



Disaster Relief and Community Recovery Working Group

Committee Members

<i>Convenor</i>	Rev David Jackson
<i>General Secretary Ex Officio</i>	Rev David de Kock
<i>Member Appointed SSC</i>	Rev John Dihm
<i>Member Appointed SSC</i>	Ps John Tomkins
<i>Member Appointed SSC</i>	Rev Gordon Scantlebury
<i>Member Appointed SSC</i>	Rev Mitch Fialkowski
<i>Member Appointed SSC</i>	Rev Don Dowling
<i>Co-opted Member</i>	Ps Lindsay Ginn
<i>Co-opted Member</i>	Rev Sophia Lizares

INTRODUCTION

Our faith not only strengthens us and gives us hope, it also shapes how we help others rebuild and experience that hope. As followers of Jesus Christ we respond to his call to love our neighbour and we act with God to walk alongside and care for the poor, the hurt and the vulnerable. To this end the DR&CR WG will:

1. Represent the Uniting Church at National Meetings of Disaster Recovery Chaplaincy Coordinators, National Meeting of Synod Disaster Recovery Coordinators, Council of Churches Emergency Relief Committee and the State Welfare Emergency Committee (SWEC)
2. Administer the WADCRF and conduct appeals in support of disasters or emergencies in WA when necessary
3. Organise and maintain Contact Teams activated in times of disaster or emergency
4. Organise training in Disaster Recovery Peer Support and Disaster Recovery Chaplaincy for congregations and Agencies
5. Develop SOP's (Standard Operation Procedures) for pastoral care after a disaster or emergency

PUBLICATION “Good Advice for Churches, Congregations and Faith Groups ministering in disaster-affected communities.”

Publication of the booklet “Good Advice for Churches, Congregations and Faith Groups ministering in disaster-affected communities.” has been republished by the Assembly.

Copies have been distributed to every congregation and agency of the Uniting Church.

The booklet provides good advice to congregations and agencies before a disaster occurs, when a disaster occurs and some advice around what churches and agencies might do to aid the long-term recovery of communities.

DISASTER RECOVERY CHAPLAINCY TRAINING

Rev Dr Stephen Robinson conducted Disaster Recovery Chaplaincy training to 19 participants via Zoom 18-19 May. Stephen is prepared to conduct further training events in if there is the need.



DISASTER RECOVERY CHAPLAINCY NETWORK WA:

The WADRCN was established in April 2019 after the Disaster Recovery Chaplaincy training event where 51 ministry agents were trained by Rev Dr Stephen Robinson over three days. 15 of those trained were UCA ministry agents.

I have approached the General Secretary of the Synod of WA to formally partner with CCWA in the establishment of the WADRCN. At the present time this is unofficial. It will probably require a MOU between the two partners to clearly spell out what each other brings to the network.

The WA DRCN is now a part of the State Government State Welfare Emergency Committee (SWEC). An invitation was given to make a presentation on the network to the SWEC in November last year and we are now formally a part of that committee. SWEC met again 12 March focussing on COVID 19 response.

Work on a MOU with government to formally establish our relationship with them will probably be needed going forward.

We are reliant on the good will of CCWA through the help provided by Simone Micke and my voluntary efforts to keep the WADRCN going. At some time we may need to apply for a grant from some source to appoint a part time officer to establish the network on a sound footing.

AUSTRALIAN VOLUNTEER EMERGENCY CHAPLAINCY ALLIANCE (AVECA)

The Australian Volunteer Emergency Chaplaincy Alliance (AVECA) was formally established as a Network of the NCCA in 2019. Our Synod is represented on that national body through the convenor of the DR&CR WG.

AVECA mission is to:

1. Promote collaboration between states and territories
2. Advocate to state and federal governments and NGO's
3. Lead agent to Federal government for Voluntary Emergency Chaplains in Australia
4. Be a learning community promoting research
5. Develop national policy, advice, standards, procedures and training
6. Share resources, ideas, information and learnings

During COVID 19 AVECA has been meeting weekly and now fortnightly via zoom. This has helped to see how each state and territory are being utilised in our response to the current Bio Security threat.

The WADRCN are also affiliated with AVECA.

In 2019 AVECA brought the Rev Dr Naomi Paget to Australia for a series of workshops in Sydney and Melbourne with participants from other areas Zooming in on her presentations.

STATE WELFARE EMERGENCY COMMITTEE

As has been mentioned already I am representing WADRCN and by my connection as the convenor of the DR&CR WG, the Synod of WA, on the State Welfare Emergency Committee (SWEC).

SWEC gathers together the lead agencies and NGO's in a coordinated way to respond to disasters and emergencies.

During the current COVID 19 threat the representative agencies and NGO's were activated in accordance with the State Hazard Plan – Human Biosecurity.

The WADRCN were able to reach into our pool of trained chaplains and offer government 45 DRCN Chaplains if they were required to assist government in their response. At this stage no one has been required.

MINISTRY IN PANDEMIC

“Ministry in Pandemic – From awareness to implementation” by Revd Dr Naomi Paget. This unpublished book has been made available by the author for distribution as AVECA sees fit.

I have provided the link to our UCA Ministry Agents as a resource to them during the COVID 19 Pandemic.

The book is a small 75 page document which is filled with lots of useful information and advice.

The book is divided into three parts:

Part 1 deals with awareness of Pandemics over the centuries and especially in the recent past from the Spanish Flue, SARS and others and provides clear information of what is known about COVID 19.

Part 2 focuses on Preparation

Part 3 focuses on Implementation

Note especially pages 61-67 which are a series of checklists for preparedness for Pandemic Influenza for different contexts.

I found Part 3 particularly helpful in defining the various roles of ministry agents during Pandemic. The most important role is representing the presence of God during a frightening and traumatic circumstance:

Bringing Calm to chaos, victory over despair, comfort in loss and sufficiency in need.

Naomi goes into detail about what is requires of the Role of Minister, Pastor, Intercessor and Fellow traveller.

What makes this disaster different is the fact that we are all facing the same fears, losses and difficulties that those we care for are facing.

INCREASE IN THE MEMBERSHIP OF THE COMMITTEE

Committee Membership – Two years ago Alan Horton was on our committee but due to his work load and the fact of his retirement he asked to stepdown form the committee. Ps Lindsay Ginn who serves the Goldfields Patrol from Kalgoorlie has been appointed to replace him.

Rev Sophia Lizares has been appointed to fill a gap we had in the Perth Metro Region and improves the gender balance on the committee.

Rev David Jackson
Convenor