

A warm welcome to the page! We have been working hard as a community to share accurate information, look after those in need in whatever way we can, to share stories and to provide a place for people to seek assistance.

TASSIE FIRES
we can help



Please follow my posts, but also the 'Recent Posts By Others'. Also be on 'information watch' – and private message me with anything you see or hear that you think is important!

If you need something posted on the main page – please private message me! Call me if you need me – 0438 330 998

I sincerely thank everyone for everything. – with love, Mel

Tassie Fires – We Can Help

20,249 likes · 36 talking about this

✓ Liked

Message * ▾

Community

My name is Mel – call me on 0438 330 998 ANYTIME; if it is not urgent, feel free to click "Message" and send me a Private Message. Website: www.tassiefireswecanhelp.com



👍 20,249

About - Fix a Problem

Photos

Likes

The “Tassie Fires – We Can Help” Facebook page: The power and efficacy of social media in an emergency

Melanie Irons¹, Prof. Douglas Paton², Associate Prof. Jenn Scott³, Dr Angela Martin⁴, Prof. Libby Lester⁵

¹ PhD Candidate, University of Tasmania, School of Psychology, ² University of Tasmania, School of Psychology, ³ University of Tasmania, School of Psychology, ⁴ University of Tasmania, School of Management, ⁵ University of Tasmania, School of Social Sciences

The scenario unfolds




- 52
 - 42°
 - Catastrophic Danger Rating
 - Storm cell → 35 more
 - 200 resources
 - Comms down. Isolation. Loss. Confusion. Big search for info. Distress. Official response lacking.
-

What I was doing – first action



Melanie Irons

January 4 

I just rang the Sorell RSL where they have about 100 people – Michael there says they are sorted for food and blankets thanks to local businesses and the SES, but tomorrow they need to cook breakfast and lunch for everyone and would happily accept some pairs of hand on deck. If anyone else is free head down there! Will ask Damo when he gets back from work if there's anything else we can do from this side of the river.

Like · Comment · Promote · Share

 27  4

Second action



Melanie Irons

January 4

Please post if you have something to offer/know of how we can help. Please share!



Tassie Fires – We Can Help

My name is Mel Irons and I started this page on the night the fires broke out in Tasmania (Friday Jan 4th 2013). We have been working hard as a community to share accurate information, look after those in need, and to provide support.

Page: 20,144 like this

Like · Comment · Promote · Share

👍 2 💬 2

A few sample posts...





Tassie Fires - We Can Help

January 6, 2013 · 🌐



Can anyone help Garry?

Friends at Connelly's Marsh are isolated and require basic foods and a generator. They are watching ferries passing by but apparently not stopping. If someone could drop off some food and somehow arrange a generator, they would be grateful. They are close to the beach at Connelly's and are keeping watch. Many thanks for responses to previous requests for information about people unaccounted for. Connelly's Marsh like many other areas is "a crime scene" and may remain off limits for some time yet.

Do NOT try to get in anywhere that you can't everyone - is anyone in that area?

[Like](#) · [Comment](#) · [Share](#)



Tassie Fires - We Can Help

January 8, 2013 · 🌐



CAN WE HELP JESS NOW???

I will be so grateful if you would post this.

My mum in her seventies is at Sommers Bay. Her water tanks are on electric pumps, hence she can't get water. She needs a generator to run the pumps. Can anyone in the area please lend a generator or take one down if you're going? Her name is [REDACTED] Sommers Bay Road.

Everyone is safe at Sommers Bay but pretty exhausted with fire fighting. But the water situation is dire.

[Like](#) · [Comment](#) · [Share](#)



Tassie Fires - We Can Help

January 6, 2013 · 🌐



Go Tassie!

I have just been to the Sorell Gym to drop off items and I can truly say the Community is pulling together the car park was full with people donating food and clothing..What a truly inspirational thing to see Tassie pulling together at a time of need. Well done to Mel for starting this page and coordinating so much information.

Reminder that I just spoke to them 30 seconds ago and they are now good for donations. Stay tuned.

[Like](#) · [Comment](#) · [Share](#)



Tassie Fires - We Can Help

January 6, 2013 · 



CAN YOU HELP?

Family of 7 at the City Hall (tourist from Brisbane) need to get up to Launceston today. If you can offer a ride please post your details here - the ABC will be watching this page and will call you!

[Like](#) · [Comment](#) · [Share](#)



Tassie Fires - We Can Help

January 6, 2013 · 🌐

****ARE YOU IN NUBEENA PLEASE HELP****

IF YOU'RE IN NUBEENA - a yacht laden with supplies is arriving but having trouble negotiating way to shore - requesting some "landing lights" from those on shore pls! PLEASE SHARE and get the word out - this boat is packed with food, blankets, water, clothes, toiletries, pet food etc for those in need! You can contact Jodie on boat: 0448180726

[Like](#) · [Comment](#) · [Share](#)



Tassie Fires - We Can Help

January 22, 2013 · 🌐

I had two phone calls from the Red Cross today about fundraising 😊

I will have an "official" post soon BUT I just wanted to say that they are absolutely stunned at how many fundraisers have been set up for the Tasmanian Bushfire Appeal. They said it had been huge; and quite out of the ordinary.

So. Well done all of you who decided that you too could host a fundraiser!

Still plenty of time to get something happening... Just gotta fill out the form!

<http://www.redcross.org.au/fundraise-for-us.aspx>



Tassie Fires - We Can Help

January 8, 2013 · 🌐

*** HAVE YOU GOT HAY TO DONATE? ***

Contacts for the hay / feed drive across northern Tasmania are as follows.

Dimity hirst co ordinator

0408506103

Scottsdale ... Andrew Burrows, 605 north Scottsdale road, Scottsdale

Cressy Cressy transport, (Peter davey)1330 powranna road, cressy

Spreyton Case (Trevor Shipton) old tas farm yard, spreyton road.

Smithton ... Allan Lord, cnr irishtown and marthicks rd, (near ta Ann)

Wynyard Bill King, cnr Bass Hwy and reservoir rd, (near airport)

[Like](#) · [Comment](#) · [Share](#)



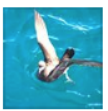
Tassie Fires - We Can Help

January 9, 2013 · 🌐

Just got a call from Tasmania Police.
They wanted to say thanks to everyone.
GO TASSIE!

Stay up to date, listen to ABC Local Radio, and check the Police page,
and keep up the hard work!

[Like](#) · [Comment](#) · [Share](#)



Tassie Fires - We Can Help

January 7, 2013 · 🌐

Spoke to the Department of Premier and Cabinet this morning, this are going to keep us updated too.

****PLEASE READ****

Hi Mel,

Great initiative and thanks for helping distribute our messages. Speaking points on donations attached.

Useful information, including contacts and where to access support here:
http://www.dpac.tas.gov.au/news_and_features/bushfire_recovery

The twitter account: <https://twitter.com/TasBushFires> will promote when the information on the website is updated. It is also promoting updates provided by other service providers (e.g. Aurora) and Government announcements.

I'll keep any extra info flowing through. Keep in touch.

Donations - talking points 060113.pdf

Department of Premier and Cabinet - TASMANIA : Bushfire recovery

The Department of Health and Human Services is providing support for people impacted by Tasmania's bushfires, including housing and health services. See a full list of emergency contacts.

DPAC.TAS.GOV.AU

[Like](#) · [Comment](#) · [Share](#)



The unofficial responders: the splinter groups



- Burridge, Bill and Phil – **the Dunalley Recovery Centre/evacuation hub**
- Bec, Dimity and Gabbi – **livestock and livestock food**
- Andrew, Adrian, Adriaan, Mike, Natasha, Patrick, Jodie – **boats**
- Ed and Mel – **The Foodbank (food delivery)**
- Elaine, Peter, Camille – **The Don (community refuge centre)**
- Jess, Nikki and Jim – **The Sorell RSL RSL (main evacuation hub/Red Cross registration site)**
- Tammy – **Sorell Gym (clothing)**
- Nicola, Nicole, Trish, Tricia, Jane, Tegan, Rachel, Linda – **scanning Facebook for me/admin/Twitter/website**
- Cathy and Tering – **the emergency vet clinic at Dunalley**
- Blaze Aid – **fencing**

And how *exactly* were they working together?



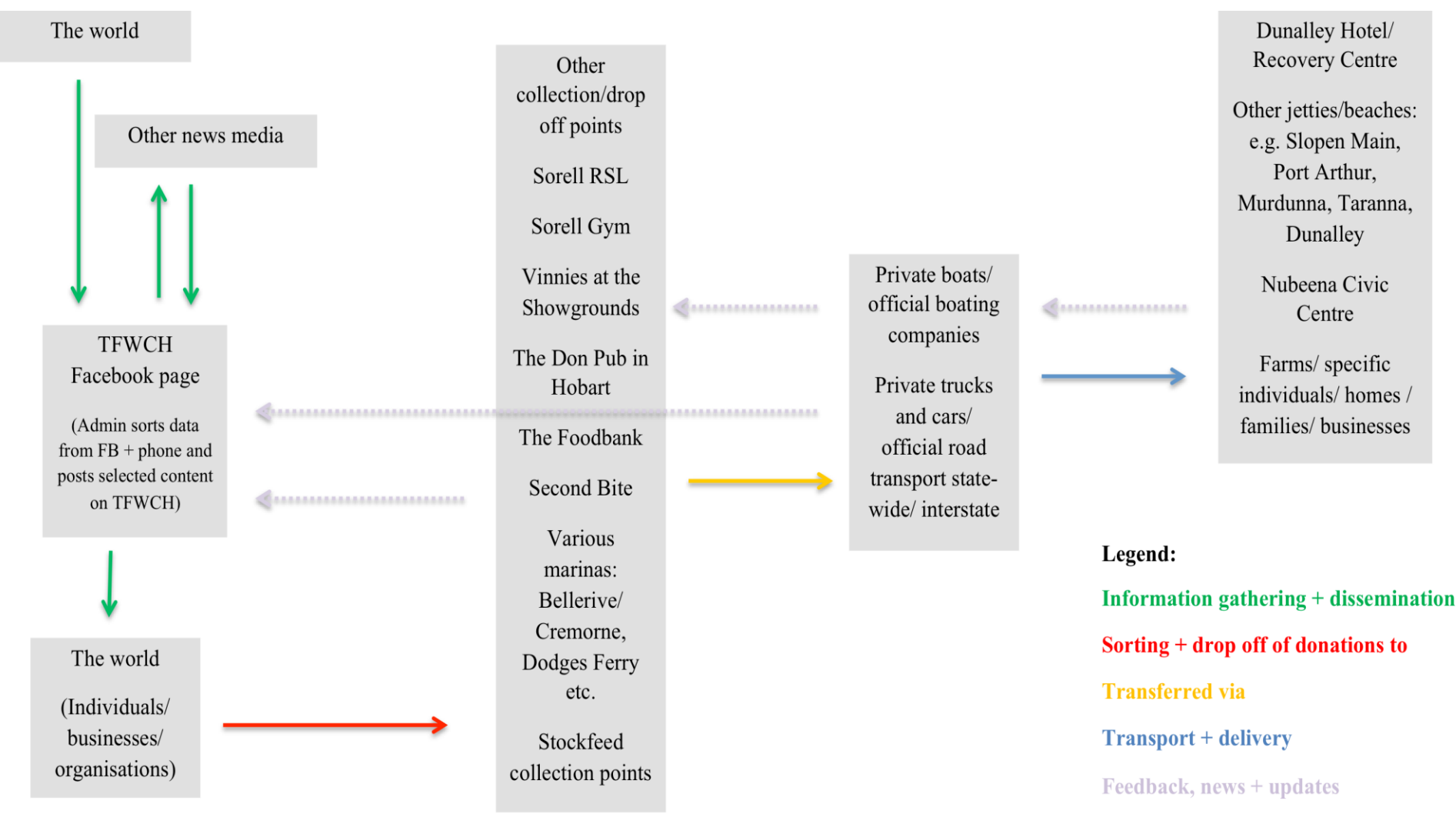


Figure X. An example of some of the linkages happening on the page

Interoperability

- Range of levels of comms
- Range of levels of trust
- Key personality factors of people 'at the top'

Some case studies:

- Tasmania Police
- Tasmania Fire Service
- St Vincent de Paul's
- The Foodbank
- Volunteering Tasmania
- State Government/BRU



Thesis aims



- **To document the TFWCH case study**
 - New area, almost no research on emergent groups or the use of Facebook
 - **To provide two sets of recommendations: for ‘officials’ and ‘unofficials’**
 - Areas of interest:
 - Social media, new spontaneous volunteers, resilience, psychological first aid, interoperability, community processes, community engagement, empowerment, trust, information curation
-

Data



- Facebook stats and metrics for 1 year (23 metrics)
 - Questionnaires (quant + qual) ($n = 678$)
 - Facebook archives of Admin's posts (2,443 posts)
-

Metrics Analysis



- 20,860 (at peak)
- 858
- Mobile v. desktop
- 20.3% v. 79.7%
- 25 – 34yo fans
- 35 – 44yo fans sharing stories
- 34,836,611 (first year)
- 2,826,273 (first year)
- 4.3 12.5
- 2,500%
- 0... resource heavy!



Qualitative Analysis 1



- NCapture function of NVivo
- 2,443 posts
- 6 overarching themes + 173 key themes + 935 subordinate themes

Overarching themes

Overarching theme	Description
The emergency	The scenario that had developed due to a bushfire emergency
The response	Aspects relating to the official response and the community response
Page administration and management	Administrative and communication style and approach; page structure, function, and design
Page function: a platform for sharing information	The broadcasting of information relating to multiple topics and issues
Page function: an arena for requesting help	The broadcasting of requests for assistance relating to multiple topics and issues
Page function: a marketplace for offers of help	The broadcasting of offers of assistance relating to multiple topics and issues

Share information... how?

Admin sources information

TRUST

Newspapers	Twitter	Facebook	Radio	Private messages via TFWCH	TV News	Phone calls	Text messages	Comments to Posts on TFWCH	Recent Posts by Others on TFWCH	Websites	Emails via Gmail
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Admin handles information

JUDGMENT + CRITICAL THINKING

Verify through other sources	Respond to privately	Do not verify or filter; proceed	Ignore	Contact source; request more info.	Contact source; request link to first-hand source
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Admin posts information on TFWCH

COMMUNICATION SKILLS

Re-word	Copy/paste	Summarise	Translate	Moderate comments where necessary
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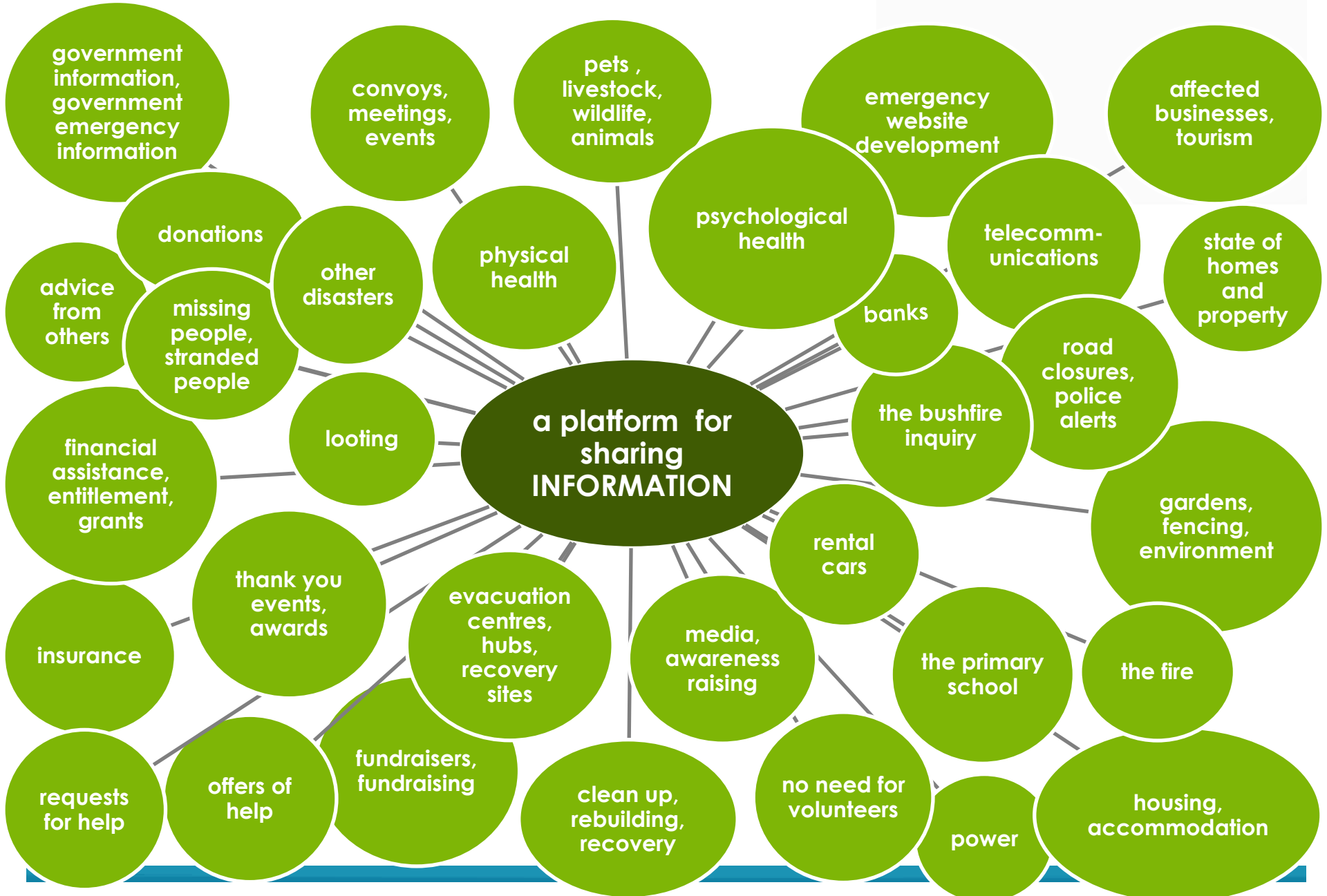


Admin leaves information to crowd

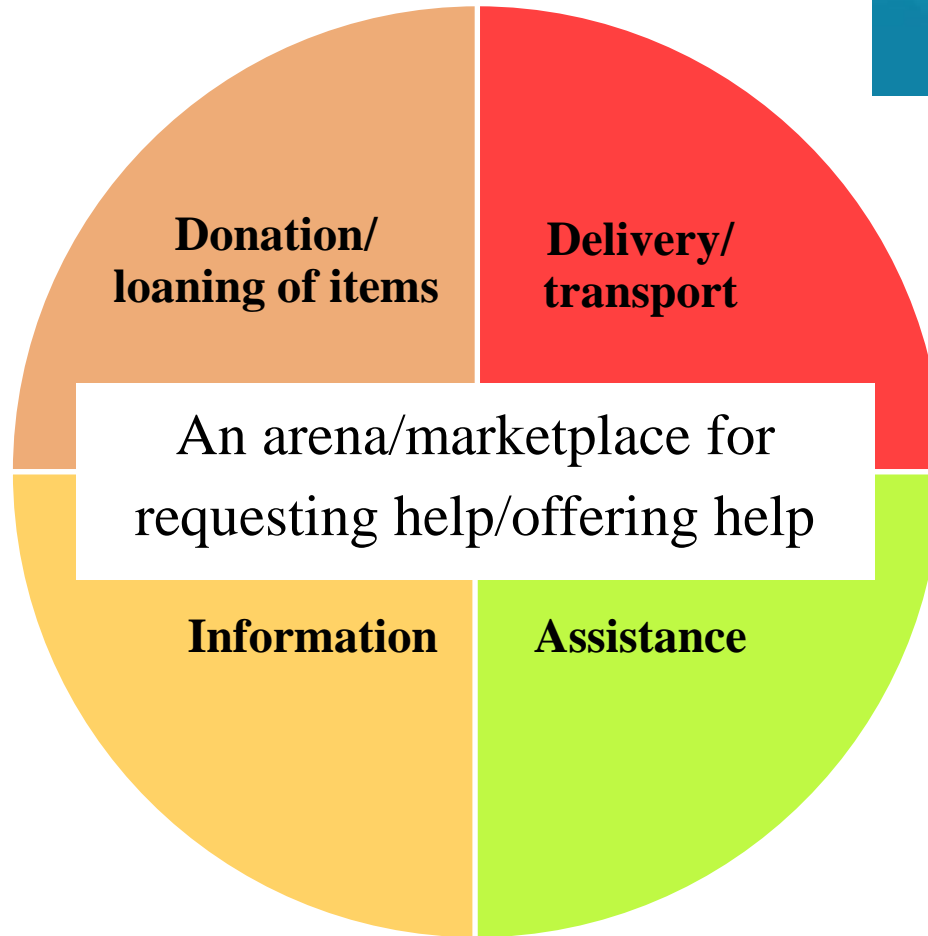
TRUST

To share online	To share in real-world	To respond to	To be informed	To act on	To problem solve	To ignore
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Share information... what information?



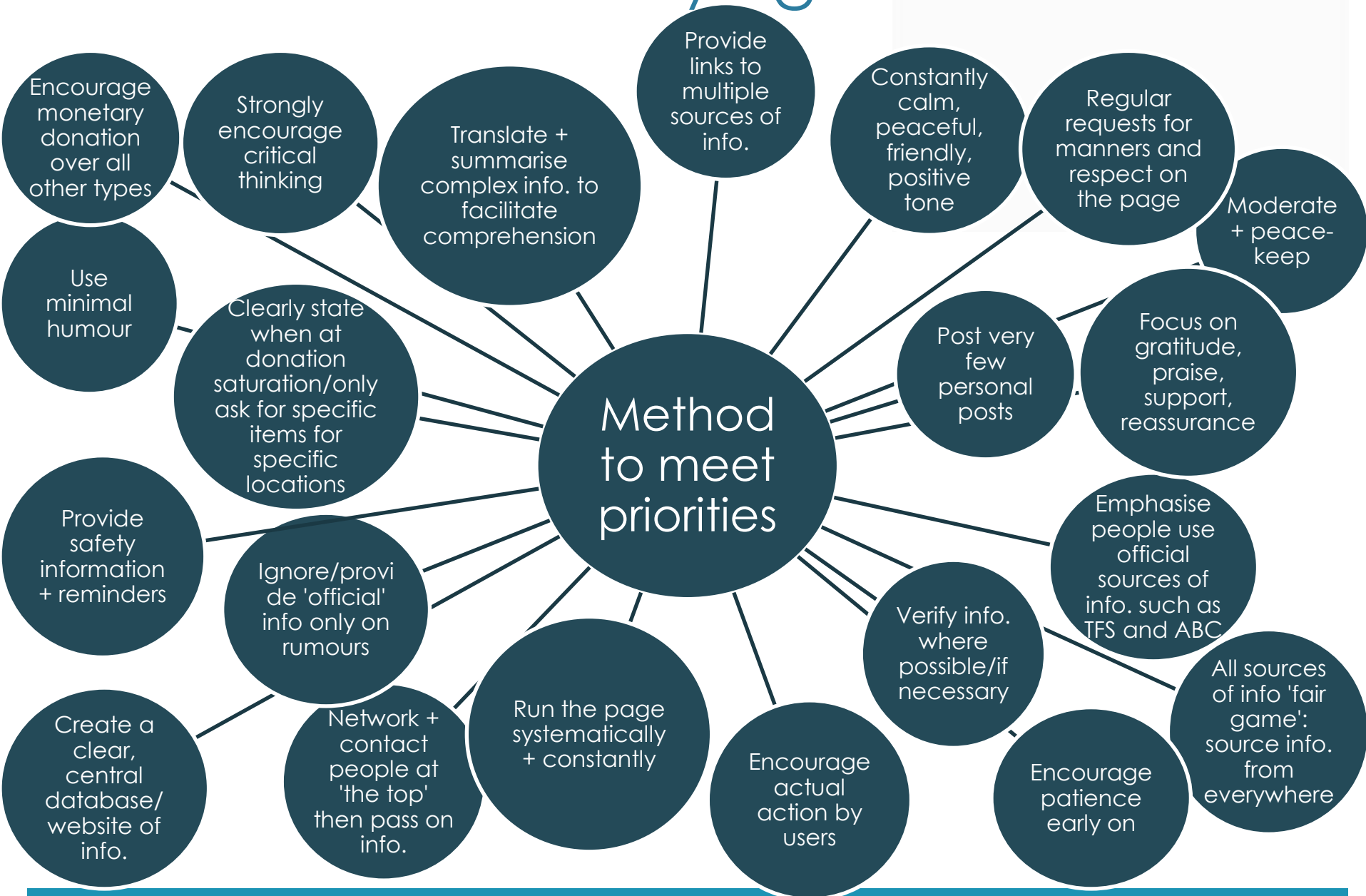
Arena to request what help?
A marketplace to offer what help?



What was I trying to focus on?



And how was I trying to do that?



Quant Analysis

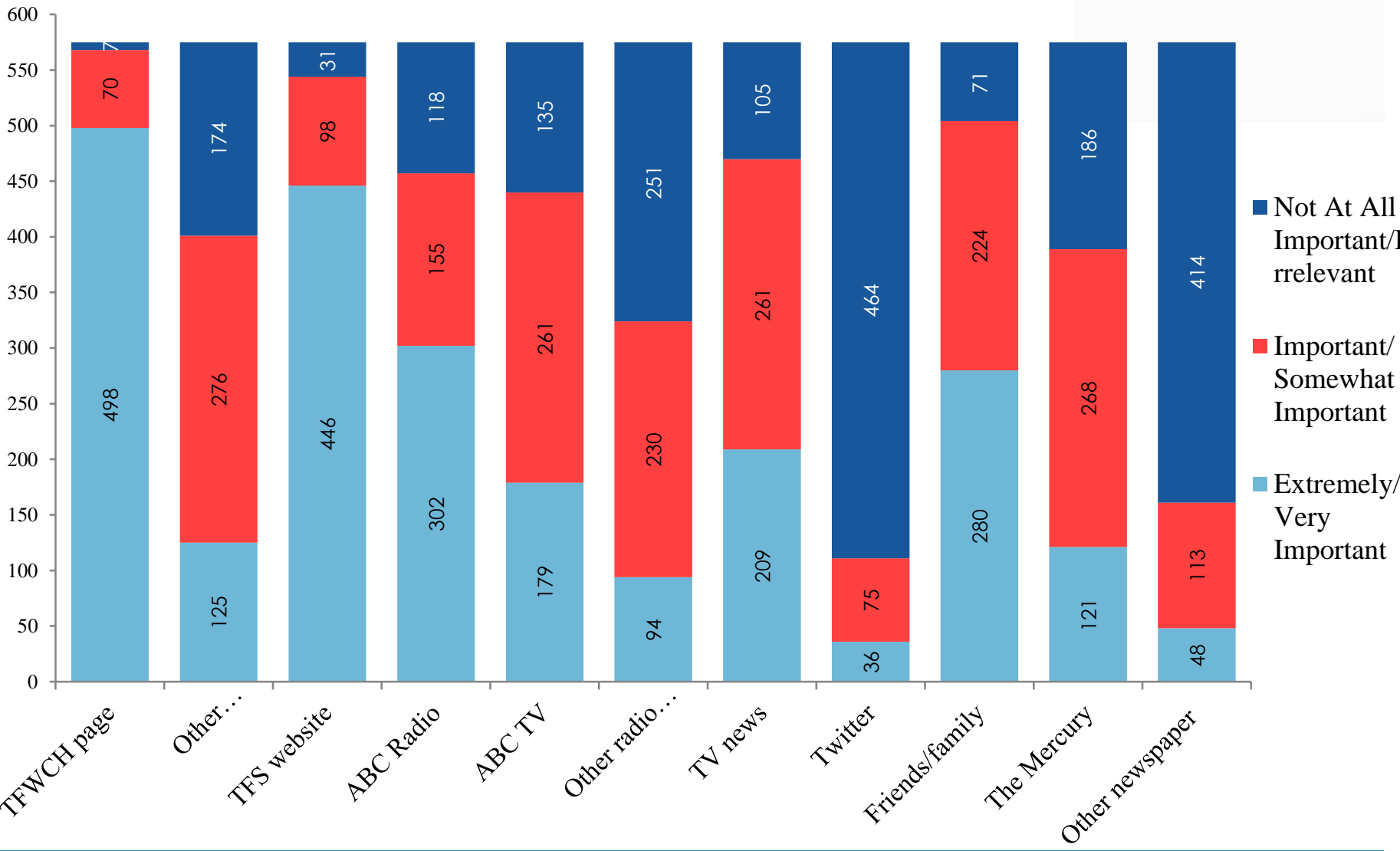
Questionnaire	Short title	Intended respondents	Sample size
Q1	Individual Contributors	Individual people who had helped/contributed	$n = 531$
Q2	Business/Organisation Contributors	Businesses, organisations and companies who had helped/contributed	$n = 95$
Q3	Bushfire Affected Individuals	People who had been impacted by the bushfires themselves	$n = 52$
Total			$N = 678$

Quant Analysis

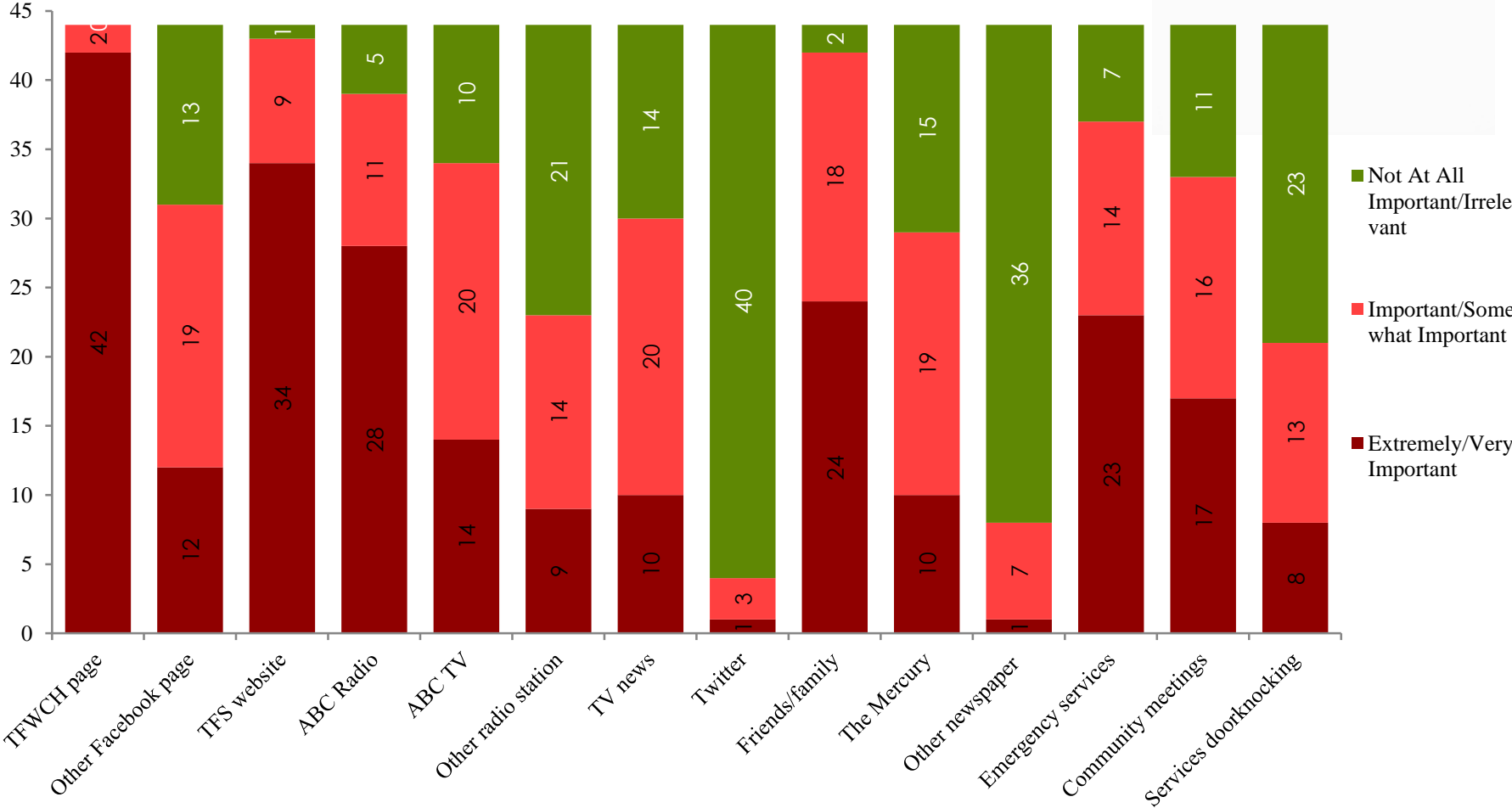


- Multiple items
 - E.g.:
 - Origin, location at time of fires, source of referral to TFWCH, importance of different news media, org/business, volunteering behaviours and activities, impact of TFWCH on volunteering behaviours and activities, positive/negative feedback about TFWCH, assistance sought/received through TFWCH
-

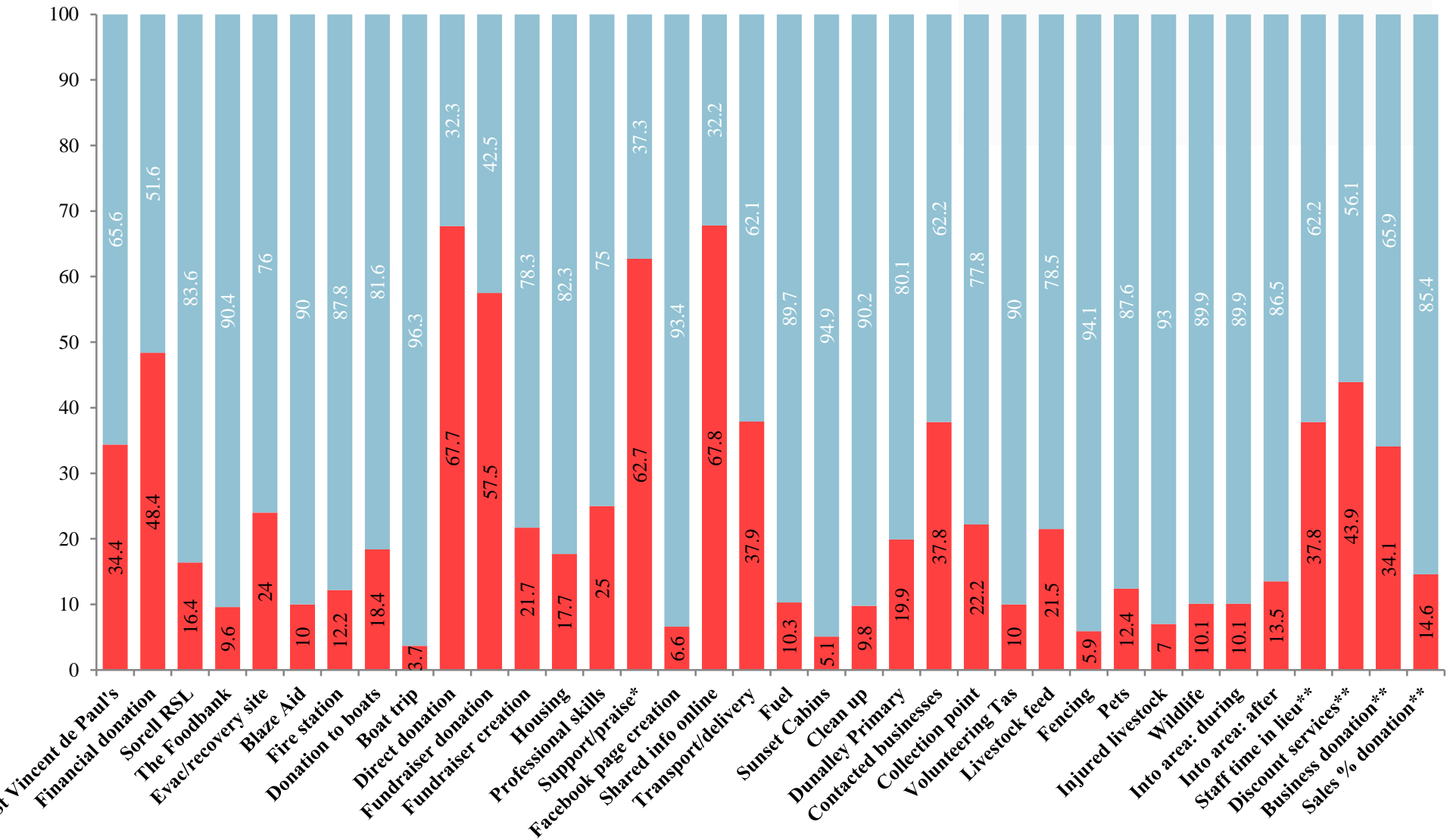
Importance of various media (Q1 + Q2)



Importance of various media (Q3)



Spontaneous volunteers... What were they even doing?! (Q1 + Q2)



Top 10 for Individuals



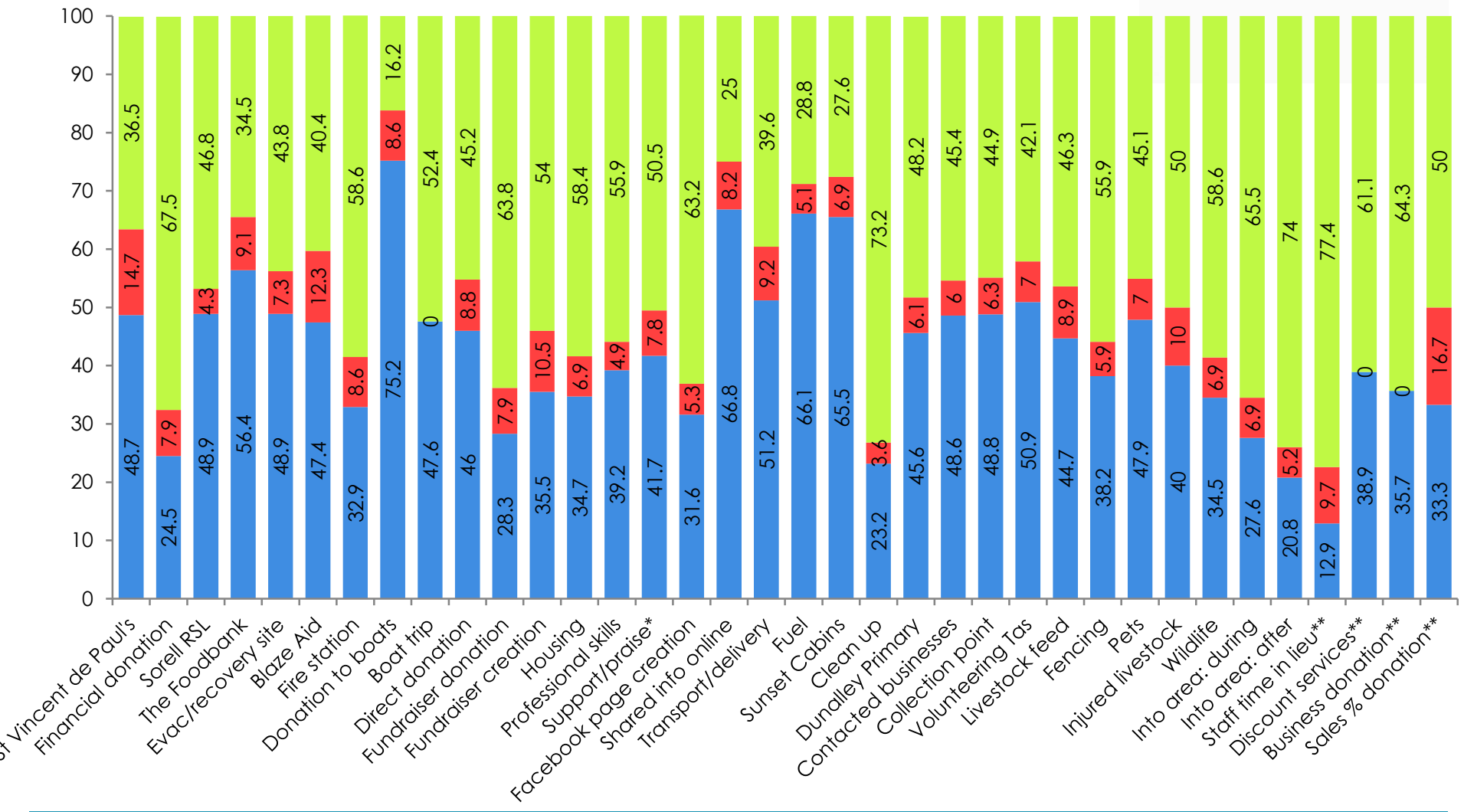
Volunteering behaviour	Volunteers
Direct donation	340
Shared info online	338
Support/praise	307
Fundraiser donation	292
Financial donation	242
Transport/delivery	183
St Vincent de Paul's	180
Contacted business	177
Evac/recovery site	119
Livestock feed	109

Top 10 for Businesses/Organisations



Volunteering behaviour	Volunteers
Shared info online	50
Direct donation	47
Professional skills	43
Contacted businesses	39
Fundraiser donation	37
Discount services	36
Financial donation	35
Transport/delivery	34
Fundraiser creation	31
Staff time in lieu	31

Did TFWCH have an impact? (Q1 + Q2)



Page impact for Individual Volunteers – Top 10

Volunteering behaviour	Volunteers	Page had an impact on X%	Volunteers influenced
Shared info online	338	70.1%	237
Direct donation	340	47.1%	160
Support/praise	307	41.7%	128
Transport/delivery	183	53.6%	98
Contacted business	177	52.5%	93
St Vincent de Paul's	180	48.9%	88
Fundraiser donation	292	28.4%	83
Donation to boats	98	76.5%	75
Financial donation	242	25.6%	62
Evac/recovery site	119	49.6%	59

Page impact for Org Volunteers – Top 10

Volunteering behaviour	Volunteers	Page had an impact on X%	Volunteers influenced
Shared info online	50	44.0%	22
Direct donation	47	38.3%	18
Discount services	36	38.9%	14
Transport/delivery	34	38.2%	13
Professional skills	43	27.9%	12
Contacted businesses	39	30.8%	12
Collection point	29	41.4%	12
Fundraiser donation	37	27.0%	10
Business donation	28	35.7%	10
Fundraiser creation	31	25.8%	8

...What about traditional volunteering?



	Yes	No
	Frequency (<i>Percentage</i>)	
Did you put your name down with Volunteering Tasmania?	57 (8.4%)	515 (76.0%)



If you put your name down, would you have done this without TFWCH?	Frequency <i>(Percentage)</i>
No way/probably not/page enabled me	39 (50.9%)
Hard to say. Not sure.	4 (7.0%)
Probably/definitely	24 (42.2%)
Total	57 (100.0%)



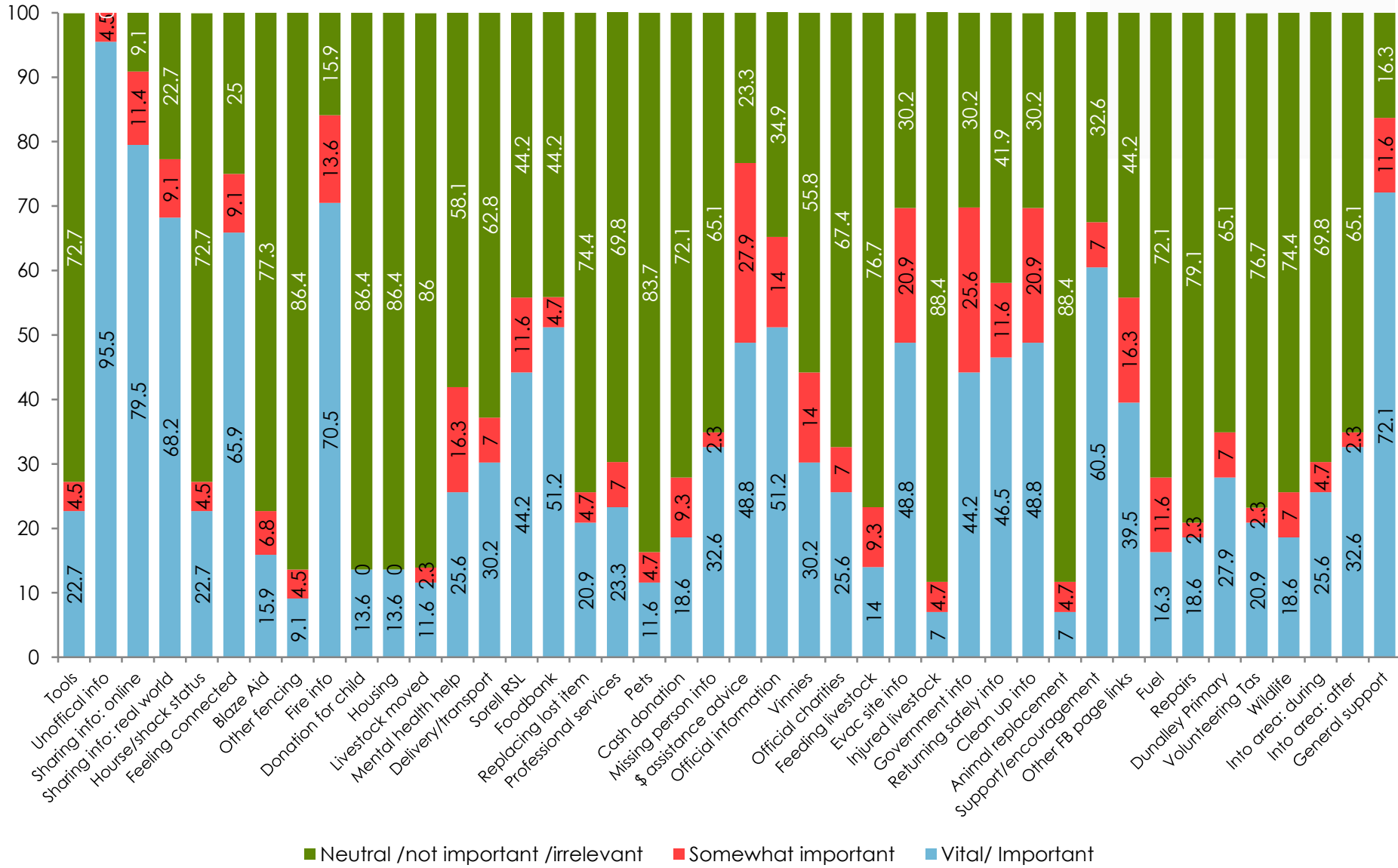
If you did put your name down with Volunteering Tasmania, have they contacted you yet?	Frequency (Percentage)
Yes! I have already done stuff!	10 (17.5%)
Yes but I haven't done anything yet	25 (43.9%)
No I haven't heard from them	22 (38.6%)
Total	57 (100.0%)

Summary...



- 8.4% of the sample said they put their name down with VT
 - Only 17.5% of *those* people had done anything with VT, four weeks post-disaster
 - That represents only 1.7% of the whole sample
-

Uses of social media for bushfire-affected



Top 11 most important benefits of TFWCH for bushfire-affected



Sourcing unofficial information	95.5%
Sharing information online	79.5%
Getting general support	72.1%
Getting fire-related information	70.5%
Sharing information in the real world	68.2%
Feeling connected	65.9%
Getting encouragement/support	60.5%
Getting official information	51.2%
Help from the Foodbank	51.2%
Evacuation hub information	48.8%
Info on financial assistance	48.8%

Qualitative Analysis 2



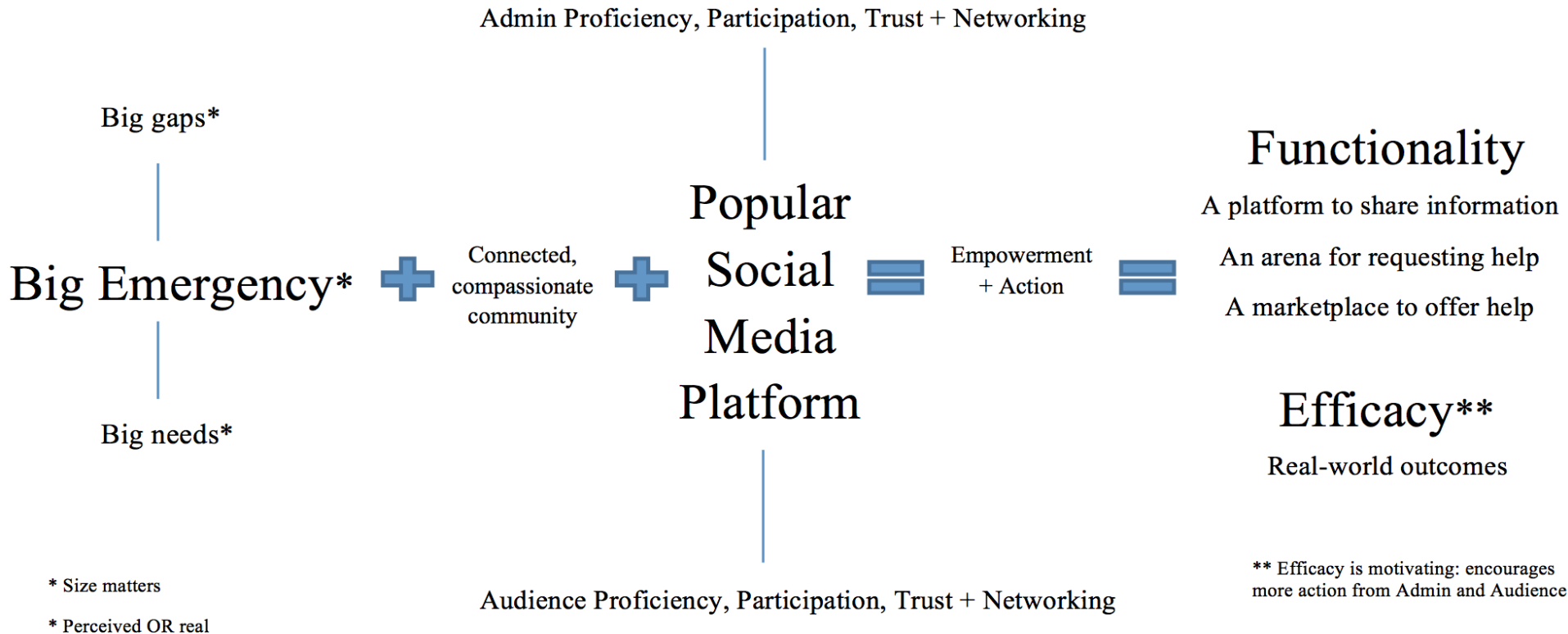
- 4 items
 - 1,302 responses
 - 18 overarching themes + 224 key themes + 675 subordinate themes
 - (no time!)
-

Some key points

- Context important
- Info handled in v. different way to traditional way
- Decentralisation of the news. Issues with incongruence of messages
- User-generated/citizen journalist info critical. Use of positive influencers key
- Social media as a tool critical for broadcasting, monitoring, crowdsourcing and collaborating. Choose. Additional tool in multi-modal approach
- Need for change within emergency management: must be in social media space; preferably interactively. Key decision makers must 'get it'
- Volunteers are quite useful! They prefer to give direct donations, share info, offer support/praise, support fundraisers... They save you time and money
- Landscape of volunteering changing: new type of volunteer?
- Importance of skilled Admin and skilled Audience
- The role of a page like this in delivering psychological first aid
- Benefit of surge support: VOSTs



Model



TASSIE FIRES

we can help



Community driven response and recovery

What does that mean? Seeing a problem, coming up with a fast and safe solution... and going for it!

Community driven response and recovery

What does that mean? Seeing a problem, coming up with a fast and safe solution... and going for it!

TASSIE FIRES WE CAN HELP



Tassie Fires - We Can Help

 Like You like this.



Tassie Fires - We Can Help

Emergency bushfire warning for White Beach

[http://www.fire.tas.gov.au/Show?](http://www.fire.tas.gov.au/Show?pageId=colCurrentBushfires)

[pageId=colCurrentBushfires](http://www.fire.tas.gov.au/Show?pageId=colCurrentBushfires)

 March 11 at 2:28pm



Tassie Fires - We Can Help

A free BBQ and social gathering - it's on tomorrow night at the Dunalley Neighbourhood House!



Event
beyondblue invites you to enjoy a Community Night Out - a free BBQ and social gathering for individuals and families in The Tasman and surrounding districts.
There'll be activities for all ages and the opportunity to chat with beyondblue Chairman, Jeff Kennett AC.

 Facebook social plugin

CONTACT MEL

Message me through the Facebook page

Email me

Call me 0438 330 998

EVENTS AND FUNDRAISERS

ALERT TAS WEBSITE

This is the Tasmanian Government Emergency Website.



[Go here now!](#)

GOOGLE CRISIS MAPPING

[See what is happening in your area NOW](#)

NEARBY SAFER PLACES

[What are these?](#)

Where are they? None right now!

936 ABC HOBART



936 ABC Hobart

 Like 9,225



936 ABC Hobart

Tonight on Statewide Evenings with Helen Shield we want to know this - what were your earliest adventures at growing plants?



HELP

I WANT TO HELP NOW

I NEED HELP NOW

TASMANIA FIRE SERVICE



[Fire Danger Rating](#) How "risky" is the weather? If a fire starts, how bad could it get?



[Current Fires](#) What fires are burning now? Where, how bad are they, do you need to be on alert?

EVACUATION CENTRES

None right now!

LATEST STORY

The Bushfire Inquiry 2013

If you are interested in the findings of the Inquiry, which were released on October 15th 2013, check out this story! [Read more](#)

Posted Wednesday, 23 October 2013, 01:00 pm

RED CROSS DONATIONS

Donating money is hands-down the BEST way you can help. I know it isn't the most "exciting" - but it is the BEST way you can help.

EVENTS AND FUNDRAISERS

Yes! Get on board!!

Check our [Facebook album](#) for posters of events and fundraisers.

Got an event I don't know about? Please [email me](#) with the poster attached - it's gotta be a JPEG file.

Don't know how to make a JPEG? [Go here...](#)

TASMANIA FIRE SERVICE



Tasmania Fire Service

[Like](#) 24,777



Tasmania Fire Service

For more information please visit www.fire.tas.gov.au and select Publications

Heating Fire Safety



1. **Don't** place clothing too close to heater - it could or will **burn** (see red mark on bed) from any source of heat.
2. **Never** leave clothes near the heater if heating the house or going to bed.
3. **Check** clothing regularly if staying near a heater.
4. **Use** the covers of all fires with care items.
5. **Don't** sit too close to the heaters.
6. **Clean** and maintain chimneys and heater flues yearly.
7. **Maintain** heaters according to manufacturer's instructions.
8. **Don't** leave your heater door open or remove covers on open fire.
9. **Be** careful with the **disposal** of ashes from the heater or wood heater. Ashes can be kept up to the door to cool. Always place ashes in a metal container. Discard of ashes well clear of your house and your water meter tank.
10. **Never** use an outdoor heater indoors.

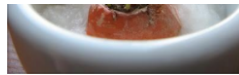
[Like](#) 10 hours ago

Tasmania Fire Service

[Facebook social plugin](#)

KEEPING INFORMED DURING BUSHFIRES

ABC Radio is the national Emergency



[Like](#) about an hour ago



936 ABC Hobart via ABC Northern Tasmania

Historian Nicholas Clements argues Tasmanians need a greater understanding of the

[Facebook social plugin](#)

TASMANIA POLICE



Tasmania Police

[Like](#) 46,272



Tasmania Police

Targa Tasmania 2014

Targa Tasmania begins with a prologue at Kayene and George Town, tomorrow, Tuesday 6 May 2014, followed by different stages of the event being held around the state until Sunday, when it finishes in Hobart on Sunday 11 May 2014.

"Targa is always popular with spectators of all ages and we encourage them to enjoy the event, but to also be mindful of the dangers that can be associated with any motorsport event," said Inspector Shane LeFevre....

[Facebook social plugin](#)

DODGES FERRY FIRE BRIGADE



Dodges Ferry Fire Brigade

[Like](#) 4,899

...but it is the BEST way you can help.



Other ways to donate money

A BIT OF RESEARCH ON THE SIDE

Bushfire preparedness, crisis communication, disaster resilience, spontaneous volunteerism, emergency management, social media, empowerment, trust, leadership, active participation, community competence... Do you work or do research in these areas? [I'd like to hear from you!](#)

SES TASMANIA



SES Tasmania

[Like](#) 6,243



SES Tasmania

A Severe Weather Warning is current for Damaging Surf for the South East Tasmania forecast district. <http://www.bom.gov.au/tas/warnings/severe.shtml>



[Like](#) 10 hours ago

Melanie Irons

- www.tassiefireswecanhelp.com
- Facebook:
“Tassie Fires – We Can Help”
- melanie.irons@utas.edu.au
- ABC Australian Story:
 - “Irons in the Fire”

