



Australian Government



Australian
Charities and
Not-for-profits
Commission

Charities and the bushfire disaster response

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To Do List:

- Risks charities might face.

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- Addressing the risks - what you should consider.

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- Addressing the risks - what you should consider.
- Tips, take aways and case studies.



Charities, bushfire relief and the risks

Finance or money-related risks:

Influx of funds or goods through donations or other income, and the risks associated with the use and management of these donations.



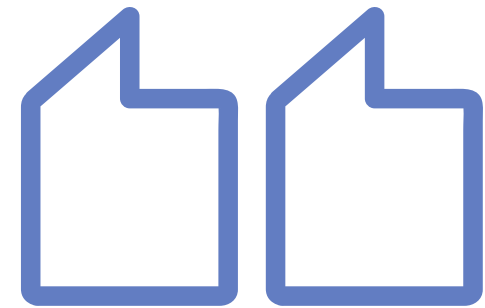
Charities, bushfire relief and the risks

Risks to charity 'people':

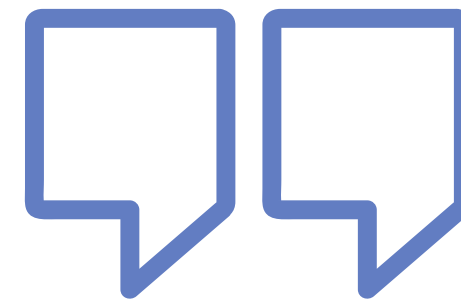
Risks linked to charity volunteers or staff working in bushfire hit areas or with people/wildlife affected by the fires.



Charities, bushfire relief and the risks



The risks charities face are varied, and each charity must assess those risks in the context of their own unique circumstances.



Charities, bushfire relief and the risks



Charity unclear on how it can spend funds raised or donated.

Charity looking to spend money in ways inconsistent with charity purpose or public expectations.



Charities, bushfire relief and the risks



- What does your charitable purpose or strategy say?
- What does your governing document say?
- What have you said in any appeal statements?



Charities, bushfire relief and the risks



Adhering to charitable purpose

- ACNC requirement

Meeting public expectations

- Spending in line with appeal



Charities, bushfire relief and the risks



Do what you said you would do

- Appeal statements/communication
- Charitable purpose/aims

Communicate

- Tell donors, supporters, your people
- Inform the general public



Charities, bushfire relief and the risks



Issues with accountability through communicating to members, donors, supporters and the general public.



Charities, bushfire relief and the risks



- How do you normally inform people about the ways you spend money?
 - Are these methods suitable in the current situation?
- Do you need to consider different communications methods?



Charities, bushfire relief and the risks



Ideas might include:

- Frequency of communication
- Different communication methods
- Website use
- Social media use
- Direct communication with donors



Charities, bushfire relief and the risks



Do you have the expertise?

- Consider options to improve communications expertise

Ensure your key people can clearly convey key messages.



Charities, bushfire relief and the risks



Donor expectations for the use of funds are not properly managed.

Inadequate communication leads to loss of public trust and confidence.



Charities, bushfire relief and the risks



- How do you stay in touch with donors?
- How does your messaging address donor expectations on funding acquittal?
- How else do you endeavour to manage donor expectations?



Charities, bushfire relief and the risks



Be aware of donors' expectations.

Develop clear statements to:

- Explain how donations will be spent
- Outline safeguards and measures

Ensure your 'communicators' are aware of donor expectations



Charities, bushfire relief and the risks



Be proactive and communicate directly with donors through:

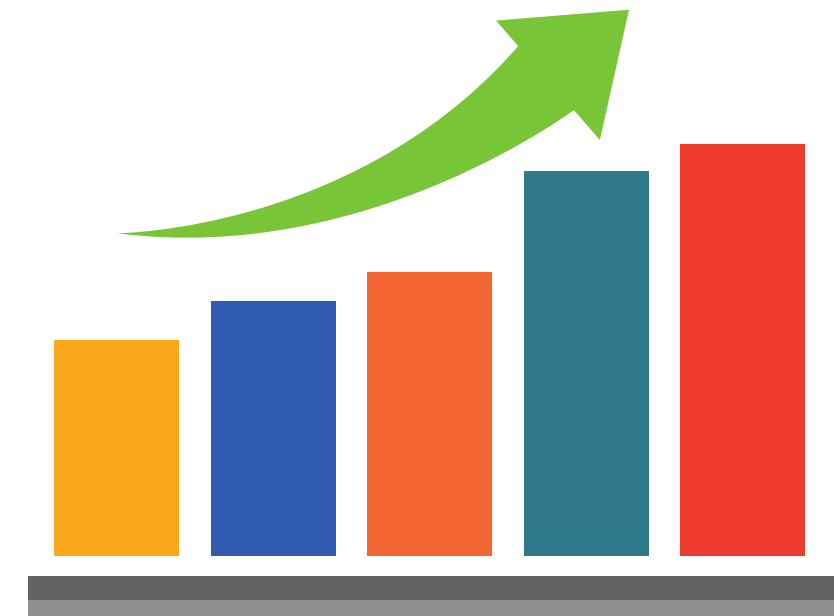
- Words
- Images
- Video
- A combination of the above



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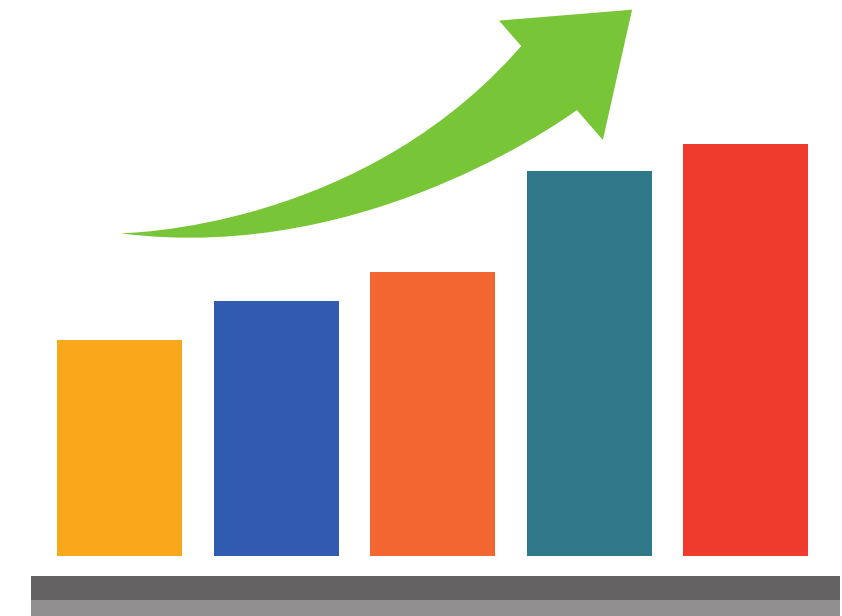
Change in scale or nature of your charity's work due to a sudden influx of funds or support.



Charities, bushfire relief and the risks



- What policies and procedures do you have in place?
 - Do they still measure up? Are they relevant and effective?
- How good is your recordkeeping?



CASE STUDY



Financial controls/credit card usage

Charities, bushfire relief and the risks

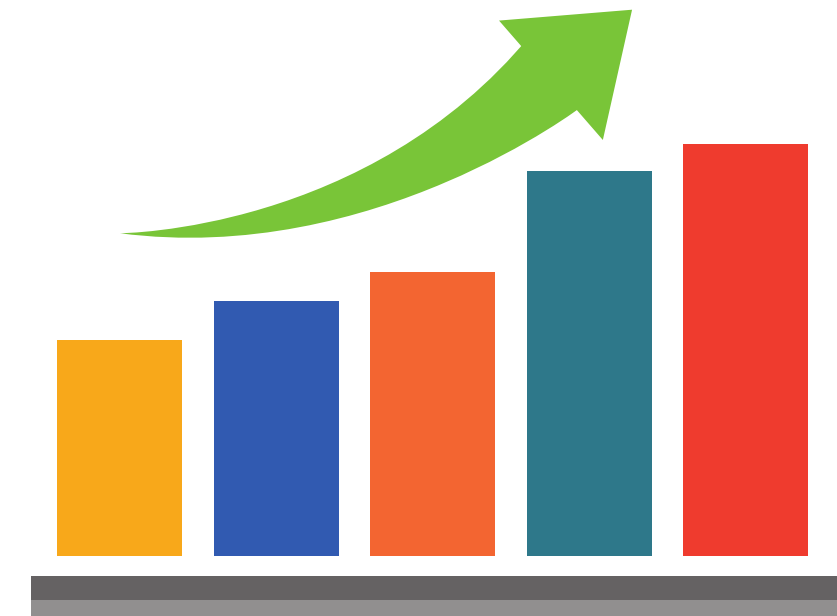


Re-examine and revisit your policies

- Update if required
- Ensure people are 'in the know'

Lead from the top

- Tell donors, supporters, your people
- Inform the general public

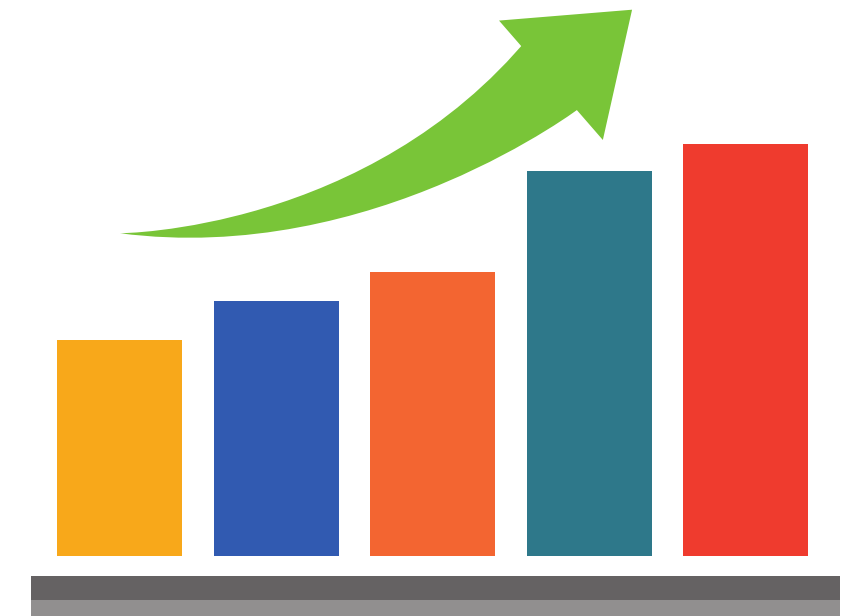


Charities, bushfire relief and the risks



Good and proper recordkeeping

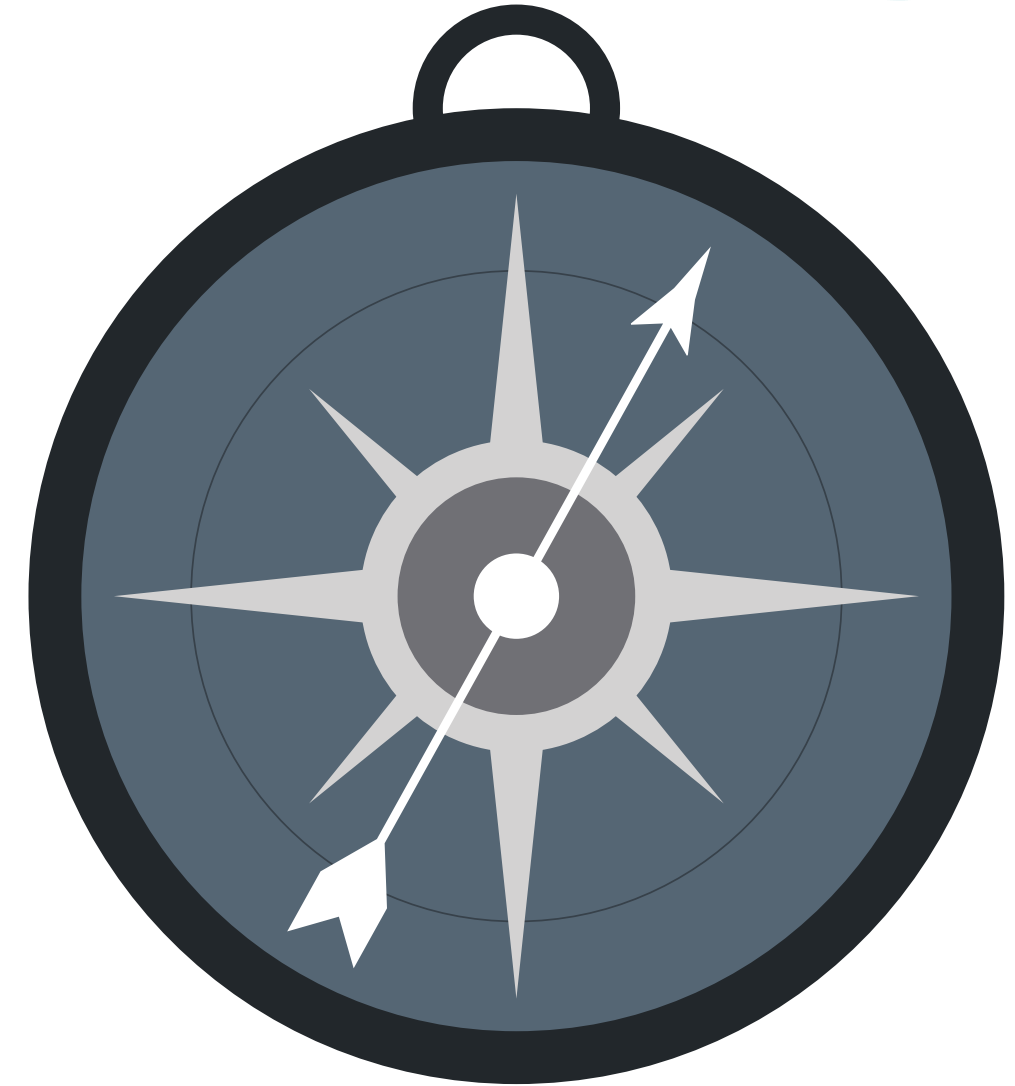
- ACNC requirement
- Recordkeeping policy
- Both financial and operational records



Charities, bushfire relief and the risks



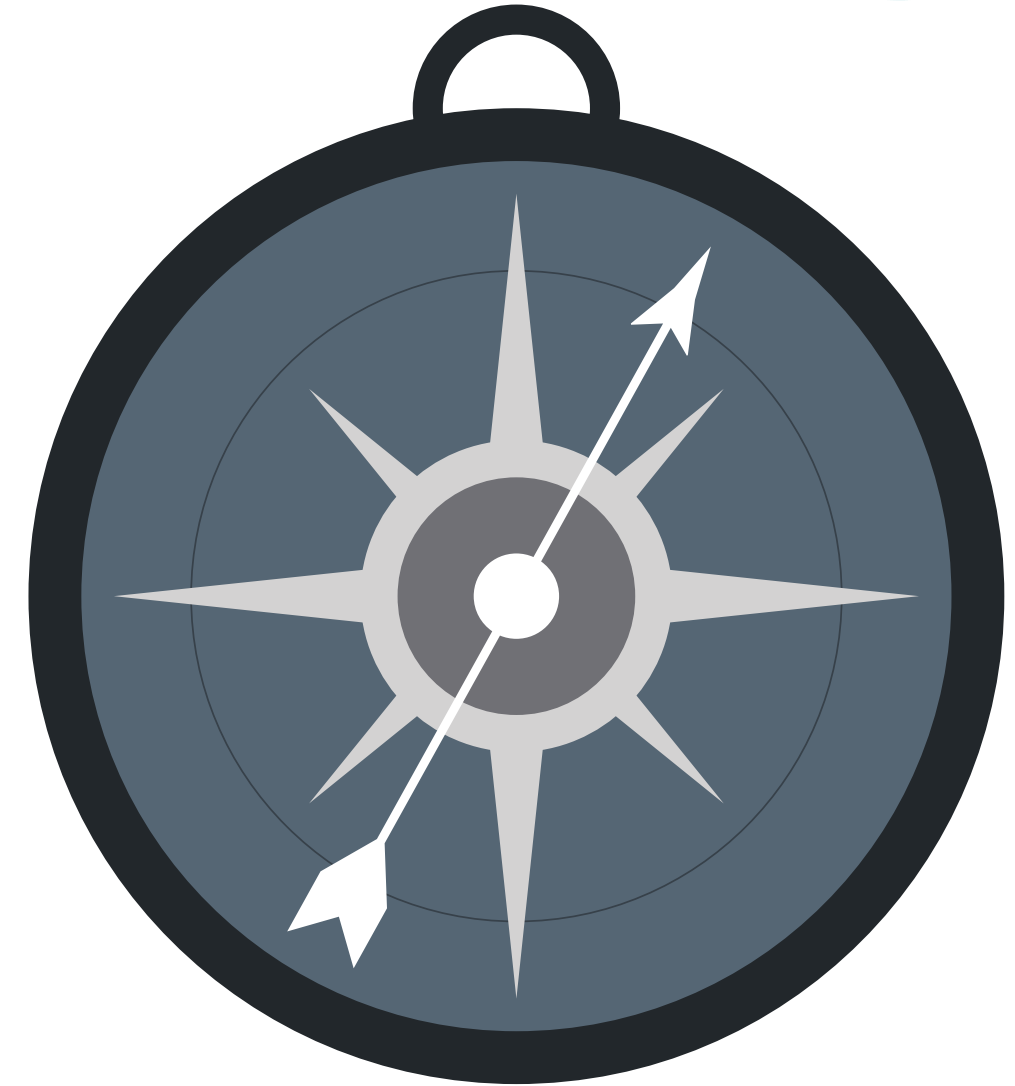
Inadequate decision making processes, or a lack of expertise among those making important decisions during a time of crisis.



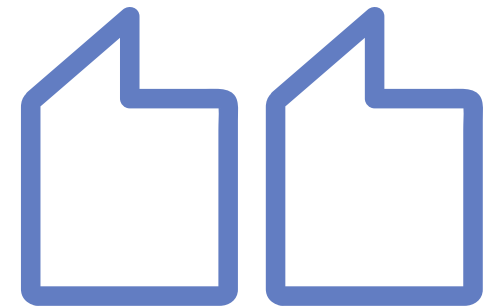
Charities, bushfire relief and the risks



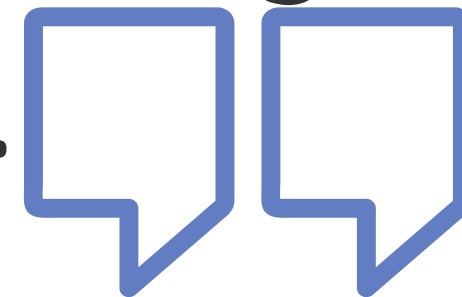
- Decisions involving larger amounts of money
- Snap decisions in challenging circumstances
- Complex logistical, procurement or supply chain decisions



Charities, bushfire relief and the risks



Not everyone is suited to leadership or decision making in a time of urgency or crisis.



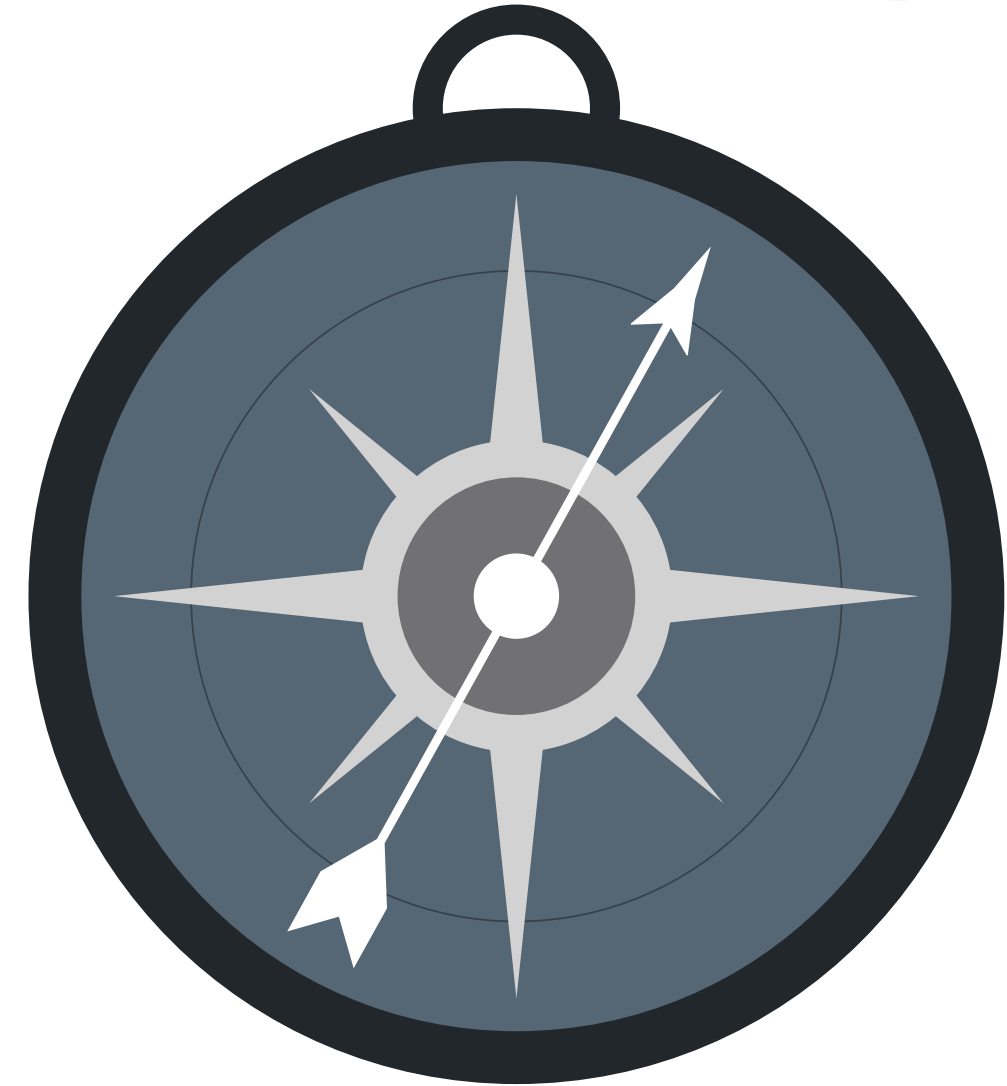
Charities, bushfire relief and the risks



Do your leaders fulfil their roles in changed circumstances?

- Financial literacy
- Can your charity offer support?

Relevant meeting and decision making processes



Charities, bushfire relief and the risks

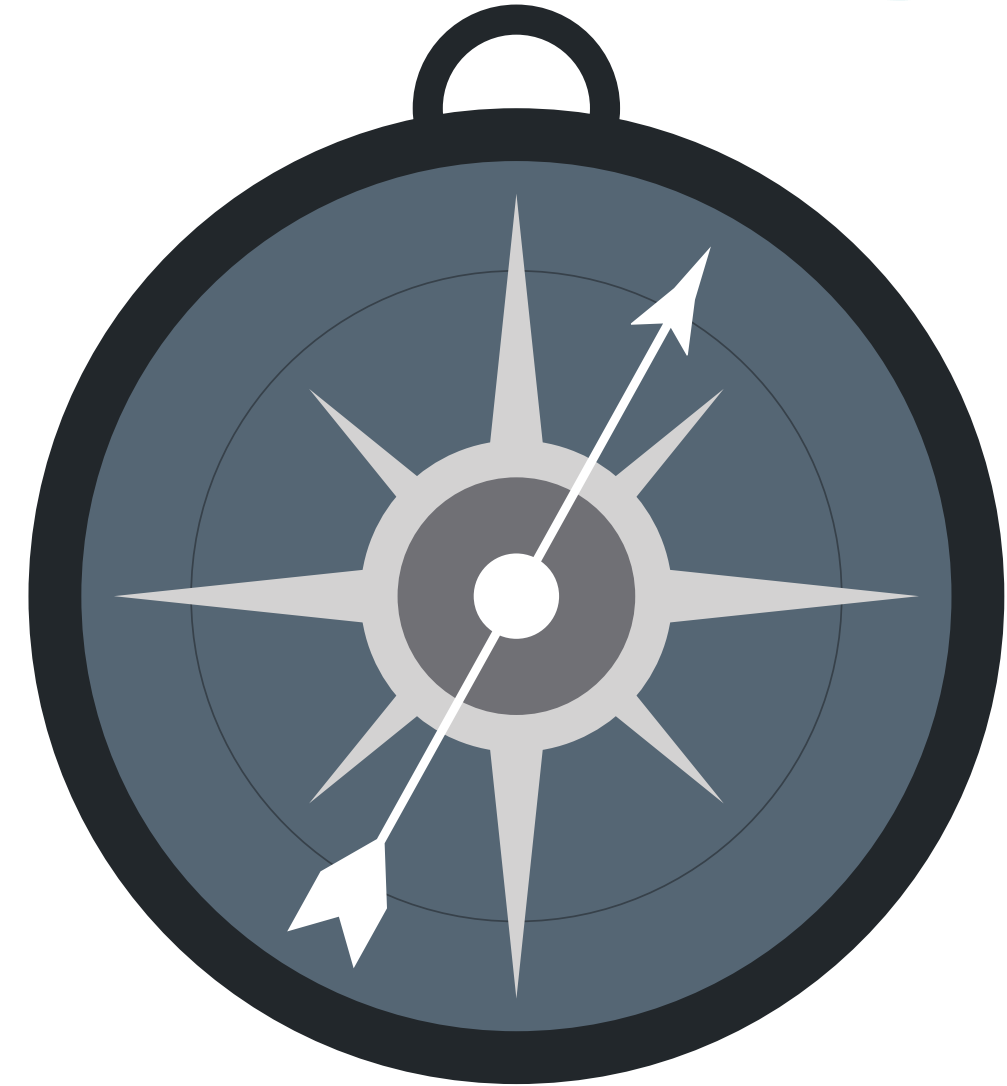


Re-examine policies

- Ensure they are fit-for-purpose in changed circumstances

Collaboration?

- Can you tap into others' expertise?

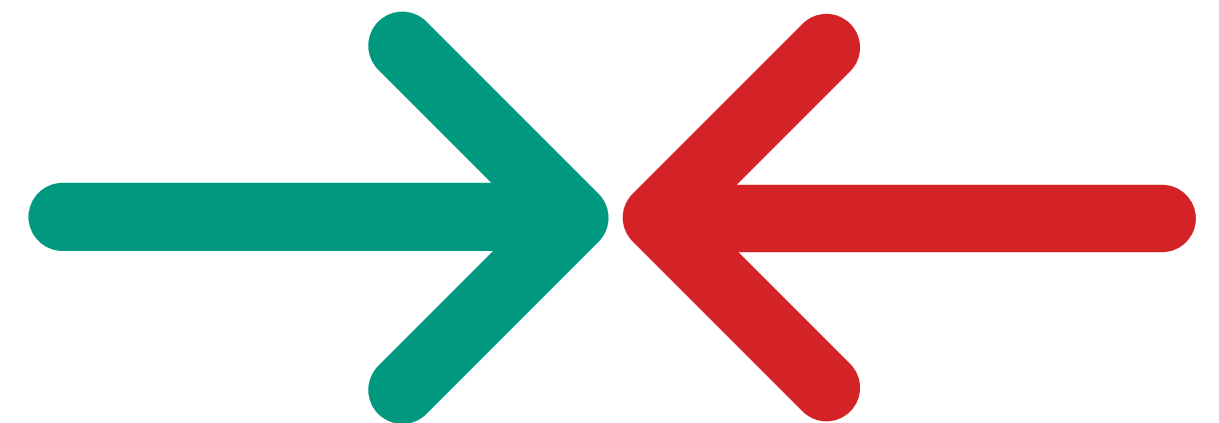


Charities, bushfire relief and the risks



Potential, perceived or actual conflicts of interest when a charity:

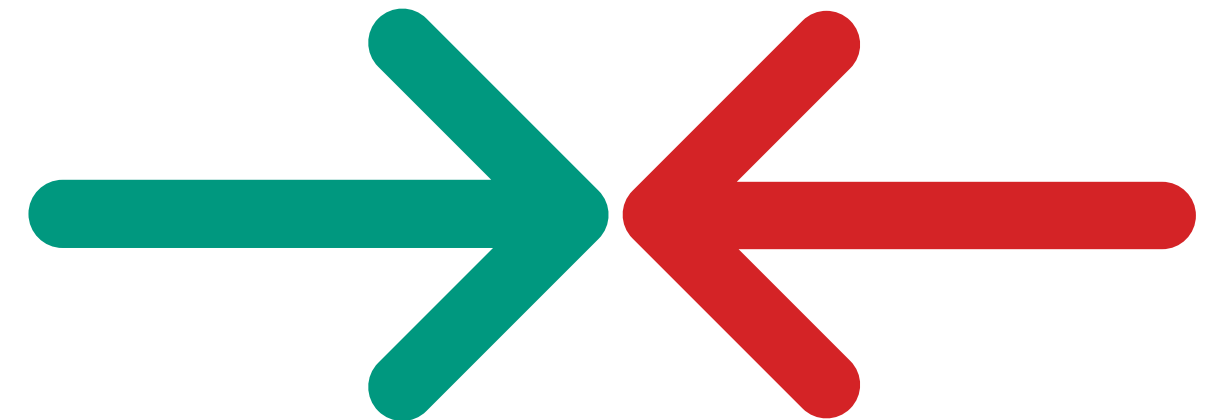
- has received an influx of funds
- is trying to get things done quickly to help the bushfire affected
- very busy



Charities, bushfire relief and the risks



- Acquitting donations or funds to help 'on the ground' creates temptation to take shortcuts
- Absence of safeguards that exist in normal circumstances.
- Public trust and confidence



Charities, bushfire relief and the risks

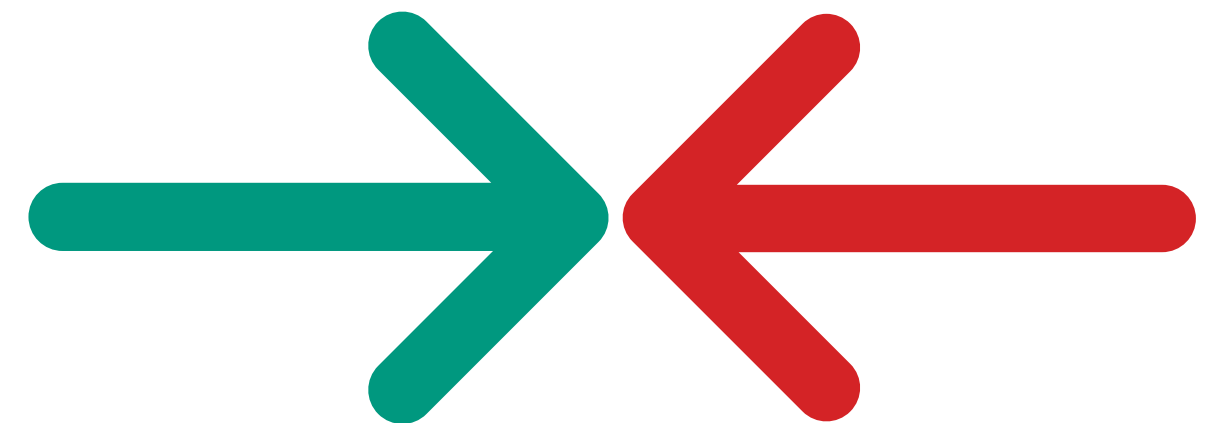


Resist temptation!

- Take a step back - follow proper processes

Ensure conflict of interest policy and interests register are updated

- Encourage people to update their entry on the register



Charities, bushfire relief and the risks



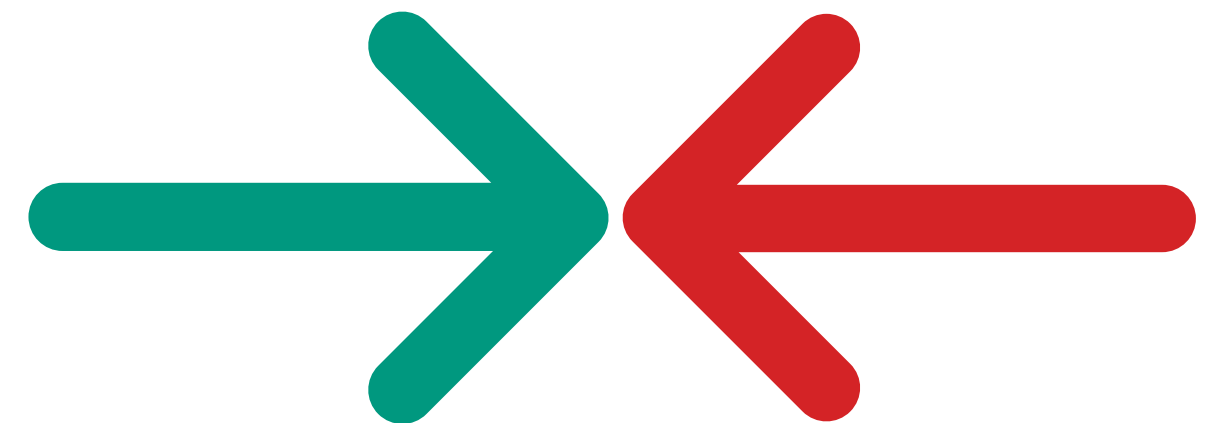
Place the issue front and centre

- Consider it during decision making
- Open and transparent declarations

Keep good records

- Documented proof

Set the example at the top



Charities, bushfire relief and the risks



Charity unable to properly monitor or report on spending or activities.

Issues with financial and operational reporting.



CASE STUDY



Financial and operational records

Charities, bushfire relief and the risks



- Are there recordkeeping policies and processes that adequately monitor:
 - The distribution of funding and donations?
 - Decision making processes leading to funding distribution?



Charities, bushfire relief and the risks



Ensure you have proper, practical recordkeeping policies

- Keep in mind ACNC requirements

Gain extra expertise if needed

Recordkeeping and proper reporting on surplus funds



Charities, bushfire relief and the risks



Management of staff and volunteers helping people affected by bushfires.

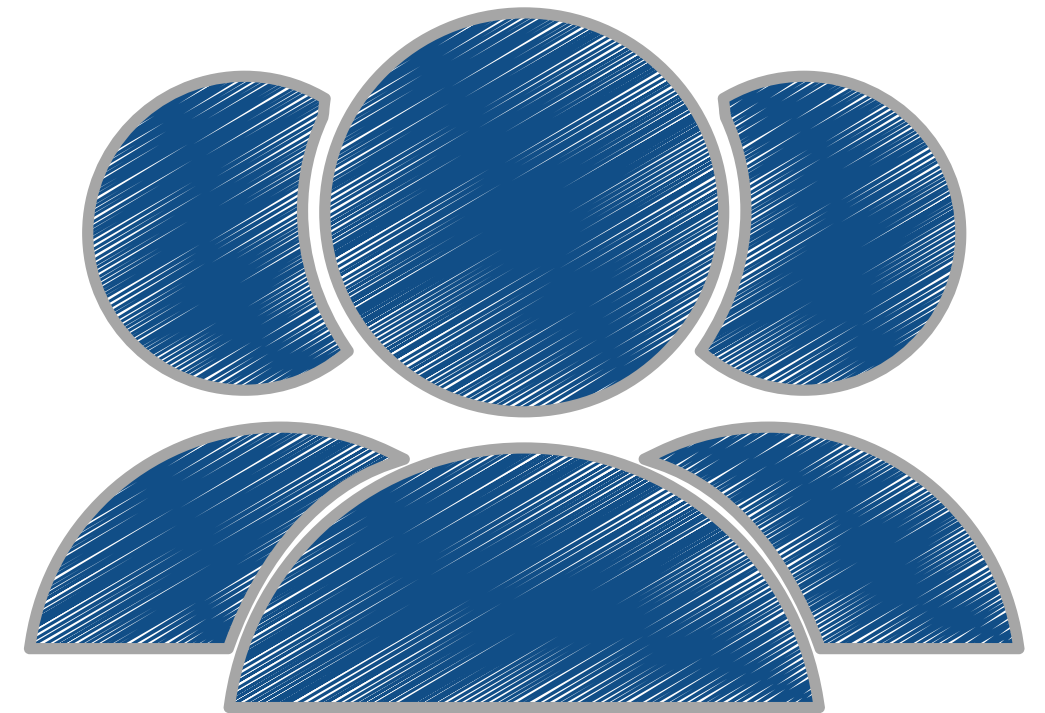
Management of those that are **on the ground** in bushfire-affected areas, helping people or wildlife.



Charities, bushfire relief and the risks



- Are your volunteer and staff-related policies up-to-date?
- What support structures does your charity have for its people?
- Does your charity have procedures on working with vulnerable people or affected wildlife?



Charities, bushfire relief and the risks



- Are those helping in bushfire-affected areas properly trained, insured?
- Does your charity understand its WHS obligations?
- Is your induction policy up-to-date and fit-for-purpose?

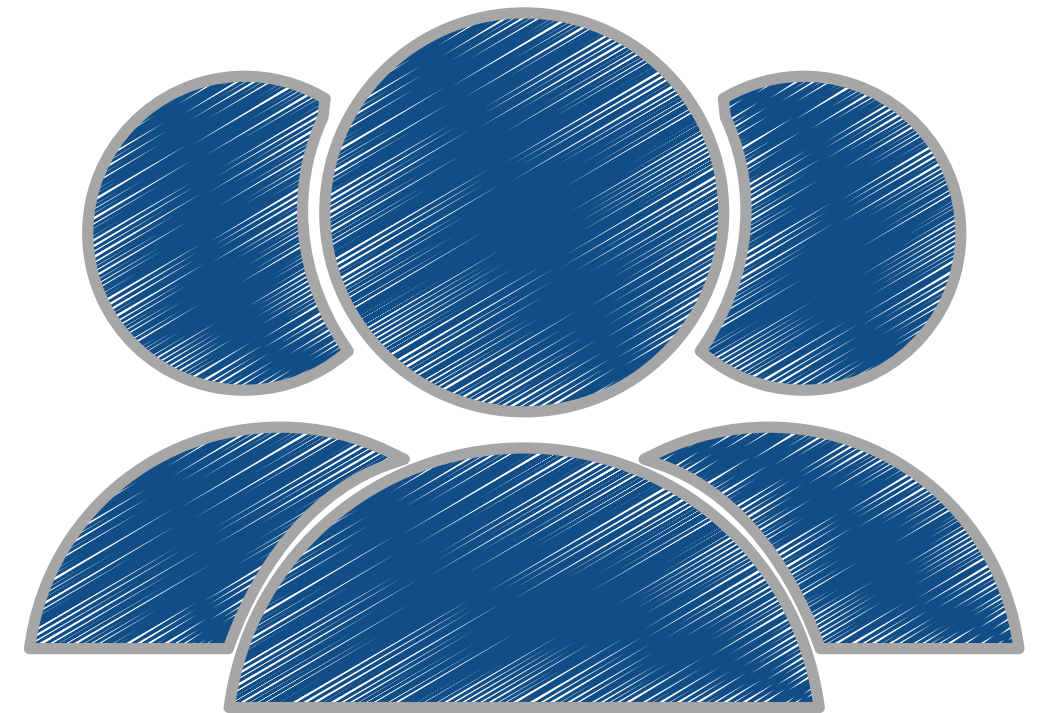


Charities, bushfire relief and the risks



Policies are vital. For example:

- Volunteer and staff management
- Induction and training policies
- Working with vulnerable people
- Handling/helping injured wildlife
- Safety guidelines for working in affected areas



Charities, bushfire relief and the risks



Other considerations:

- Permits, insurance, permissions from relevant authorities.
- Adequate support processes for those working in affected communities.
- Media/social media use



**Five key things
to remember**



Things to remember

Your 'plan' for the money/support

- What have you said you are going to do with the money donated or support given?
- How will you communicate this - now and into the future?



Things to remember

Policies and procedures

- Are they up to date?
- Have they been reviewed?
- Are they widely known?
- Are they fit-for-purpose, especially in the current context?



Things to remember

Communication

- What are your key messages?
- Who is delivering them?
- How are they being delivered?
- Are they consistent?



Things to remember

Recordkeeping

- Retention of operational and financial records
- Record keeping policies and procedures



Things to remember

Streamlined procedures

- Don't not allow them to become entrenched if they are not appropriate
- Ensure your governance is robust





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