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As volunteer broadcasters we found ourselves at the frontline of a national emergency, updating constantly as the fires approached our town.

Francesca Winterson, 3MGB Mallacoota.



Community Broadcasting Foundation Ltd

Community broadcasting & reporting in bushfire impacted communities

What is the issue

Last summer, Australia experienced an unprecedented fire season. Communities were devastated and wildlife populations suffered as millions of hectares of our country burned. In this extraordinary situation, for weeks on end, community radio stations, from 2EARFM Moruya in NSW to 3MGB Mallacoota in Victoria, provided critical information to help people in their communities make decisions that would affect their lives.

At the crisis unfolded, nearly 80 community radio stations were broadcasting in fire-affected areas and, in many cases, staffed by a handful of volunteers. During the bushfires, when local information needs were critical and constantly changing, they faced extreme pressure and responsibility.

Now, in the aftermath, it is clear volunteers at these stations experienced significant trauma. The Community Broadcasting Foundation wants to support these community broadcasters in managing the ongoing impact of that trauma and build resilience for the future.



Buckenbowra State Forest - Photo Tracee Hutchison

What are we doing about it (Online Program)

The Community Broadcasting Foundation, in partnership with the DART Centre for Journalism & Trauma (Asia Pacific) wants to deliver an online trauma support and resilience program for community broadcasters and journalists impacted by the 2019/20 bushfires.

The first of its kind in the Australian community broadcasting sector, this program is specifically tailored for broadcasters and journalists working in community radio to build expertise and resilience in communities to deal with traumatic events.

Starting with stations directly affected by the bushfires, DART Centre experts have developed a specialist online program for community broadcasters and station management. The program will be conducted as a series of online forums and workshops, led by two specialist DART trainers.

The initial participating stations include EAR FM Moruya (NSW), Braidwood FM (NSW), 3REG FM Bairnsdale (VIC) and 3MGB Mallacoota (VIC). The online course will be delivered across two cohorts reaching an expected total of 40 volunteer broadcasters and station management.

Included in the project will be an evaluation with the view to scaling up and building an annual offering for the community broadcasting sector. The ongoing offering would support resilience in high-impact community stations as they may be required to respond in future to events of fire, flood or cyclone.

Our partners

The Dart Centre for Journalism and Trauma is the only provider in the world that focuses solely on the nexus between journalism, the media and psychological trauma. With over 25 years of specialist training on this topic, the Dart Centre is the leading global expert in supporting the media industry dealing with trauma and building resilience, drawing on science-based content and informed by journalism practice from one of the world's most prestigious journalism schools – Columbia University, New York.

Principal trainers

Dr Cait McMahon OAM, PhD, MAPS – Dart Centre Asia Pacific's principal trainer and Managing Director. Cait has undertaken internationally ground-breaking PhD research on trauma impacts as experienced by Australian journalists. She is the only known psychologist to work fulltime with media professionals on the topic of trauma exposure in the world. In 2016 she received a Medal of the Order of Australia for her work with journalist's wellbeing and trauma exposure.

Ms Kimina Lyall – former journalist, provisional psychologist and doctoral candidate and Deputy Director of Dart Centre Asia Pacific. Kimina has spent almost 15 years as a journalist, including a period as Southeast Asia correspondent for The Australian and the publication of her first book, *Out of the Blue - Facing the Tsunami*. Kimina has reported on, and experienced, disasters firsthand. Kimina is currently studying a doctorate in psychology and is an experienced trainer on media exposure to trauma.

Other specialist trainers will be brought in as required. All Dart Centre trainers have a professional background in journalism and/or psychology and are specialists in trauma and journalism.

Budget (Online delivery)

Community Broadcasting Foundation budget for phase 1 based on 2 online cohorts (Pilot)	Year 1 - 2020 Pilot
Planning and prep of e-learning	\$12,600.00
4 x 2 hr workshops per cohort x 2 @\$2000 per module* (*Total for two facilitators)	\$16,000.00
Evaluation report	\$6,000.00
On costs	\$8,650.00
10% GST	\$4,325.00
DART Centre & CBF In-Kind (Project development, including online trial workshop)	\$9,710.00
TOTAL PILOT PROJECT BUDGET	\$57,285.00
TOTAL FUNDING SOUGHT	\$47,575.00

We are seeking collaborative philanthropic contributions to support this project in its first year.



Kathy Shields & Tony Jagers, EAR FM - Photo Tracee Hutchison

Why you should support us

In a time of crisis, community broadcasters were there to provide critical information to their communities as fire threatened their homes and their loved ones. In many cases, these volunteer broadcasters were personally impacted, through loss of homes, livelihoods and the associated psychological trauma of living in a fire-affected community.

We want to acknowledge the part these stations played and provide trauma support training in order to build resilience in these communities.

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Fire ravaged beautiful Mallacoota on New Year's Eve and things will never be the same. As volunteer broadcasters we found ourselves at the frontline of a national emergency, updating constantly as the fires approached our town. Many of us are experiencing intense emotional issues. Nobody can quite understand the effects of the disaster on those of us who were doing our jobs as broadcasters under such intense pressure, we're grateful for the offer from DART and the CBF to support us.



Francesca Winterson - ABC News Screen Shot (31.12.2019)

Francesca Winterson, volunteer broadcaster and participant, 3MGB Mallacoota.

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The recent bush fires severely devastated the Eurobodalla Shire and surrounds. People are still suffering and fragile and our community will take a long time to heal. To have mechanisms in place to deal with these situations now and in the future is paramount. 2EAR FM is very happy to be a part of the DART project and is extremely grateful for the ongoing support and concerns of the CBF Team for our wellbeing.

Kathy Shields, company secretary, broadcaster and participant, EAR FM Moruya.

For more information please contact:

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