

3(b). Disaster Relief and Community Recovery Working Group (DR&CR WG)

Convenor Rev David Jackson
Members Rev Don Dowling
 Rev John Tomkins
 Rev Mitch Fialkowski
 Rev John Dihm
 Rev David de Kock

1. **Represent** the Uniting Church at the National Meeting of Disaster Recovery Chaplaincy Co-ordinators and the National Meeting of Synod Disaster Recovery Coordinators.
2. **Administer** the WA Disaster Relief and Community Recovery Fund (WADRCRF) and conduct appeals in support of disasters and emergencies in WA when necessary.
3. **Organise** and maintain teams activated at times of disaster or emergency.
4. **Organise** training in Disaster Recovery Peer Support and Disaster Recovery Chaplaincy for congregations and agencies.
5. **Develop** Standard Operating Procedures' for pastoral care after a disaster or emergency.
6. **Meet** at least annually.

In March 2018, a steering committee comprising national disaster recovery chaplaincy co-ordinators met to put together a submission to the National Council of Churches in Australia (NCCA) to establish the Australian Volunteer Emergency Chaplaincy Alliance (AVECA). On 5 April 2018, the NCCA approved AVECA to become a network of the NCCA. This is an exciting development and will lead to many positive outcomes in promoting disaster recovery chaplaincy nationally.

The landscape across our state brought events that potentially could have been disastrous. Cyclones and bushfires ravaged some parts of our state and the DR&CR WG members were on alert as these events approached and passed. One event that prompted action was the Albany Fires. Fortunately they were brought under control with no need for the DR&CR WG to activate a peer support team. One particularly tragic and sad event did prompt action from the committee. The murder/ suicide of a family of seven at Osmington, near Margaret River, saw a team activated to support the congregation at Margaret River.

One submission went to the WADRCRF for an initiative in support of Margaret River congregation's response to the tragedy at Osmington.

No training could be provided this year in Peer Support and Disaster Recovery Chaplaincy because the DR&CR WG have no line of funding from the Synod and the number of activities happening in the Uniting Church this year. It is hoped that training will happen in 2019.

The annual meeting of the DR&CR WG will take place in the week prior to Synod. Rev Dr Stephen Robinson will be attending the meeting and providing some training to the committee. Stephen will also be meeting with some key people in WA in the disaster recovery area.

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