



Australian Government
National Emergency Management Agency

Australian Institute for
Disaster Resilience



Annual Report 2024-25





AIDR acknowledges the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as the first inhabitants and Traditional Custodians of the lands on which we live, work and learn. As part of the trans-Tasman organisation, AFAC, AIDR acknowledges the Māori as the Tāngata Whenua and Treaty of Waitangi partners in Aotearoa New Zealand. We pay our respects to their ancestors and Elders – both past and present.

AIDR recognises the importance of reconciliation in creating stronger, safer, more inclusive and resilient communities. Through AFAC's partnership with Reconciliation Australia, and embodied in our Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan 2024–26, we hope to make a meaningful contribution to honouring the histories, cultures and contributions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

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Foreword

Disasters are neither natural nor inevitable, but they are increasingly intense and costly economically, socially, culturally, and for the planet. In the words of Professor Ilan Kelman, ‘we choose disasters’.

This seems counterintuitive because many are the product of natural processes we can’t control. However, we choose to allow people to live in places at risk, build homes that can’t withstand great forces, and not put in place warning systems that allow people to make safe evacuations. Having sat across the kitchen tables from people who have lost everything dear to them, I intensely know the true costs of disasters.

As the Australian Institute for Disaster Resilience (AIDR) approaches its 10th anniversary, the world in which we live becomes increasingly more volatile and complex. Disaster risk was once thought of as the simple intersection of a hazard with an exposed population, but now it is increasingly recognised as the product of consequences that cascade through interconnected and increasingly fragile systems.

The good news is that much of the thinking, practice and tools to deal with these challenges have already been made available by those working in our sector. Our challenge is to make them available in a systematic and sustained way.

Evidence that AIDR achieved its intended end-of-strategy outcomes were demonstrated through responses the recent stakeholder survey. More than 65% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that AIDR’s materials and/or professional development events had:

- helped them build stronger connections with others working in disaster resilience (65%)
- enhanced their knowledge and understanding of disaster resilience (86%)
- improved their capability for evidence and values-based decision-making for improved disaster resilience (71%).

AFAC secured a new contract for the delivery of AIDR on behalf of NEMA in early 2025. The new contract brings a new focus. AIDR

will concentrate on disaster risk reduction, resilience and recovery. Recognising that disaster risk reduction is everyone’s business, it will focus on non-traditional actors, including local governments, local agencies, the community services sector.

Over the past year AIDR successfully delivered the Australian Disaster Resilience Conference in Sydney, published the *Planning for Animals Handbook*, a revised *Tsunami Emergency Planning Handbook*, the *Major Incidents Report 2023–24* and 4 editions of the *Australian Journal of Emergency Management*, including the first Indigenous edition. AIDR established a new webinar series focused on foundational knowledge for disaster risk reduction, delivered 4 Volunteer Leadership Programs and 43 masterclasses. Over 510,000 people visited the Australian Disaster Resilience Knowledge Hub over 3.5 million times.

This could not have been achieved without the support from our primary funder and strategic policy agency, NEMA. AIDR acknowledges NEMA for their ongoing support.

AIDR also thanks our key partners AFAC and the Australian Red Cross, for their support in the development and delivery of knowledge products and services for a disaster resilient Australia.

I’d like to recognise and thank the staff of AIDR and AFAC for their tireless work and passion in delivering this important work. I would also like to acknowledge the leadership of AIDR under my predecessor, Dr Margaret Moreton, through to the end of 2024. These are big shoes to fill. As the late, great Joe Strummer of The Clash once said, ‘Without people, yer nothing’.



John Richardson

Executive Director, AIDR



The AIDR team

About AIDR



About AIDR

AIDR is the national knowledge institute for disaster risk reduction and resilience. AIDR collaborates across sectors to strengthen the resilience of Australian communities to disasters.

AIDR develops, curates and shares knowledge and learning to educate and promote good practice in disaster risk reduction and resilience to enable informed decision-making and action.



AIDR's partners

Building on extensive knowledge and experience from within Australia and internationally, AIDR works with all levels of government, non-government organisations, not-for-profits, research organisations, education partners, the health sector, community organisations and the private sector to enhance disaster resilience through innovative thought leadership, professional development and knowledge sharing.



Influencing change

AIDR contributes to a more disaster resilient Australia through 4 key influencing strategies:

- Actively supporting, growing and sustaining a range of networks across sectors and jurisdictions.
- Enabling those with a role in disaster risk reduction and resilience to come together to learn, develop and innovate.

- Collecting, developing, curating and sharing knowledge to educate and promote good practice in disaster risk reduction and resilience.
- Providing a central focus point for national thought leadership on disaster risk reduction and resilience.



History of AIDR

AIDR's journey started when national scale capability in emergency management and disaster risk reduction started in Australia in 1956 with the establishment of the Australian Civil Defence School at Mount Macedon, Victoria. Over time, the college evolved into the Australian Emergency Management Institute (AEMI) under the auspice of Emergency Management Australia. AIDR was created in 2015 following the closure of AEMI. AIDR was established as a consortium between AFAC, the Australian Red Cross and the Bushfire and Natural Hazards Cooperative Research Centre, with AFAC as the managing partner. AIDR's remit was sector development.



AIDR's future

Over the intervening 10 years, AIDR has successfully delivered on building capability for the emergency management sector. Moving into the next stage of AIDR's future, AFAC continues to manage this important contribution to reducing disaster risk on behalf NEMA.



Australian Government

Australian Institute for
Disaster Resilience



Australian Institute
for Disaster Resilience

2021-2025

OUR APPROACH

Influencing Strategy – Thought Leadership

AIDR continues to influence strategic thinking and systemic change by leading and participating in national forums focused on disaster risk reduction and resilience.

AIDR's Executive Director and members of the AIDR team are active members or observers of national committees, influencing disaster risk reduction and resilience policy development, discussions and outcomes. These include:

- Community Outcomes and Recovery Subcommittee of Australia-New Zealand Emergency Management Committee (ANZEMC)
- National Emergency Management Agency's Charitable, Not-for-Profit and Philanthropic Roundtable
- Disaster Ready Fund Assessment Panel.

AIDR's inclusion in several expert advisory groups and committees is highly valuable as many organisations and sectors work to build knowledge and capacity in relation to disaster risk reduction and resilience. This financial year, the AIDR team participated in strategic advisory groups and committees at the national and state level including:

- Social Recovery Reference Group
- Natural Hazards Research Australia (NHRA) Disaster Challenge Steering Committee and Judging Panel
- Advisory Board for the National Centre for Outdoor Risk and Readiness
- National Indigenous Disaster Resilience Community of Practice
- Disability Inclusive Disaster Risk Reduction (DIDRR) Expert Advisory Group
- National Infant and Child Disaster Mental Health Advisory Committee
- NHRA Remote and Rural Lifelines Project Working Group
- NHRA Urban Resilience Project

- Person-Centred Emergency Preparedness Peer Leadership Project National Advisory Group
- Victoria University and Youth Affairs Council Victoria's Consultation for the National Centre of Excellence: Young People and Disasters
- University of Melbourne's Beyond Disasters Working Group and Children and Disasters Advisory Committee
- NHRA Early and Mid-Career Practitioner Network.

AIDR presented at the following conferences or events:

- RSPCA Animals in Emergency Conference 2025
- NHRA Research Forum
- University of Melbourne Recovery Short Course
- Australian Disaster Resilience Conference panel sessions.

In January 2025, AIDR's Executive Director, John Richardson met with the Chair and Executive Director of the UK's National Preparedness Commission, the UK Resilience College and Cabinet Office, London Resilience Forum, and Royal Borough of Kensington. In June, John also attended the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction in Geneva, and to the Accelerator Systemic Risk Assessment's Currents of Change Symposium in Paris.

Currents of Change

New Horizons in Systemic Risk



ASRA Currents of Change Symposium, Paris 2024.



GLOBAL
PLATFORM FOR
DISASTER RISK
REDUCTION

SWITZERLAND
2-6 JUNE
2025



GLOBAL
PLATFORM FOR
DISASTER RISK
REDUCTION

SWITZERLAND
2-6 JUNE
2025

ASRA Currents of Change Symposium, Paris 2024.

303

Australian Institute for Disaster Resilience

Why are disasters not natural?

We often encounter the term "natural disaster" in conversations, media and research.

But there is no such thing as a "natural" disaster.

Roads, houses, buildings, dust storms, earthquakes, tsunamis and storms are natural hazards.

Natural hazards only lead to disaster when they occur where people or infrastructure are vulnerable to the impacts of the hazard and the impacts exceed people's capacity to cope.

The term "natural disaster" suggests that these events are caused by forces outside our control and that we are responsible for the impact.

But vulnerability often results from deliberate actions like building in high-risk areas or having poor building practices. Poverty, inequality and social exclusion also contribute to increased risk.

This is because people may not have the money live in a safer area, to build a stronger house, or to take preparedness actions. People may not have a strong social network to help them reduce their risks.

As a society, we create the conditions for disasters. Natural hazards do not choose who is more vulnerable, but we do. We can make active decisions to reduce risks and avoid disasters.¹

1. National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) Second National Action Plan, We're doing it this time.

2. See International Disaster Response Centre: How our actions turn natural hazards into disasters.

TIP: Language and terminology matters. Let's describe disasters better so that we can prevent or reduce the impact of the actions involved in reducing disaster risk.

DISASTERS ARE NOT NATURAL

#NoNaturalDisasters

www.nonaturaldisasters.com

KNOWLEDGE AIDR.ORG.AU

Australian Red Cross

afac

ADRC 2024 Knowledge Centre.

Influencing Strategy – Networks

Every Australian jurisdiction is represented in AIDR's network membership including representatives from all levels of government, not-for-profit groups, emergency management agencies, other sectors (e.g. education and volunteering), various charitable organisations, and the private sector. These networks provide opportunities for members to support one another, learn from each other and share experiences.

The top 3 sectors that engage in AIDR's activities are:

- emergency services/emergency management agencies
- local government
- state government agencies.

AIDR continued to support the Jurisdictional Emergency Management Education Network (JEMEN) through to the end of 2024. The aim of the network is to collaborate and share knowledge and initiatives, develop national consistencies in collaboration, share knowledge, governance arrangements, and technology. With the shift in focus towards local government and local agencies, it was agreed that JEMEN would become a stand-alone network, independent of AIDR.

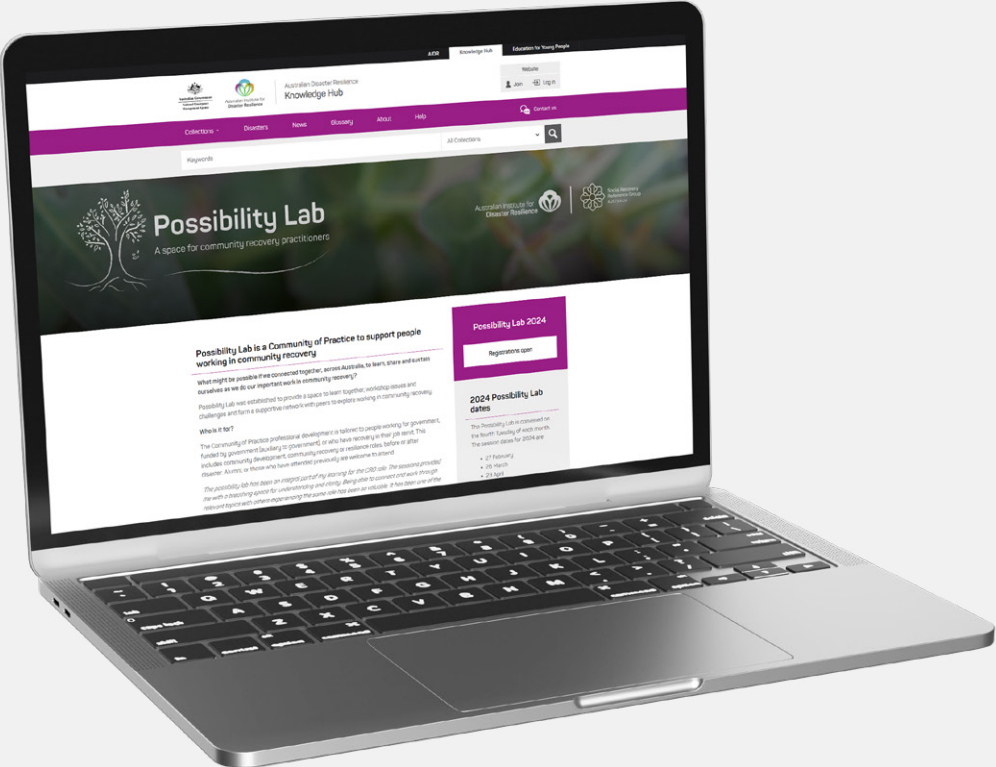
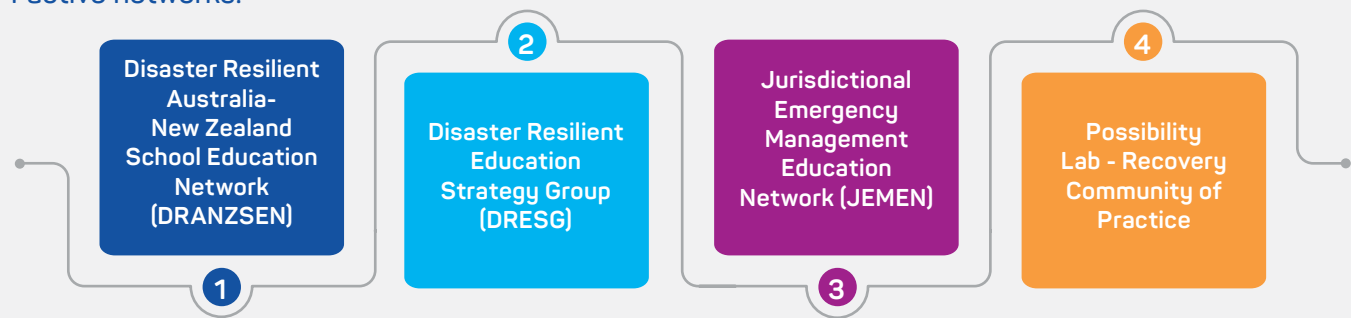
AIDR maintained its partnership with the Social Recovery Reference Group, created under the auspices of the Community Outcomes and Recovery Subcommittee (CORS) of ANZEMC, to host 4 Possibility Lab Recovery Community of Practice sessions.

Possibility Lab provides a space for learning, workshopping issues and forming a supportive network with peers. Throughout the year, 393 members from the target audience of community-facing government and non-government recovery workers participated in the 4 sessions. These sessions explored themes of successful disaster recovery, preparing high-risk communities, recovery funding, collaboration, community led recovery, rebuilding, supporting recovery transition and creating a culture of inclusion in disaster preparedness. Participants attended from all Australian states and territories.

Highlights:



4 active networks:



Influencing Strategy – Capability

**MORE THAN
5,000** people connected from
a broad range of sectors
and jurisdictions

44 professional
development events

4 volunteer leadership programs

Building capability across the system is a key part of AIDR's plan to make Australia more resilient to disasters. We do this by hosting professional development events such as masterclasses and webinars, as well as important national events such as the Australian Disaster Resilience Conference, the Resilient Australia Awards, and the Volunteer Leadership Program. These initiatives help people learn from each other and from experts, share knowledge, build or strengthen relationships, and contribute to national disaster resilience and risk reduction outcomes.

AIDR's professional development program supports both new and experienced emergency and disaster resilience practitioners, whether they are paid staff or volunteers. Surveys from our events and annual stakeholder survey show that AIDR effectively helps a community of people stay connected, informed, knowledgeable, and capable of making evidence-based and values-driven decisions for better disaster resilience.

Key outcomes:

- Those new to disaster resilience are building their networks and knowledge base.
- People have a better understanding and awareness of good practice and share insights and learnings across communities and sectors.
- People working across the resilience system better understand their interconnected roles and contribution to disaster risk reduction.

In 2023–24, AIDR delivered and facilitated 40 professional development events and 4 Volunteer Leadership Programs. AIDR's events were attended by more than 5,000 people. Of these, 90% strongly agreed that their knowledge was improved, 92% stated they would recommend the event they attended to others, and 92% rated the event they attended as very good or excellent.

Participant feedback:

'I really enjoyed the mix of information and interactive exercises.'

'The practical exercises were a great opportunity for learning. They helped me better understand the learning material and improved my confidence.'

'I will change my approach to work by continuing to push for a change in emergency management to be a systems/holistic approach with connection at the centre.'



Influencing Strategy – Knowledge

AIDR continues to lead the development and promotion of knowledge and good practice for disaster resilience and risk reduction.

AIDR delivers evidence based, high-quality and trusted resources through the [Australian Disaster Resilience Handbook Collection](#).

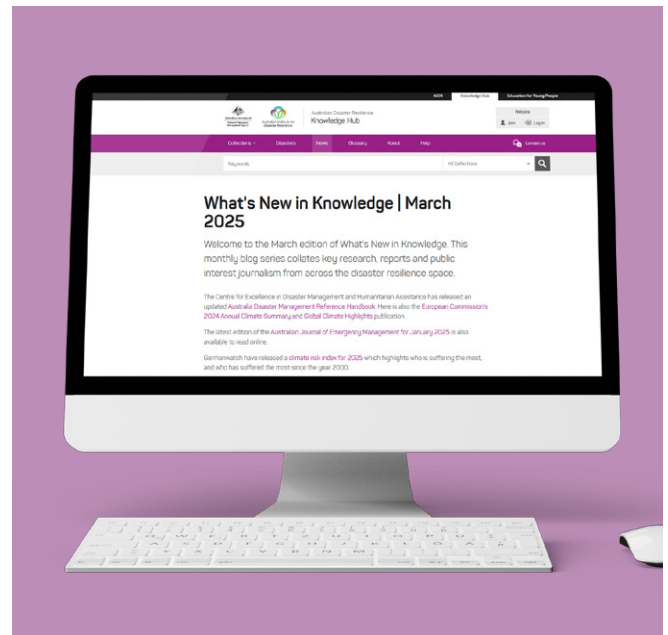
AIDR's knowledge products and services are valued as high quality, credible and practical. Almost 575,000 people accessed materials across the 3 AIDR websites, with 3,588,573 page views on the [AIDR Knowledge Hub](#), 445,219 page views on the corporate [AIDR website](#), and 30,635 page views on the [Education for Young People website](#).

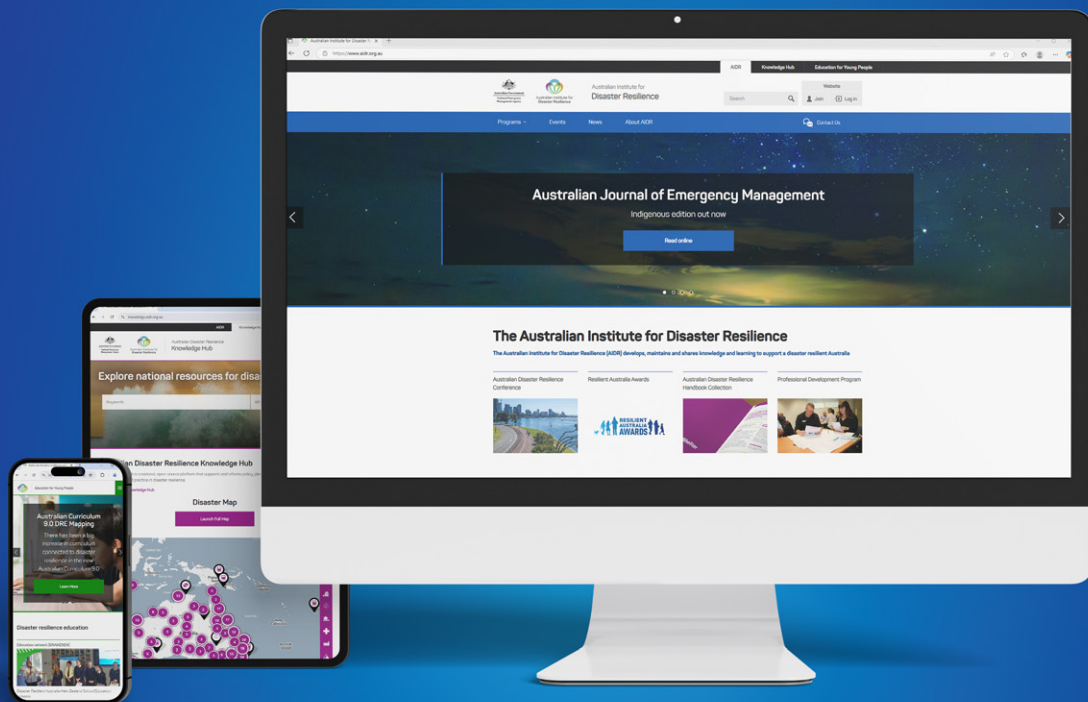
The Australian Disaster Mapper was the most accessed resource with 372,174 page views.

The [Major Incidents Report 2023–24](#) was launched at the National Disaster Preparedness Summit hosted by NEMA in September 2024. The report was downloaded 1,197 times in 2024–25. The second [Australia's Riskscape Report](#) was published as a companion to the [Major Incidents Report 2023–24](#) and the [Systemic Disaster Risk Handbook](#).

The monthly roundup of national and international reports, research, and public interest pieces in the blog series '[What's New in Knowledge](#)' continues to have strong readership, with over 900 people accessing it monthly.

In 2024–25, all 4 editions of the [Australian Journal of Emergency Management \(AJEM\)](#) were published, including the [first Indigenous research edition in April 2025](#). AJEM was downloaded 944 times in full over the course of the year.





Impact and engagement

Events



over **90%** of participants agree or strongly agree the event they attended increased their knowledge.



31
online events



5
face-to-face



4
hybrid events

Participants

top three sectors in attendance

State government
18%

Local government
15%

Emergency management
12%

VLP **86** volunteers participated

97%
respondents reported an increase in local leadership

95%
respondents reported an overall improvement of their knowledge

100%
respondents indicated they would recommend the program to others

ADRC

84%
rated ADRC as a whole excellent or very good

94%
said that they would recommend the conference to others

93%
said the conference met or exceeded their expectation

Knowledge Hub

accessed over

3.5 million

times by
more than

513,000
people



Australian Disaster Mapper

has more than

372,000
engagements



Thought Leadership

46 Conferences, panels or workshops where AIDR provided input

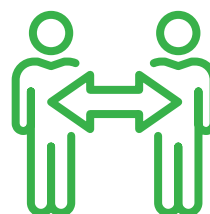
20 Representations on national committees to influence change

88 Media mentions



Engagement

27 Sectors across **9** Australian jurisdictions engaged



23,491
Stakeholders engaged

Professional development events



Throughout 2024–25, AIDR delivered 44 professional development events in person and online.

These events included:

- Australian Disaster Resilience Conference
- Lessons Management Forum
- Resilient Australia Awards National Ceremony
- 22 Masterclasses
 - » Decision Making Under Pressure: New Skills for the New Normal (8)
 - » Facilitating Successful Debriefs (4)
 - » Leadership in Crisis and Adversity (3)
 - » Meteorology for Disaster Managers (6)
- 14 Webinars
 - » NAIDOC Week webinar
 - » International Day for Disaster Risk Reduction: Empowering the next generation for a resilient future
 - » Major Incidents Report Showcase
 - » Recovery Uncovered (3)

- » Disability Inclusive Emergency Management Toolkit Launch (hybrid event)
- » Youth voice, agency and leadership in disaster risk reduction: A panel discussion with students from Upwey High School (hybrid event)
- » Cyclone Tracy – 50 years on
- » Animals in Disasters Handbook launch
- » Disability Inclusive Emergency Management Online Toolkit Launch
- » Resilience Matters (2)
- » Spotlight Series

AIDR continues to host online events as a way of supporting participation of people across Australia and beyond. While AIDR does receive requests for in-person events, online delivery continues to be the most inclusive way to encourage broad audiences to engage with disaster resilience learning opportunities. Participants came from all Australian states and territories, and overseas. The top 3 sectors who attended AIDR's events were:

- state government (18%)
- local government (15%)
- emergency management (12%).

Other key sectors that attended AIDR's events were:

- emergency services (9%)
- Commonwealth Government (6%)
- not-for-profit and NGO (5%)
- community (6%).

Post-event surveys indicate that attendees continue to highly value AIDR's professional development events, with 89% of participants stating that they agree or strongly agree the event they attended increased their knowledge.

Possibility Lab

[Possibility Lab](#) asks the question: What might be possible if we connected together across Australia, to learn, share and sustain ourselves as we do our important work in community recovery?

Possibility Lab is facilitated by members of the Social Recovery Reference Group and supported by AIDR. It serves as a Community of Practice that creates space to connect government and non-government participants across Australia. Possibility Lab is a space to share knowledge, challenges, and experiences, and to build peer support networks in community disaster recovery. Participants come from all Australian states and territories.

During the 2024–25 financial year, 4 Possibility Lab sessions were held, totalling 393 participants. Possibility Lab provides an opportunity for participants to experience mindfulness activities, break out groups and invited speakers. Recordings of the speaker presentations are uploaded to the Knowledge Hub. Website visitors are invited to browse and access any of these recordings.

Online events

continue to be a popular and accessible way for people across Australia to engage with disaster resilience learning. Participants came from all states and territories, as well as overseas.

Post event surveys indicate that attendees continue to highly value AIDR's professional development events, with 90% of participants stating that they agree or strongly agree the event they attended increased their knowledge.

ADRC24:

85%

would recommend

RAA24:

93

attended hybrid

LMF24:

160

attended hybrid

4x

Possibility Labs



Australian Disaster Resilience Conference 2024

The Australian Disaster Resilience Conference 2024 (ADRC24) was held at the International Convention Centre in Sydney on 4–5 September. The conference explored the theme ‘Maintaining momentum: Driving systemic change to create a more resilient future’.

555 delegates attended, 66% of whom attended for the first time. Survey results found that 82% of attendees agreed or strongly agreed that their knowledge around disaster resilience was improved, 84% rated the conference as excellent or very good, and 85% of attendees stated that they would recommend the conference to others.

Top sectors in attendance were local and state government, community and non-government organisations, emergency services and health services. ADRC24 attracted delegates from all Australian states and territories and from overseas.

ADRC24 included 2 presentation streams across both days of the conference. After its popular debut at the 2023 conference, delegates welcomed the return of Resilience Lane which featured 16 exhibitors. AIDR acknowledges NRMA Insurance as sponsors of Resilience Lane, which allowed for the following community and not-for-profit organisations to participate:

- Australian Breastfeeding Association
- Australian Red Cross
- Blue Shield Australia
- DisasterWise Communities Network
- Foundation For Rural And Regional Renewal
- Girls on Fire
- Headspace National Youth Mental Health Foundation

- Mackillop Seasons
- Multicultural Emergency Management Partnership
- National Indigenous Disaster Resilience
- Resilient Ready
- Royal Far West
- The Flagstaff Group
- The Salvation Army Emergency Services
- YACVic

Feedback from ADRC24

‘I enjoyed all the community speakers from NGOS [non-government organisations]. The breaks were good for networking.’

‘The conference was highly informative and well-organised, with a strong lineup of keynote speakers that provided valuable insights into current challenges and innovations in disaster resilience. The diversity of sessions offered a comprehensive view of the field, and the networking opportunities facilitated meaningful connections. Overall, it was a rewarding experience that provided practical takeaways and inspiration for future work in disaster resilience.’

‘Location, speakers and exhibition excellent, and supported by good food.’

The conference program was exceptionally well-structured and insightful, providing a comprehensive overview of current challenges and emerging solutions in disaster resilience.



Australian Disaster Resilience Handbook Collection

The [Australian Disaster Resilience Handbook Collection](#) provides a national focal point to coordinate, develop, and endorse national principles and approaches that set the standard for good practice in disaster risk reduction and resilience across Australia.

Each handbook is developed and reviewed through a rigorous process of national consultation with key stakeholders and subject experts from diverse sectors and jurisdictions across Australia.

In 2024–25, AIDR published the updated the [Planning for Animals Handbook](#) and finalised the updated [Tsunami Emergency Planning in Australia Handbook](#). Work commenced on reviewing the Recovery Handbook and planning the Disaster Risk Reduction Handbook.

In total, handbooks from AIDR's collection were downloaded 18,958 times.

The most downloaded handbooks were:

- [Australian Emergency Management Arrangements](#) (2098 times)
- [Managing Exercises](#) (2,005 times)
- [Incident Management](#) (1,625 times)
- [Community Recovery](#) (1,577 times)
- [Lessons Management](#) (1,203 times)

The Australian Disaster Resilience Handbooks continue to be well regarded and used in a number of different ways. The 2025 AIDR Stakeholder Survey found that 53% of respondents found the handbooks very useful, and 27% found them useful. Only 7% had not used them, and 2% not heard of them.

Feedback from respondents included:

Great tool and often refer back to the handbook.'

'Great Handbooks to use and reference.'

'Very useful and provides specific information.'

'Should be source of truth for workplaces - consider fact sheets or training modules to complement.'

'These are great, and amongst the most valuable things that AIDR does. Please keep these going.'

'We need more handbooks. The work across the system is lifting and new stakeholders are entering this work all the time. We need to have a structured set of guidance material with overview and systemic handbooks that are supported by specific or niche guidance.'

Australian Disaster Resilience Handbook Collection | 2024

Planning for Animals



Australian Government
National Emergency Management Agency

Australian Institute for
Disaster Resilience

Australian Disaster Resilience Handbook Collection | 2025

Tsunami Emergency Planning in Australia



Australian Government
National Emergency Management Agency

Australian Institute for
Disaster Resilience

Australian Journal of Emergency Management

AJEM is Australia's premier journal for emergency management.

AJEM is peer reviewed, published quarterly and features news, reports, and research from all areas of emergency management theory and practice, with a focus on risk reduction, readiness, response, and recovery.

In 2024–25 there were 4 editions of AJEM published which are freely accessible on the AIDR Knowledge Hub. Selected AJEM articles can also be accessed in themed collections on the Knowledge Hub for people searching for information on specific topics such as recovery, volunteering and emergency planning.

Online subscriptions have remained steady, with 4,381 people subscribing to the journal.

Top AJEM downloads:

- October 2024 edition (302 downloads)
- AJEM contributor guidelines (301 downloads)
- July 2024 edition (279 downloads)

While the top downloads reflect the most recent editions, it is also noteworthy that people are accessing prior editions of the journal to inform their practice.

The AJEM contributor guidelines were accessed 301 times, that's a 40% rise on the previous year (which was 200 times), reflecting a strong interest in publishing in the journal.



Major Incidents Report 2023–24

The eighth edition of the [Major Incidents Report 2023–24](#) provides an overview of 30 major incidents regarded as nationally significant by the emergency management sector over the financial year. The report includes detailed case studies for 5 of these events, selected based on their complexity, scale, impacts, and the insights they offer for future emergency management practice. Each case study presents background information, the impact of the incident, the response efforts, and key observations to support continuous improvement across the emergency management and disaster resilience sectors.

The report also includes a snapshot of the climate drivers that influenced Australia's weather patterns during the year, an overview of national resource sharing arrangements, and a summary of international events where Australia provided support.

As a companion piece, AIDR published [Australia's Riskscape Report](#) which explores systemic risk drivers and emerging challenges across sectors and jurisdictions.

The *Major Incidents Report* was launched at the National Disaster Preparedness Summit, hosted by NEMA in September 2024. From 2024–25, the report was downloaded 788 times from the AIDR Knowledge Hub.

In November 2024, AIDR hosted a [webinar](#) to showcase key content from the *Major Incidents Report 2023–24* and *Australia's Riskscape Report*. The webinar featured an in-depth discussion of the Barkly Fire Complex case study which highlighted the scale and challenges of remote bushfire response in the NT. The event attracted widespread interest, with 371 attending live and numerous online views following the event.



Education for Young People

AIDR has long provided strategic support for stakeholders from the education sector, emergency services, and youth-focused organisations to facilitate networks and professional learning around disaster resilience education for children and young people.

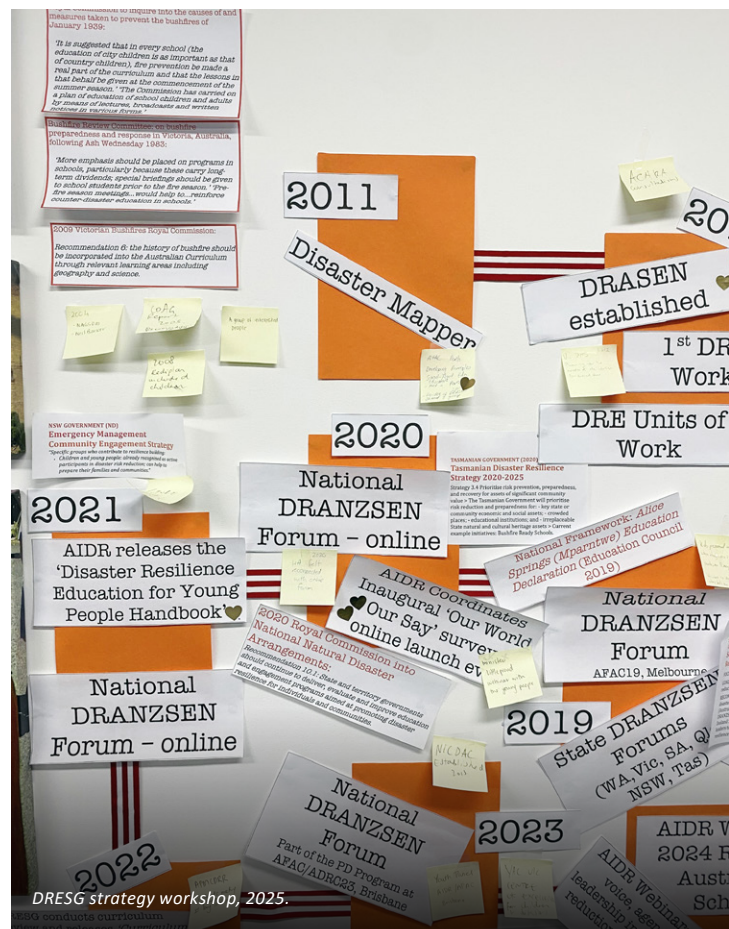
The [Education for Young People](#) website was accessed by 4,976 users with 30,635 engagements. The teaching resources were accessed 6,327 times. The quarterly Education for Young People newsletter subscribers remained steady with 7,786 subscribers, although the open rate dropped from 36% to 15% at the end of 2024. The newsletter was put on hold in 2025.

AIDR partnered with NHRA to celebrate and promote the United Nations International Day for Disaster Risk Reduction 2024. The 2024 theme was 'Empowering the next generation for a resilient future'. Over 450 people attended the free [60-minute webinar](#) which showcased projects, practical tools, strategies, and resources for schools, organisations, and policymakers to promote disaster resilience education and facilitate youth engagement.

During the event, Ness Wiebford from Australian Red Cross discussed the Youth in Emergencies project, and Carla Hall from Youth Affairs Council Victoria, accompanied by young person Harmony Carmichael, explored the Future Proof project. The event also heard from the Office of the Advocate for Children and Young People NSW, as well as the voices of young people affected by, learning about, and working in disaster.

AIDR hosted a hybrid Disaster Resilient Australia-New Zealand School Education Network event in December 2024. Upwey High School students from Victoria's Dandenong Ranges joined Dr Briony Towers and Scarlett Harrison for a panel discussion on youth voice, agency and leadership in disaster risk reduction and resilience. Of the over 300 online registrations, 94 people tuned in for the livestream event, with another 37 people attending in-person at AIDR's Office. The event was not recorded for the public at the request of the students. However, the livestream was recorded to be used as an example for Deakin University's education students.

In 2025, in line with new contractual requirements, AIDR has commenced a review process with the Disaster Resilience Education Strategy Group for a future approach to engaging with young people.



The Australian Disaster Resilience Knowledge Hub

The [Australian Disaster Resilience Knowledge Hub](#) is a national platform that supports and informs policy, planning, decision-making, and contemporary good practice in disaster resilience and disaster risk reduction. The Knowledge Hub is suitable for more experienced practitioners as well as people new to the sector.

The Knowledge Hub is designed for a wide range of use by emergency management professionals, policymakers, researchers, government staff, community organisations, and community members who are involved with or interested in disaster resilience.

The Knowledge Hub collections include research, case studies, the Handbook Collection, quick guides, and implementation guidance to support planning for disaster risk reduction, resilience building, disaster recovery and more.

The Knowledge Hub offers curated collections on various disaster resilience topics and themes. It includes resources such as the Australian [Disaster Mapper](#), [AJEM](#), the [Australian Disaster Resilience Handbook Collection](#) and [Glossary](#), and the National Disaster Recovery Monitoring and Evaluation Database.

Visitors can leverage the Knowledge Hub to access up-to-date information, best practices, and research findings. It is a valuable tool for those looking to enhance their understanding of disaster resilience, develop effective strategies, and implement evidence-based practices. The platform also facilitates knowledge sharing and collaboration among professionals and communities, contributing to a more resilient and prepared Australia.

Between July 2024 and June 2025, the Knowledge Hub had over 3.5 million engagements by more than 525,000 people.



Volunteer Leadership Program

The Volunteer Leadership Program (VLP) equips emergency sector volunteers with the skills and confidence to grow as leaders. The VLP experience is immersive and collaborative, bringing together volunteers from different organisations and agencies to build knowledge and share experiences with each other.

The program explores practical leadership frameworks through interactive learning, with participants gaining both self-awareness and an enhanced ability to understand and contribute to their organisations.

The program explores leadership and management strategies in the context of volunteering, including:

- leading change in an organisation
- building and maintaining motivation
- identifying and working with different personality types
- resolving conflict, addressing performance issues and giving constructive critical feedback
- stress and self-care strategies
- contemporary issues facing the emergency management sector.

The VLP is delivered by experienced Australian Red Cross facilitators, on behalf of AIDR.

Key 2024–25 program information

In 2024–25, the VLP had 86 attendees across 4 programs.

The program was held in the following locations across 2024 and 2025:

- Port Macquarie, NSW, 26–28 July 2024
- Melbourne, VIC, 16–18 August 2024
- Hobart, TAS 20–22 September 2024
- Perth, WA, 13–15 June 2025

Between July 2024 and June 2025, AIDR delivered the VLP on a reduced schedule with 2 programs conducted within the calendar year.

A VLP was held in Sydney, NSW, from 25–27 July 2025 which is accounted for in the 2025–26 financial year period.

Additionally, 2 closed VLPs were delivered as part of a tailored professional development initiative for the NSW Rural Fire Service, Coffs Coast.

Survey feedback:

- 100% of respondents rated the program as good or excellent.
- 97% of respondents reported an increase in local leadership.
- 95% respondents reported an overall improvement of their knowledge.
- 97% respondents reported the program as useful to their volunteer role.
- 100% respondents indicated they would recommend the program to others.

Additional feedback:

‘The AIDR VLP plays a crucial role in fostering networking, information sharing, and the formation of relationships that are essential for increasing cooperation in disaster response in addition to excellent training in leading and managing volunteer workforces. It was an amazing course.’

‘A superbly designed and delivered course with remarkable adherence to the timetable! Skilled and knowledgeable facilitators, coupled with passionate volunteers from across a number of agencies provided for an engaging and thought-provoking weekend.’



VLP Port Macquarie, NSW, 26-28 July 2024.

Resilient Australia Awards

The Resilient Australia Awards (RAA) celebrate and promote initiatives that build whole of community resilience to disasters and emergencies around Australia, as well as capture and share examples of resilience in action.

The awards recognise collaboration and innovative thinking across a broad range of sectors and initiatives that strengthen disaster resilience within communities, institutions, and the private sector. The awards endorse a wide range of initiatives. Past projects centred around risk assessment and mitigation, planning and preparation, and response and recovery. Winners from each state and territory are considered for the National Awards. Finalist projects benefit from national exposure via a range of marketing and communications channels and their presence at the National Awards Ceremony. RAA is proudly sponsored by the Australian Government in partnership with states and territories and managed by AIDR.

In 2024, submissions were judged across 7 jurisdictional award categories. Jurisdictional finalists were then reviewed across 10 national award categories. The finalists were high calibre projects from all states and territories. The jurisdictional award categories included business, community, government, local government, mental health and wellbeing, schools, and a People's Choice Photography Award.

At the national level, the 2024 RAA finalists were recognised across 10 categories: national, collaboration and partnership, research for impact, business, community, school, government, local government, mental health and wellbeing, and photography. Finalists represented every state and territory, highlighting the diverse contributions to resilience across Australia.

The 2024 RAA National Ceremony took place in November at Old Parliament House in Canberra. Hosted by (then) AIDR Executive Director Dr Margaret Moreton, the event welcomed 119 attendees in person, while an additional 93 people joined via livestream, bringing the total attendance to 212. The 2024 RAA winners and

finalists featured in the January 2025 edition of AJEM: in print and online via the Knowledge Hub, with the winning photograph featuring on the cover.

The winner and highly commended awards were presented in each category including the 5 new national categories:

- The Government and Business Awards were preserved as separate categories at the national level, no longer being combined to determine the National Award.
- The National Research for Impact Award, based on national-level evaluation only.
- The National Collaboration and Partnership Award, a judges' choice award, was selected from the finalists and winners of the jurisdictional awards.
- The National Award, evolved into the Award of Excellence across all categories, recognising the winning project that demonstrates the most significant systemic change and groundbreaking results. The national panel reviewed winning projects from all award categories, excluding photography.
- In 2024, a total of 8 highly commended and 11 winners were awarded across the 10 categories at the National Ceremony.

A list of all finalists can be found on the AIDR website.

The awards reflect an ongoing legacy and commitment to a disaster resilient Australia, with each submission telling a story of building more safe, connected and prepared communities. Collectively, RAA finalists make significant impact before, during, and after disaster events, and demonstrate the benefits of resilience building across sectors in Australia.



2024 Resilient Australia Photography Award winner, Carinbundi Clients Complete Emergency and Disaster Management Training. Image: Tina Marshall.



Andrew Coghlan presents the Resilient Australia National Collaboration and Partnership Award to Professor David Bowman. Image: Gary Hooker (AFSM).



Dr Cheryl Desha presents the Resilient Australia National Research for Impact Award to Hannah Mason and Professor Richard Franklin of James Cook University. Image: Gary Hooker (AFSM).



Sharing Connection

Maddi Moser (Taungurung artist), 2024.

The story: This artwork represents connection through all living things. It depicts the sharing of knowledge and process of learning – circles are continuous and have no beginning or end, reflecting the process of the sharing of stories, wisdom and learning. The patterns highlight wisdom and the flow of teaching, learning and sharing knowledge and skills. It reminds us that we are connected through the past and into the present.

About the artist: Maddi Moser is an Aboriginal artist, designer and secondary school teacher. Maddi is a proud First Nations person and is a member of Taungurung Mob in Victoria, whose ancestral Country encompasses Seymour and Broadford along the Goulburn River. Taungurung is part of the Kulin Nations (Melbourne).

www.aidr.org.au/resources/aidr-aboriginal-artwork





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