



REFLECTIONS ON THE EVALUATION OF THE VICTORIAN BUSHFIRE CASE MANAGEMENT SERVICE

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The logo for urbis consists of the word 'urbis' in a lowercase, green, sans-serif font, set against a white rectangular background.

REFLECTIONS OF THE VBCMS EVALUATION

The event and the response

The evaluation

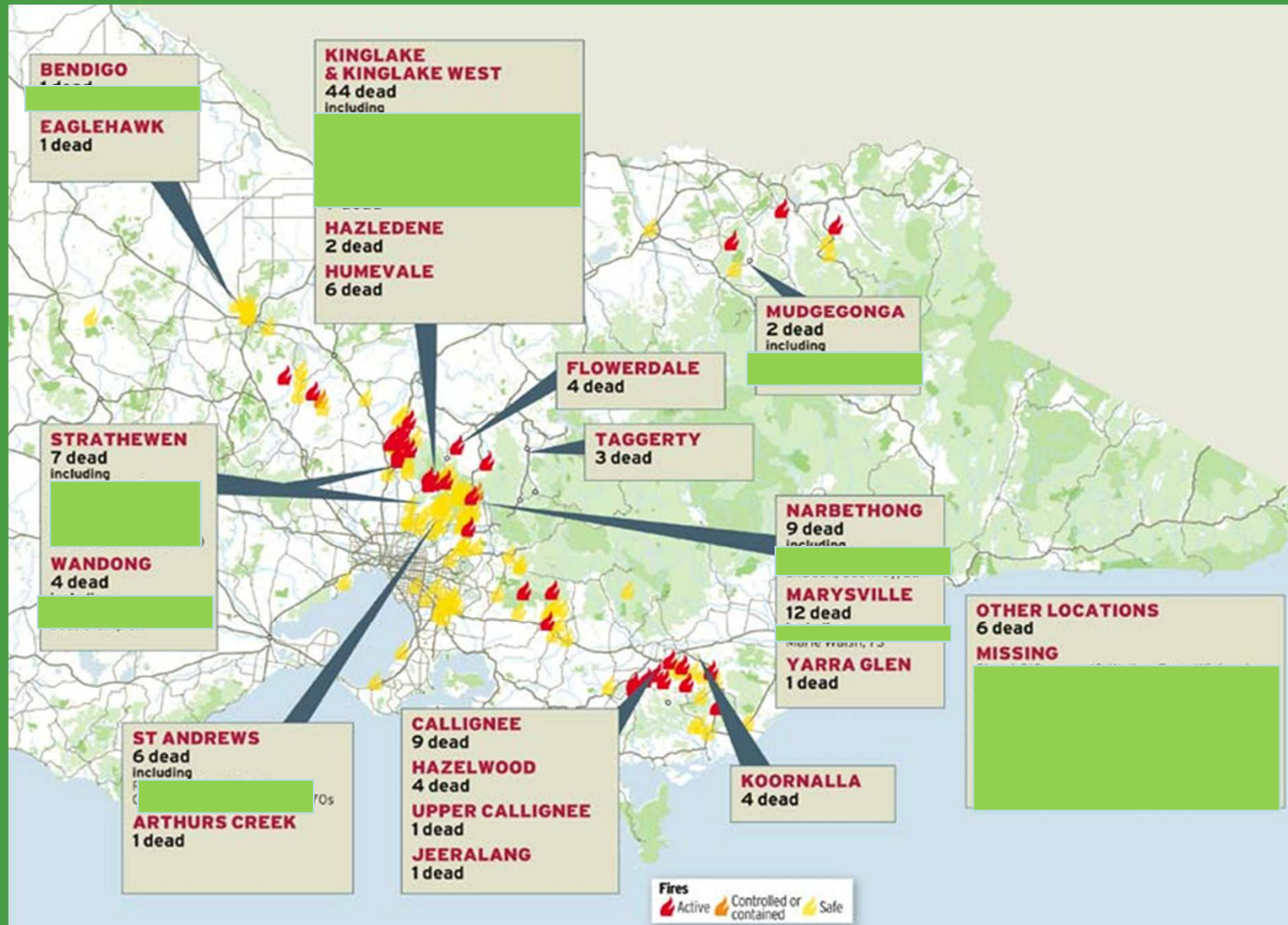
The methodology

Planning for the engagement

Contribution to the evidence

Reflections

THE EVENT AND THE RESPONSE





THE MODEL

Individual engagement

Assertive outreach

Delivered early and sustained over period of time

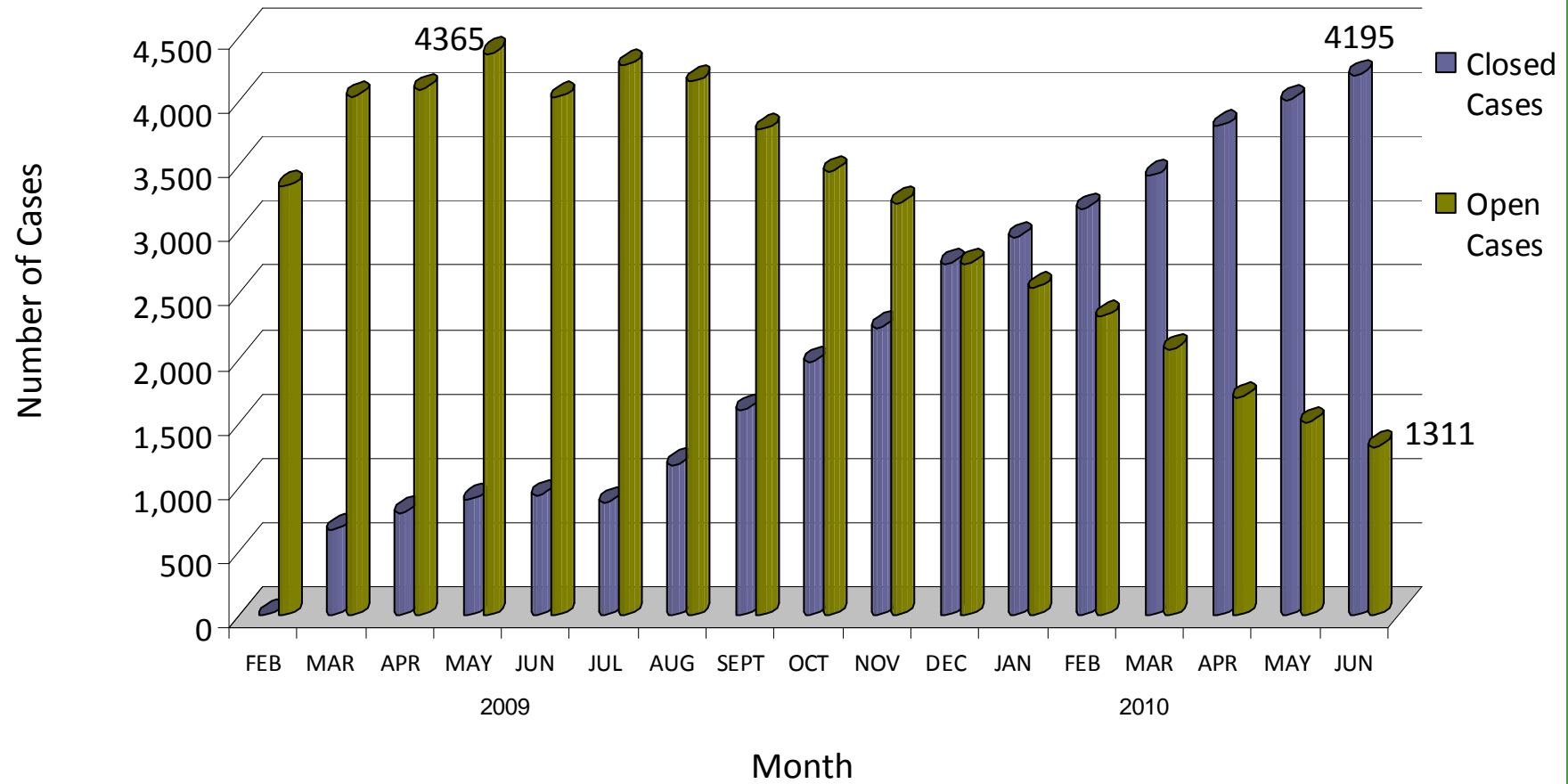
Flexible, responsive, person-centered

Investment in QA and QI

Substantial 'back office' resourcing, analysing, adapting

UPTAKE

Movement in Cases



SCOPE & APPROACH

- Identify service improvements (6 weeks)
- Identify the impact of the VBCMS on clients and other stakeholders
- Make recommendations for future support to be provided to members of the Australian community during and after emergencies

Maximise participation

Manage risk

Do it really quickly!

Ethics approved mixed methodology

Keep the client close

Marshall and support the team

METHODS

Literature review

Key informant interviews

Focus groups and in-depth interviews with designers, managers, providers, case managers

Client and non-client surveys (online and paper)

Focus groups with clients

Written submissions from professionals

Analysis client data

PLANNING ENGAGEMENT: MINIMISING RISK

Maximise participation to gain breadth and depth of data

Cause minimal burden and meet our duty of care

Qualified team members with expert advisors

Pro active process to inform potential participants and gain consent

Two facilitators at focus groups

Debriefings

REAL TIME ADVICE

Introduce a differentiated response

Triage /assessment at registration

Workforce induction

CM into State Emergency Plan

Strengthen CM integration within broader recovery system

Negotiate agreements re Aust Govt contribution

Register of personnel/ workforce

Determine workforce skills, knowledge and experience

Consider practice guide

Consider web-based client information management database

Investigate data sharing options

KEY FINDINGS

Overall, the story is one of success

- 75% of clients recommend the case management service
- nearly half acknowledged that they would have managed fairly poorly
- one in ten felt that they would not have been able to manage at all

Highly adaptive program management

- extensive use of feedback loops to support QA and action learning
- service has improved over time

DRIVERS OF SATISFACTION

- Frequency of contact from their case manager
- Advocacy undertaken on their behalf
- Support in accessing Government grants/Victorian Bushfire Appeal Fund (a priority for many)
- Satisfaction with the assistance provided to access counselling services.

WHAT WAS USEFUL

- Assertive outreach
- Skilled case managers who ask questions, listen, empathise and 'dig' deeper
- Proactive case managers who know the system and ferret out information
- Proactive engagement for vulnerable
- Stronger focus on kids/young people
- Opportunities for informal social connection
- Well considered and skilful endings

FINAL LEVELS OF ADVICE

EM level

- CM as a feature of the response
- Early identification of vulnerable groups

Program level

- Preparedness
- Workforce
- QA
- Privacy

Practice level

- Articulation of the skills and attributes of the workforce
- Practice Framework to guide quality service delivery



CONCLUSIONS & ADVICE

CM AS PART OF THE EMERGENCY RESPONSE

- evidence-based CM service model as part response to disaster
- inter-agency agreements on role

RATIONALE AND TIMING FOR ACTIVATION

- deploy as soon after the emergency as possible, with an open eligibility criteria for people affected by the event

ASSESSMENT OF PRIORITY GROUPS

- analysis to identify groups likely to be at risk of particular trauma in the context of the event; tailor response
- in the case of children as a vulnerable group, appoint a dedicated senior child and youth specialist to the program management team



CONCLUSIONS & ADVICE

PHASED INTERVENTIONS

- match response to likely phases of recovery: requires program level anticipation and monitoring of needs as they change over time, and the well-equipped case managers

BEGINNING AND ENDING: CRITICAL PHASES

- The initial phase and the final phase of support have emerged as important to the overall impact of case management.

CONNECT CASE MANAGEMENT AND COMMUNITY RECOVERY ACTIVITY

- align individual support with community recovery: expand CM role to support new and positive community structures which emerge

CONCLUSIONS & ADVICE

CASE MANAGEMENT WORKFORCE

- work/supervision of case workers in an interdisciplinary context; equipped with relevant qualifications and be familiar/become familiar with the local service systems.
- the incorporation of formal study units on disaster case management in undergraduate and postgraduate courses to strengthen a future workforce
- thorough induction to the specifics of each emergency context, including the place of case management in the overall recovery effort



CONCLUSIONS & ADVICE

A PRACTICE FRAMEWORK FOR DISASTER CASE MANAGEMENT

- a comprehensive case management framework

PRIVACY ISSUES

- Investigate options in regard to data sharing in the disaster recovery context

QUALITY ASSURANCE

- utilise the VBCMS quality assurance mechanisms in a future case management model.

GAPS IN THE RESEARCH

- The link between case management services and the intended mental health outcomes for survivors
- How to determine/ assess different levels of need following disaster
- When to activate and de-activate case management services

