January 9, 2013 · 🌐

Just got a call from Tasmania Police.  
They wanted to say thanks to everyone.

**GO TASSIE!**

Stay up to date, listen to ABC Local Radio, and check the Police page,  
and keep up the hard work!

[Like](#) · [Comment](#) · [Share](#)



**Tassie Fires - We Can Help**

January 7, 2013 · 🌐

Spoke to the Department of Premier and Cabinet this morning, this are going to keep us updated too.

**\*\*PLEASE READ\*\***

Hi Mel,

Great initiative and thanks for helping distribute our messages. Speaking points on donations attached.

Useful information, including contacts and where to access support here:  
[http://www.dpac.tas.gov.au/news\\_and\\_features/bushfire\\_recovery](http://www.dpac.tas.gov.au/news_and_features/bushfire_recovery)

The twitter account: <https://twitter.com/TasBushFires> will promote when the information on the website is updated. It is also promoting updates provided by other service providers (e.g. Aurora) and Government announcements.

I'll keep any extra info flowing through. Keep in touch.

Donations - talking points 060113.pdf

## Department of Premier and Cabinet - TASMANIA : Bushfire recovery

The Department of Health and Human Services is providing support for people impacted by Tasmania's bushfires, including housing and health services. See a full list of emergency contacts.

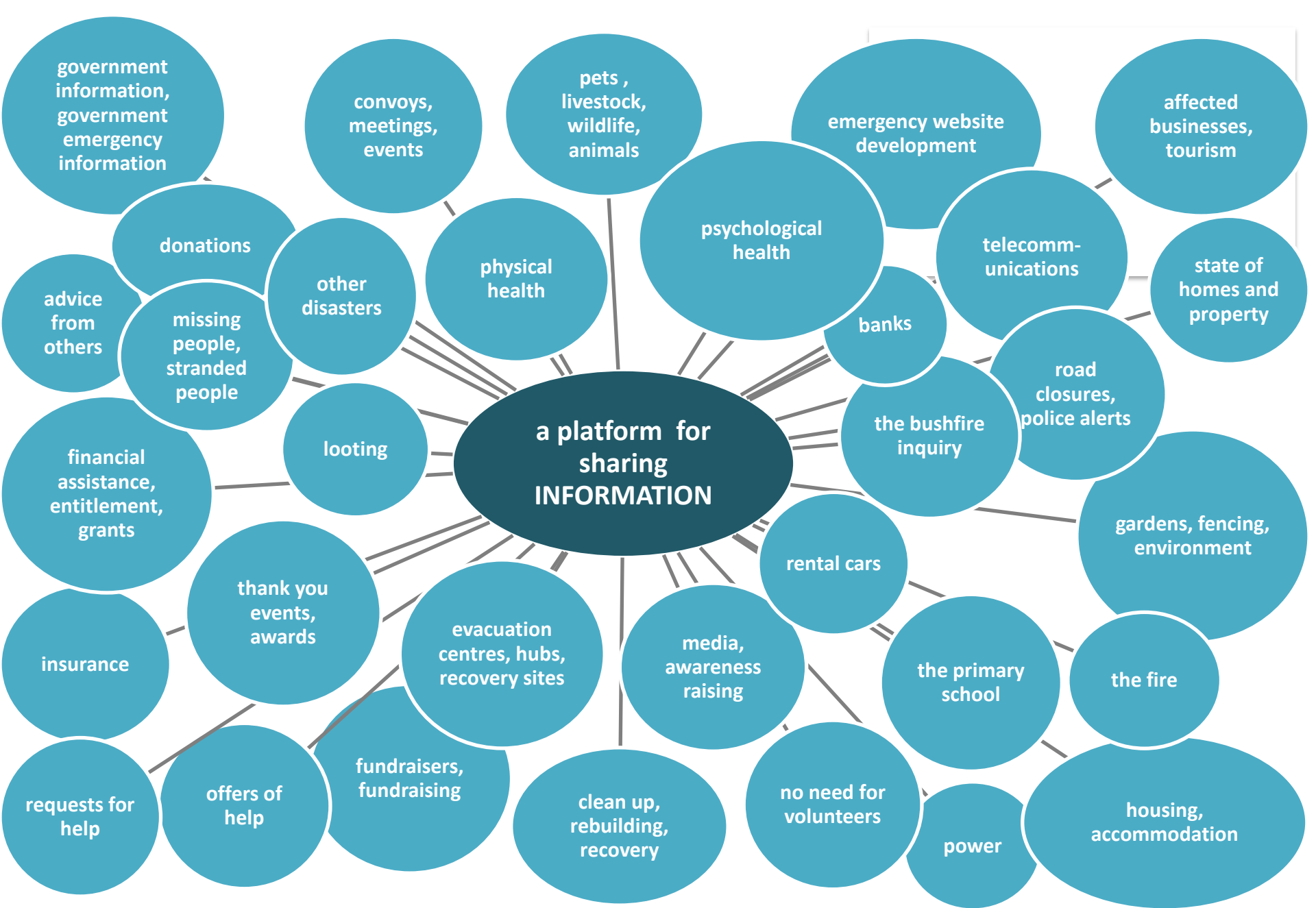
[DPAC.TAS.GOV.AU](http://DPAC.TAS.GOV.AU)

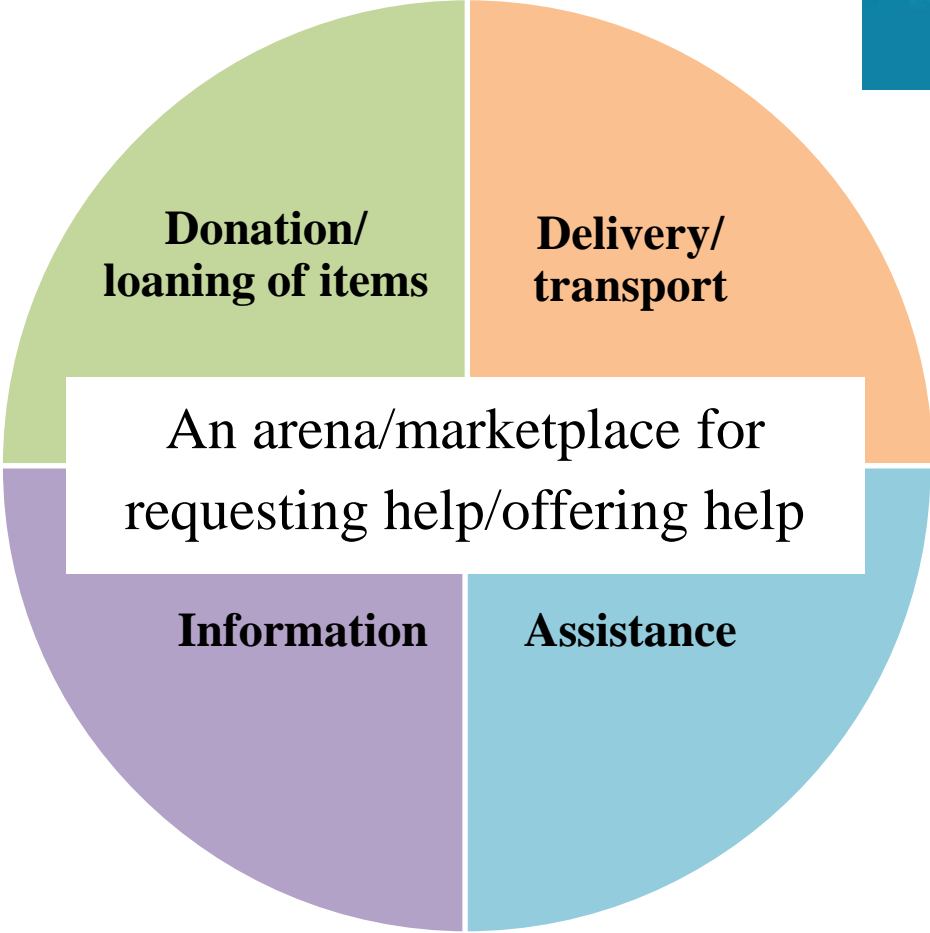
[Like](#) · [Comment](#) · [Share](#)



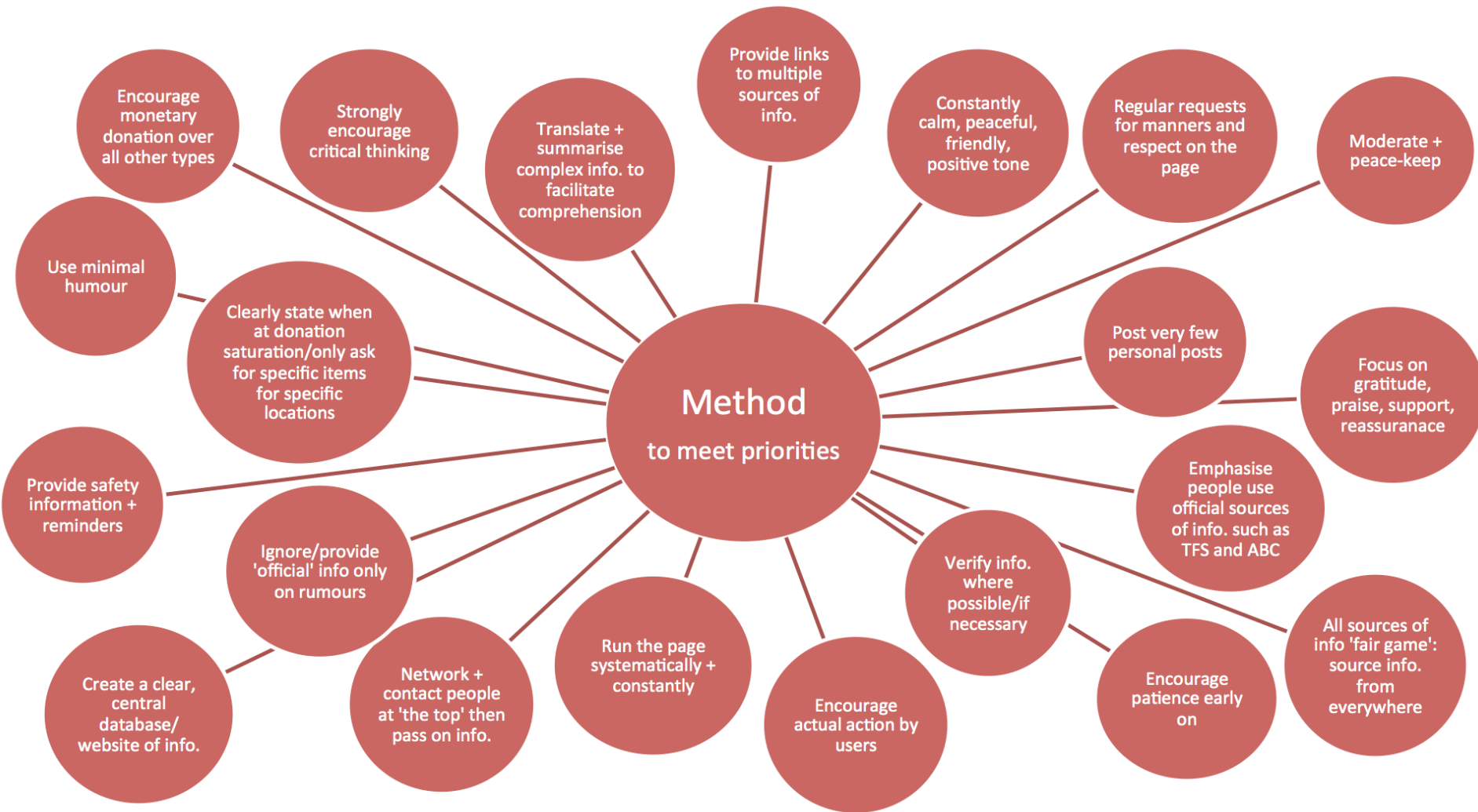


- The Dunalley Recovery Centre/evacuation hub
  - Livestock and livestock food
  - Boats
  - The Foodbank (food delivery)
  - The Sorell RSL RSL (main evacuation hub/Red Cross registration site)
  - Scanning Facebook for me/admin/Twitter/website
  - The emergency vet clinic at Dunalley
  - Blaze Aid – fencing
-













## Key contextual points

- Geography
- Official response
- Time of year
- Media presence
- Response quality



## What we know

- They will come
- They will look for the biggest/fastest/most informative etc.
- Diversity of issues
- Social media will be used
- Social media will be used to form groups



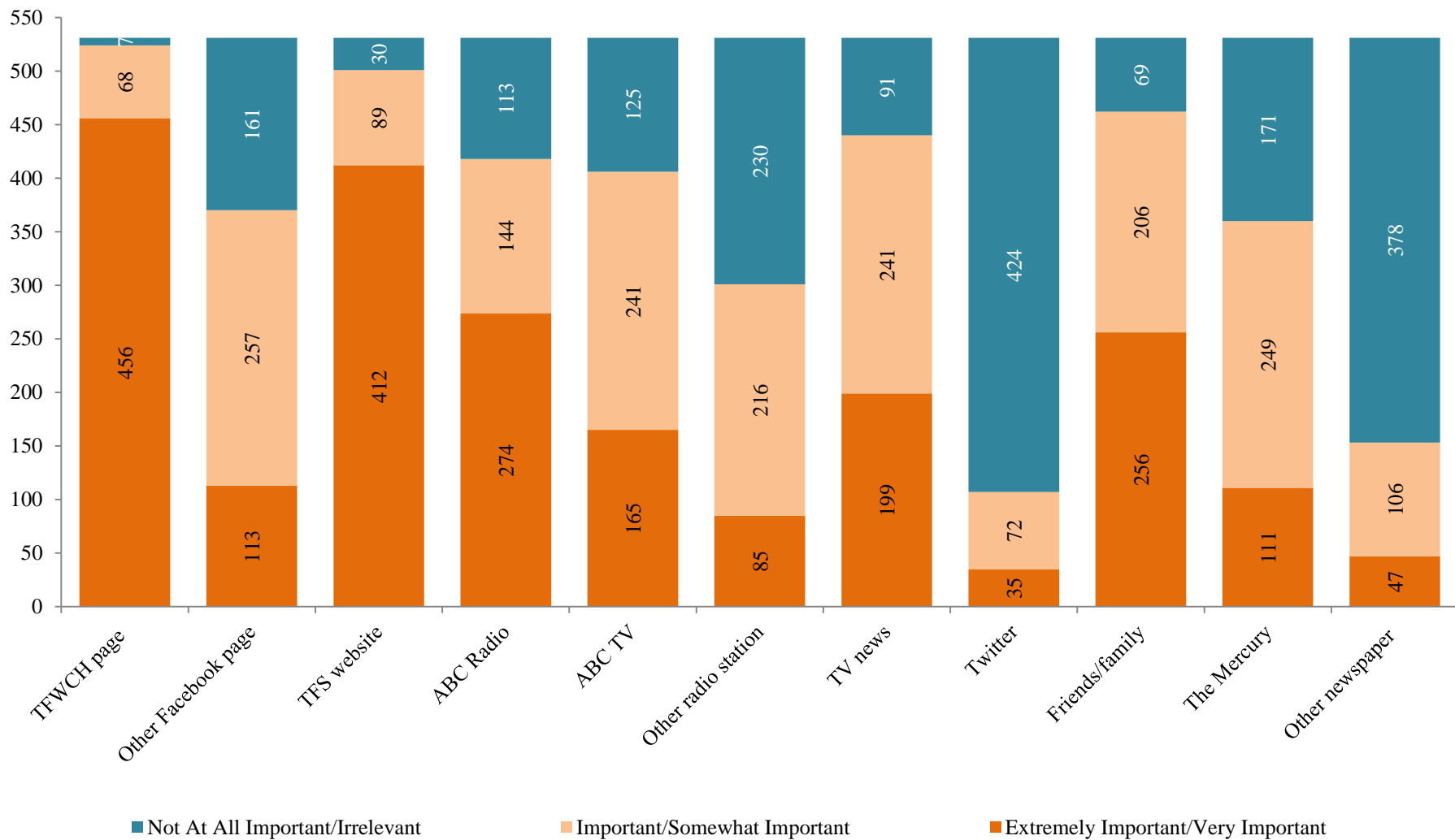
## What else we know

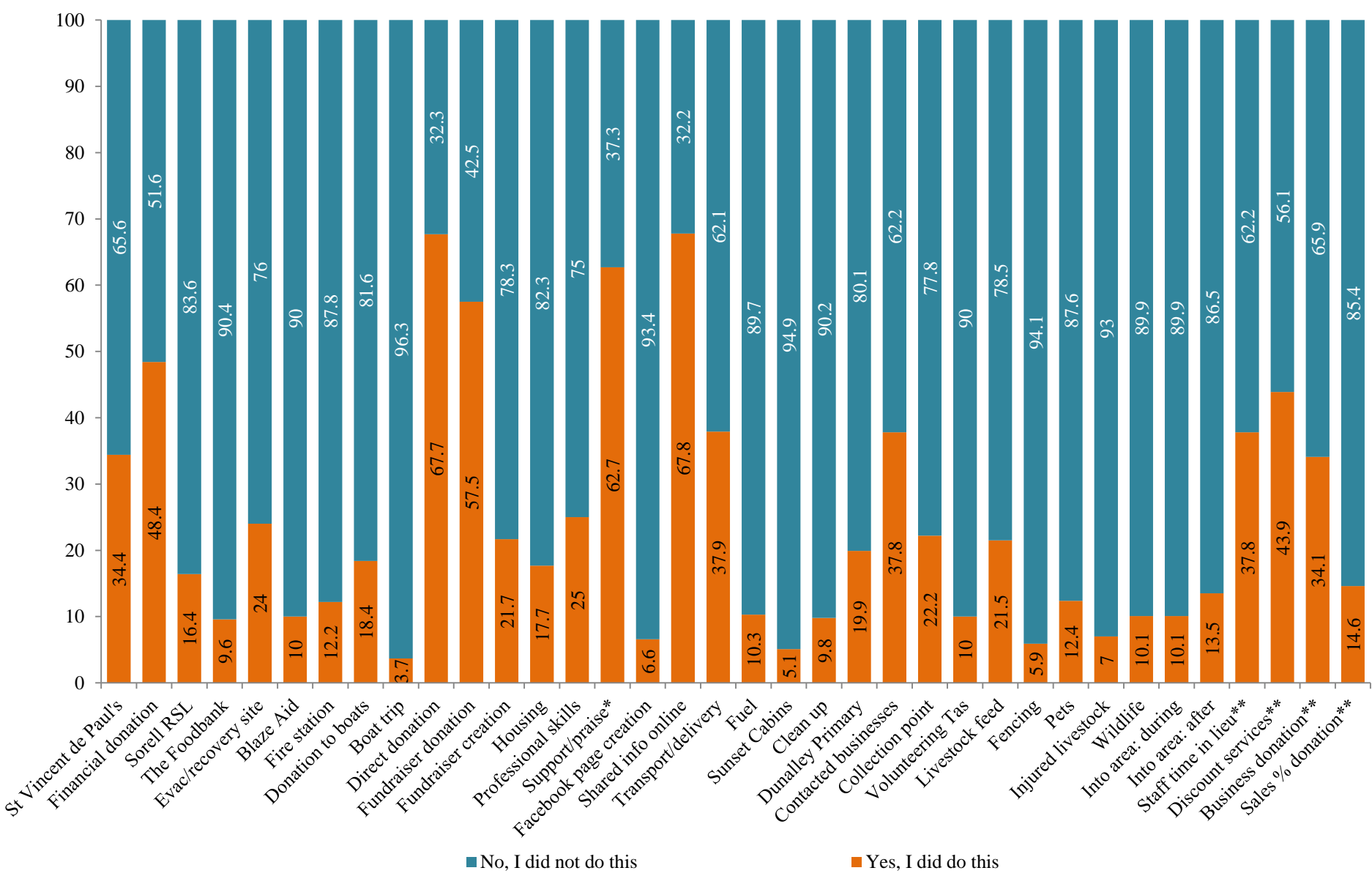
- Most emergent groups are kind of crap!



## Volunteer typologies

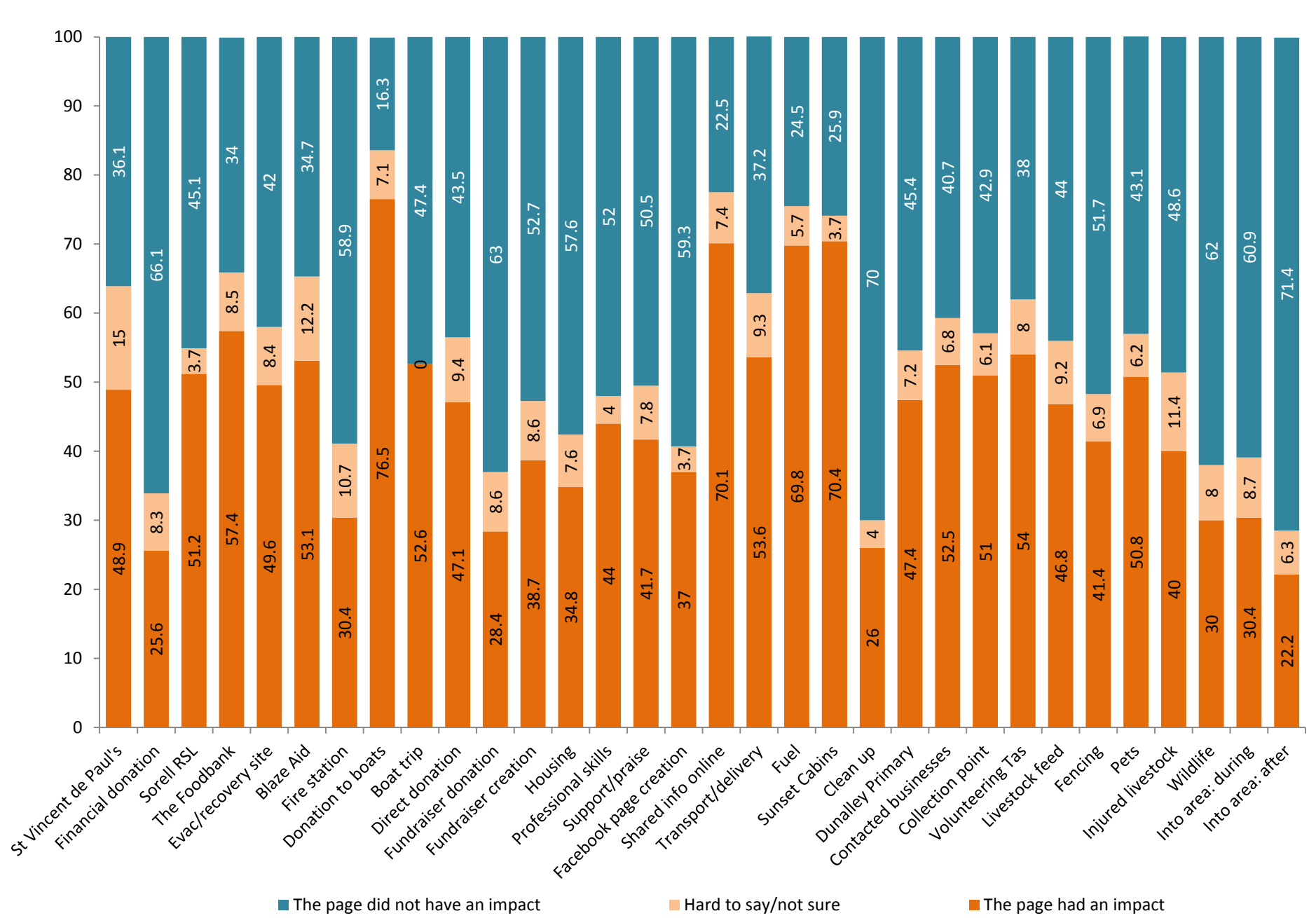
- Fritz & Mathewson (1957): *returnees, anxious, helpers, curious, and the exploiters*
- Kendra & Wachtendorf (2003) as above, PLUS *the supporters and the mourners*

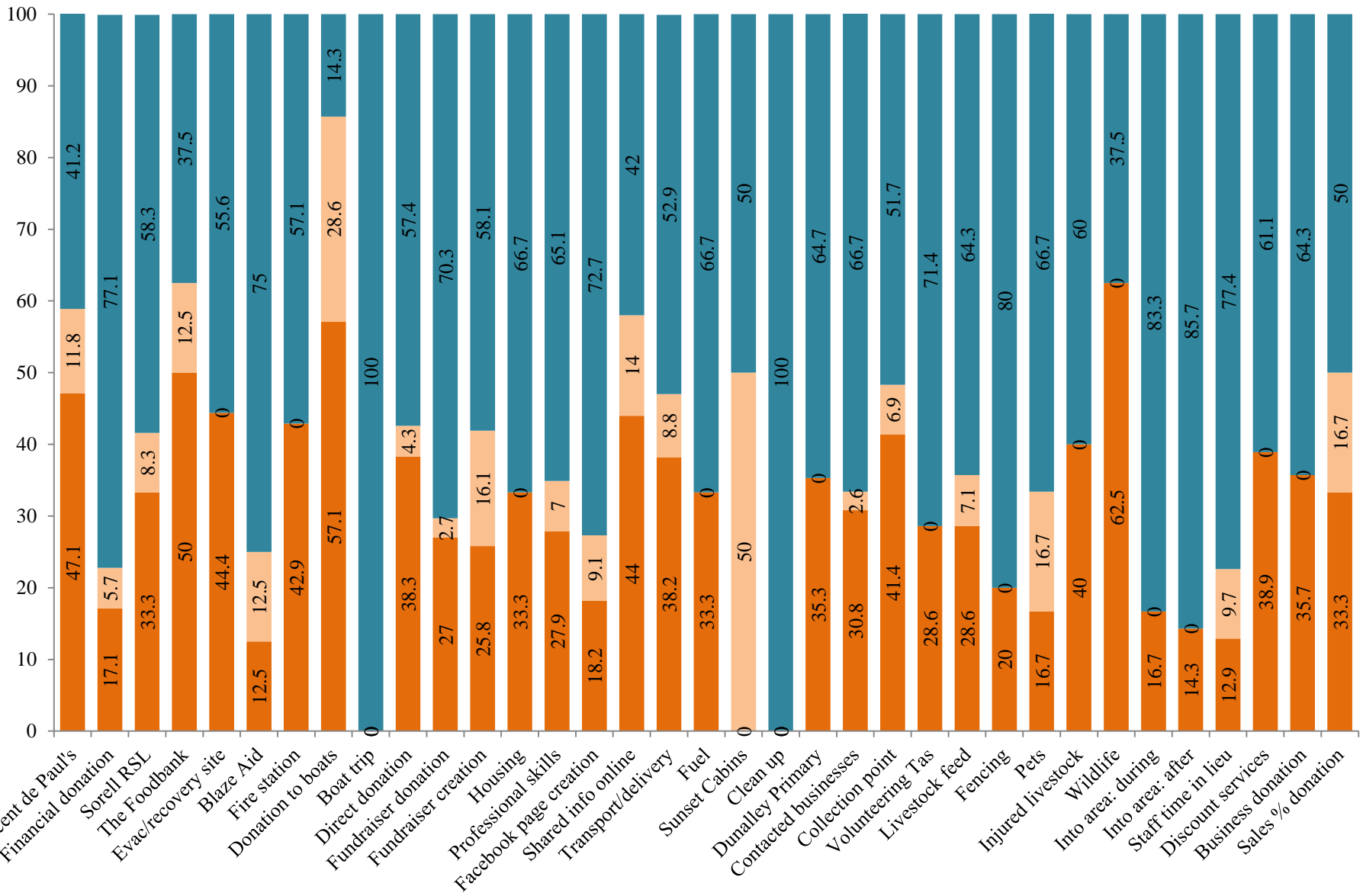




■ No, I did not do this

■ Yes, I did do this





■ The page did not have an impact     
 ■ Hard to say/not sure     
 ■ The page had an impact



	More likely to be done by individuals	
Volunteering activity	Individual	Business
Donate/assist with Vinnies	36.7%	20.7%
Take a boat out to the affected areas	20.0%	8.5%
Give direct help to family/individual	69.4%	57.3%
Donate to a fundraiser	59.6%	45.1%
	More likely to be done by a business	
Create/play important role in a fundraiser	19.0%	37.8%
Offer professional services for free	20.4%	52.4%
Start a Facebook page to assist in some way	5.5%	13.4%
Contact other businesses to get more support	36.1%	47.6%
Give to a specific collection point	20.0%	35.4%



- 8.4% with VT
- 17.5% of these had been actively used
- = 1.7% of group contributed through VT

Assistance sought	%	Assistance sought	%	Assistance sought	%
Sourcing unofficial info	100.0	Sorell RSL	55.8	Tools	27.2
Sharing info: online	90.9	Other FB page links	55.8	House/shack status	27.2
Fire info	84.1	Vinnies	44.2	Replacing lost item	25.6
General support	83.7	Mental health help	41.9	Wildlife	25.6
Sharing info: offline world	77.3	Delivery/transport	37.2	Feeding livestock	23.3
Financial assistance/advice	76.7	Missing person info	34.9	Volunteering Tas	23.2
Feeling connected	75.0	Dunalley Primary	34.9	Blaze Aid	22.7
Government info	69.8	Into area: after	34.9	Repairs	20.9
Evac site info	69.7	Financial support: official charities	32.6	Pets	16.3
Clean up info	69.7	Professional services	30.3	Other fencing	13.6
Support/encouragement	67.5	Into area: during	30.3	Donation for child	13.6
Official info	65.0	Cash donation	27.9	Housing	13.6
Returning safely info	58.1	Fuel	27.9	Injured livestock	11.7
The Foodbank	55.9	Livestock moved	27.5	Animal replacement	11.7

Note: % = percentage of respondents who had identified that the page was either somewhat important, important, or vital to them with this particular assistance



*The goals of psychological first aid (Burke et al., 2013, p. 9)*

Calm people	Reduce distress
Make people feel safe and secure	Identify and assist with current needs
Establish human connection	Facilitate people's social support
Help people understand the disaster and its context	Help people identify their own strengths and abilities to cope
Foster belief in people's ability to cope	Give hope
Assist with early screening for people needing further or specialized help	Promote adaptive functioning
Get people through the first period of high intensity and uncertainty	Set people up to be able to recover naturally from an event
Reduce the risk factors of mental illness as a result of the event, such as post-traumatic stress disorder	



The page was the right page at the right time. We were devastated hearing about the fires, and you provided a means for all of us to really help. The first week was absolutely awesome. I cried lots with the fantastic things people were able to do. Not something I'm prone to do much of - I'm male!! Your page kept us all in touch with real time needs and we really felt what we were doing was actually making a difference. *[sic]*

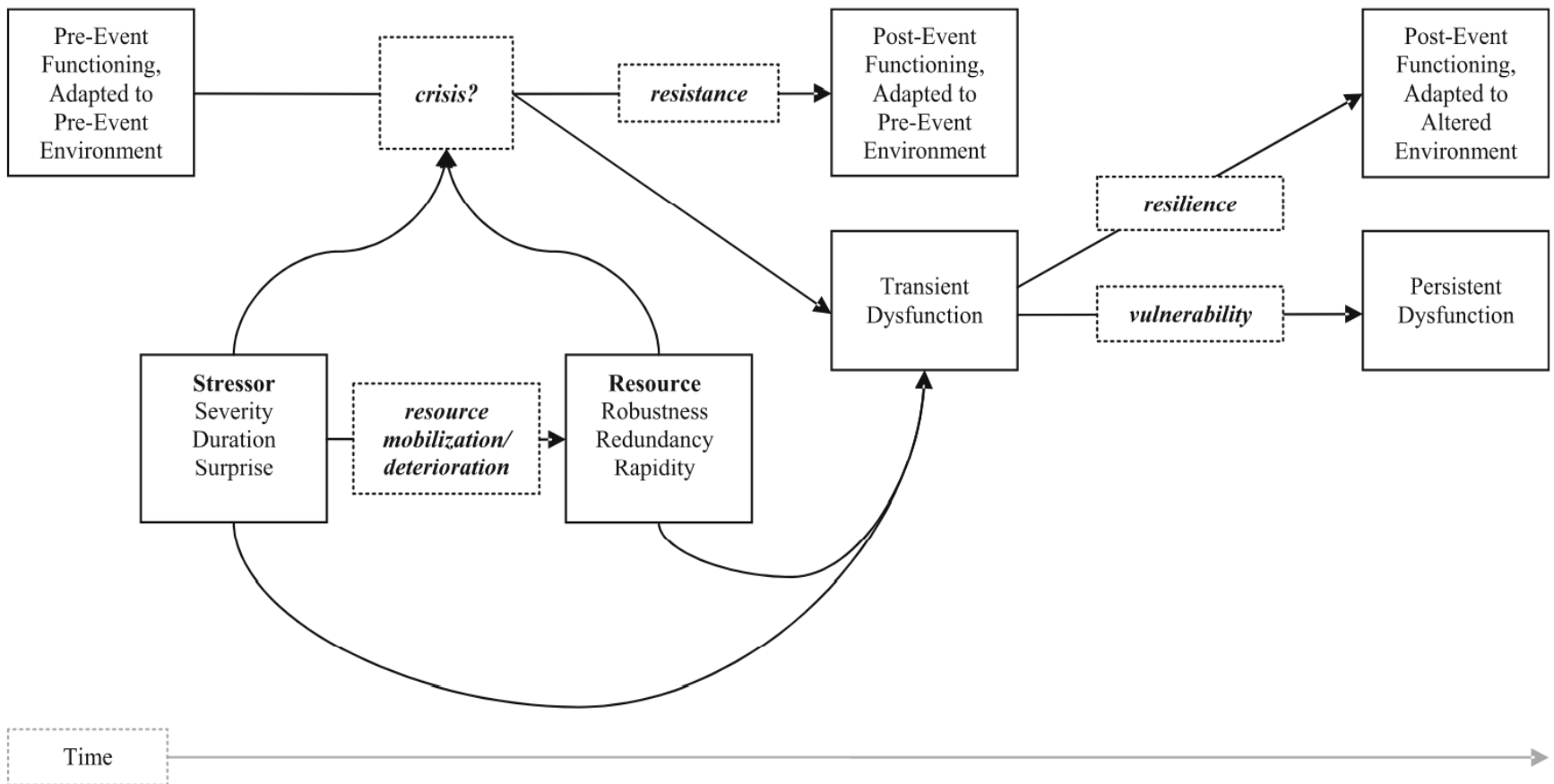
When we were isolated on the [location], this page was the lifesaver of my emotional wellbeing. Just reading of the goodness of strangers and how every one was helping took my mind off the fear I felt of being so isolated. *[sic]*

Everything...we would of had nothing if it wasn't for tfwch and foodbank. I sent a message, received a reply within a few hours and had most supplies by that night. All people delivering supplies went out of their way to help. *[sic]*

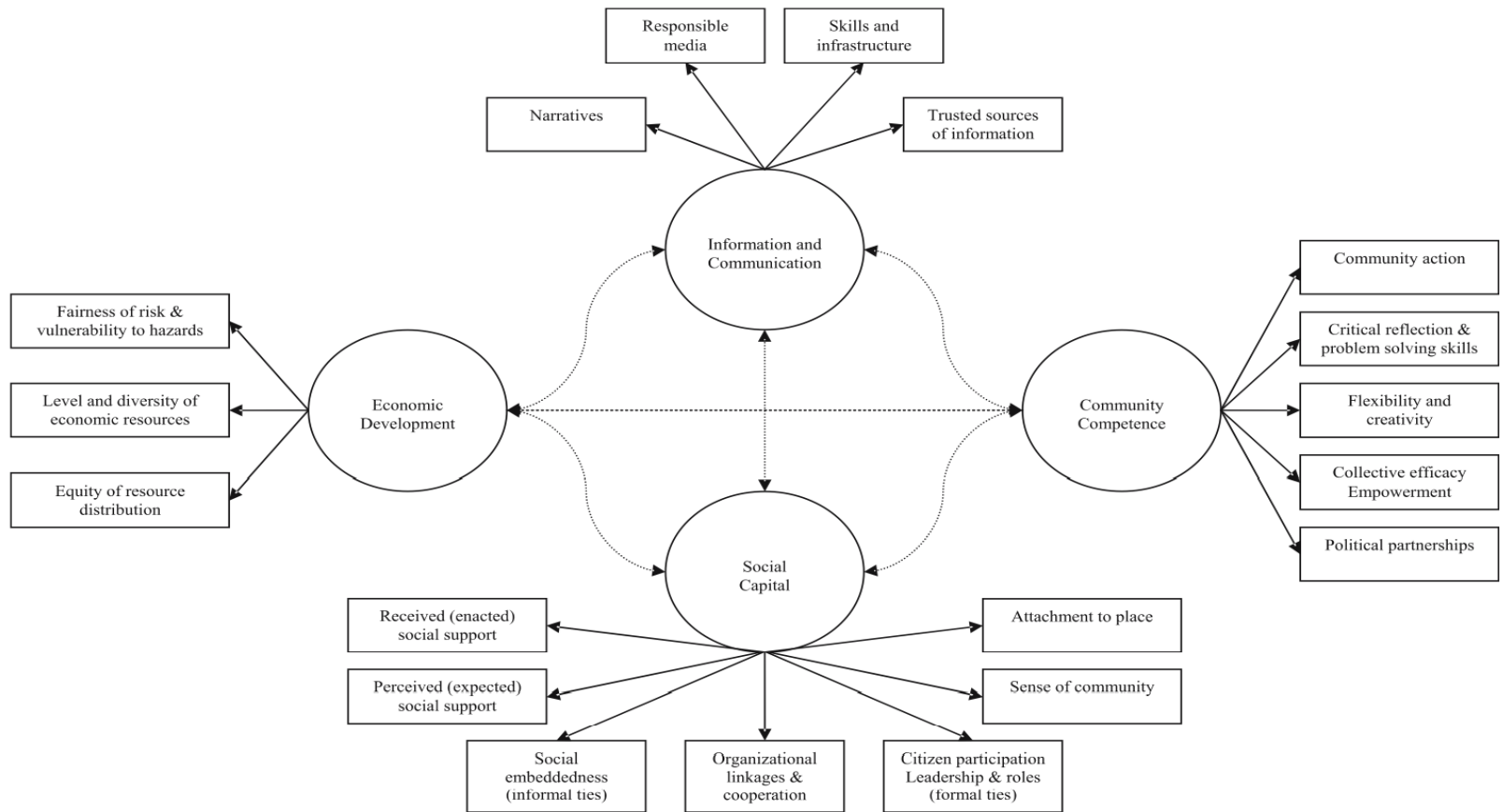


This page was brilliant and the founder should be commended and sent many praises. My [relative] lost her entire house and all her belongings just after losing her husband a few years prior. The house was all her memories and all her possessions. This page was able to get someone to fix my [relative]'s old but sentimental car, which was damaged in the fires by someone on the page. This person did the work for free and had it running better than it was before the fires. My [relative] received donations from everywhere and has now been set up in a government unit at [location] with everything she needs. This page and the people have been amazing. *[sic]*

I helped our little local community of [location] start a refugee centre because we were blocked in between two road closures and unable to return home if we left...none of this would have happened if it wasn't for tfwch. Thank you so much. Ps...we had children, elderly, diabetics and disabled people who would agree with me.... *[sic]*



A model of stress resistance and resilience over time (Norris et al., 2008, p. 130)



Community resilience as a set of networked adaptive capacities (Norris et al., 2008, p. 236)



- Information and communication
- Uncertainty reduction
- Psychological first aid
- Social support
- Economic development
- Empowerment
- Social capital
- Community competence
- A way to utilise spontaneous volunteers

→ Resilience

- Things to work on:
  - Donations
  - Interoperability
  - Risk and safety



- VOST VOST VOST
- Use volunteers....?
- Key decision makers on board?
- Incongruence of messaging
- Social media as tool of control
- Who gets legitimacy?





Voorhees (2007):

- 1) promulgate rules: just a few select, critical rules
- 2) identify and utilise the organising paradigm that the group has set up for themselves: it is likely to be working, and changing it = not smart
- 3) manage the legitimacy you are going to give them knowing they can achieve more if made legitimate
- 4) establish communications with them
- 5) work with their leaders by putting one of your own team in their organisations as a liaison/connector/boundary spanner
- 6) understand the group will be able to evolve and change, so be involved in that process in order to make the change happen in a really useful direction that avoids duplication/being a nuisance

# TASSIE FIRES

*we can help*



## Community driven response and recovery

What does that mean? Seeing a problem, coming up with a fast and safe solution... and going for it!

# Community driven response and recovery

What does that mean? Seeing a problem, coming up with a fast and safe solution... and going for it!

## TASSIE FIRES WE CAN HELP



### Tassie Fires - We Can Help

 Like You like this.



### Tassie Fires - We Can Help

Emergency bushfire warning for White Beach

[http://www.fire.tas.gov.au/Show?](http://www.fire.tas.gov.au/Show?pageId=colCurrentBushfires)

[pageId=colCurrentBushfires](http://www.fire.tas.gov.au/Show?pageId=colCurrentBushfires)

 March 11 at 2:28pm



### Tassie Fires - We Can Help

A free BBQ and social gathering - it's on tomorrow night at the Dunalley Neighbourhood House!



**Event**  
beyondblue invites you to enjoy a Community Night Out - a free BBQ and social gathering for individuals and families in The Tasman and surrounding districts.  
There'll be activities for all ages and the opportunity to chat with beyondblue Chairman, Jeff Kennett AC.

 Facebook social plugin

## CONTACT MEL

Message me through the Facebook page

Email me

Call me 0438 330 998

## EVENTS AND FUNDRAISERS

## ALERT TAS WEBSITE

This is the Tasmanian Government Emergency Website.



[Go here now!](#)

## GOOGLE CRISIS MAPPING

[See what is happening in your area NOW](#)

## NEARBY SAFER PLACES

[What are these?](#)

Where are they? None right now!

## 936 ABC HOBART



936 ABC Hobart

 Like 9,225



936 ABC Hobart

Tonight on Statewide Evenings with Helen Shield we want to know this - what were your earliest adventures at growing plants?



## HELP

I WANT TO HELP NOW

I NEED HELP NOW

## TASMANIA FIRE SERVICE



[Fire Danger Rating](#) How "risky" is the weather? If a fire starts, how bad could it get?



[Current Fires](#) What fires are burning now? Where, how bad are they, do you need to be on alert?

## EVACUATION CENTRES

None right now!

## LATEST STORY

### The Bushfire Inquiry 2013

If you are interested in the findings of the Inquiry, which were released on October 15th 2013, check out this story! [Read more](#)

Posted Wednesday, 23 October 2013, 01:00 pm

## RED CROSS DONATIONS

Donating money is hands-down the BEST way you can help. I know it isn't the most "exciting" - but it is the BEST way you can help.

## EVENTS AND FUNDRAISERS

Yes! Get on board!!

Check our [Facebook album](#) for posters of events and fundraisers.

Got an event I don't know about? Please [email me](#) with the poster attached - it's gotta be a JPEG file.

Don't know how to make a JPEG? [Go here...](#)

## TASMANIA FIRE SERVICE



Tasmania Fire Service

[Like](#) 24,777



Tasmania Fire Service

For more information please visit [www.fire.tas.gov.au](http://www.fire.tas.gov.au) and select Publications

### Heating Fire Safety



1. **Don't** place clothing too close to heater - it could or will **burn** (see red mark on bed) from any source of heat.
2. **Never** leave clothes near the heater if heating the house or going to bed.
3. **Check** clothing regularly if staying near a heater.
4. **Use** the covers of all fires with care items.
5. **Don't** sit too close to the heaters.
6. **Clean** and maintain chimneys and heater flues yearly.
7. **Maintain** heaters according to manufacturer's instructions.
8. **Don't** leave your heater door open or remove covers on open fire.
9. **Be** careful with the **disposal** of ashes from the hearth or wood heater. Ashes can be kept up to the door to cool. Always place ashes in a metal container. Discard of ashes well clear of your house and your water meter tank.
10. **Never** use an outdoor heater indoors.

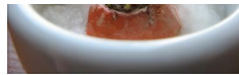
[Like](#) 10 hours ago

Tasmania Fire Service

[Facebook social plugin](#)

## KEEPING INFORMED DURING BUSHFIRES

ABC Radio is the national Emergency



[Like](#) about an hour ago



936 ABC Hobart via ABC Northern Tasmania

Historian Nicholas Clements argues Tasmanians need a greater understanding of the

[Facebook social plugin](#)

## TASMANIA POLICE



Tasmania Police

[Like](#) 46,272



Tasmania Police

Targa Tasmania 2014

Targa Tasmania begins with a prologue at Kayene and George Town, tomorrow, Tuesday 6 May 2014, followed by different stages of the event being held around the state until Sunday, when it finishes in Hobart on Sunday 11 May 2014.

"Targa is always popular with spectators of all ages and we encourage them to enjoy the event, but to also be mindful of the dangers that can be associated with any motorsport event," said Inspector Shane LeFevre....

[Facebook social plugin](#)

## DODGES FERRY FIRE BRIGADE



Dodges Ferry Fire Brigade

[Like](#) 4,899

...but it is the BEST way you can help.



Other ways to donate money

## A BIT OF RESEARCH ON THE SIDE

Bushfire preparedness, crisis communication, disaster resilience, spontaneous volunteerism, emergency management, social media, empowerment, trust, leadership, active participation, community competence... Do you work or do research in these areas? [I'd like to hear from you!](#)

## SES TASMANIA



SES Tasmania

[Like](#) 6,243



SES Tasmania

A Severe Weather Warning is current for Damaging Surf for the South East Tasmania forecast district. <http://www.bom.gov.au/tas/warnings/severe.shtml>



[Like](#) 10 hours ago

# Melanie Irons

- [www.tassiefireswecanhelp.com](http://www.tassiefireswecanhelp.com)
- Facebook:  
“Tassie Fires – We Can Help”
- [melanie.iron@utas.edu.au](mailto:melanie.iron@utas.edu.au)
- ABC Australian Story:  
– “Irons in the Fire”

