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Balmoral Fire Connect

A case study of social networks
and the diffusion of bushfire
preparedness information in a
rural community.

Final Report

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Disclaimer

The views expressed herein do not represent those of the Country Fire Authority or any organisations that participated in the study. They are the views and interpretations of the authors.

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Executive Summary

Ensuring critical fire safety and preparedness information is disseminated to those most vulnerable to bushfire is a high priority for Victorian Emergency Services. Reaching those most at risk in bushfire prone communities relies heavily on an intricate understanding of the communities themselves. Balmoral Fire Connect uncovers the value of the existing networks of staff and the user-groups of the Balmoral Bush Nursing Centre (BBNC) in South West Victoria. This report examines the diffusion of information using social network analysis of four key staff at BBNC. Staff reported having limited capacity to become fire safety experts, however they have strong networks with clients and the community and can integrate informal prompts into everyday conversations about upcoming weather, safety and welfare. Additionally, using BBNC as a central hub, the flow of information from user-groups using a “pass the parcel” approach demonstrates a supplementary method whereby rural networks can add to the formal fire safety education available in the community.

1. Background

Primary Care Partnerships are well placed to play a vital role in enhancing community resilience. As one of 28 Victorian Primary Care Partnerships, Southern Grampians Glenelg Primary Care Partnership (SGGPCP) works with 20 partner agencies across the Southern Grampians and Glenelg Shires in South West Victoria to improve the health and wellbeing of the community. The partnership includes local government, large and small rural health services, community service organisations, disability providers, mental health services, neighbourhood houses, bush nursing centres and aboriginal health services.

SGGPCP recognised the impacts of climate change on the health and wellbeing of the community as a priority in 2008 and published Policy Signpost #3 Climate Change Adaptation: A Framework for Local Action (Rowe and Thomas 2008) to identify the role of the partnership in climate change adaptation.

The importance of connections and collaboration and the leadership platform offered in the SGGPCP structure was one of the key research findings of Enhancing Networks for Resilience (EN4R; McCann, Fünfgeld et al. 2016), a research project carried out as part of the National Disaster Resilience Strategy (Council of Australian Governments 2011) in 2015/2016. Primarily EN4R focused on examining inter-organisational collaboration and the formal networks underpinning the SGGPCP; however data collected through semi-structured interviews also revealed the extent of informal relationships and networks of staff in community sector organisations. Staff reported sharing information gained through their work environment with professional and personal networks and referred to this notion of inseparable professional and personal relationships as “wearing two hats”. Balmoral Fire Connect enabled the opportunity to study a rural bush nursing centre to further understand the value of the relationships of community sector staff in the community setting for sharing fire safety information.

2. Current project

Funded by Victoria's Country Fire Authority (Summer Fire Initiatives 2016/2017) the Balmoral Fire Connect Project was led by Southern Grampians Glenelg Primary Care Partnership (SGGPCP) in collaboration with Balmoral Bush Nursing Centre (BBNC) and RMIT University. The intention of the Balmoral Fire Connect Project was to investigate the flow of fire safety information from a rural community sector organisation (BBNC) to members of the community by focusing on both staff and community groups that use the centre.

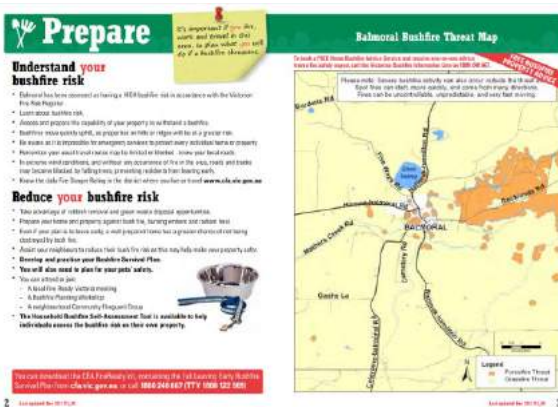
Enhancing the resilience of those most vulnerable to death or injury from bushfire presents ongoing challenges for fire services. In the Black Saturday bushfires that struck Victoria on 7 February 2009 alone, 173 people died and 414 people were injured (Haynes, Tibbits et al. 2008, Handmer, O'Neil et al. 2010). Ensuring the spread of fire safety education to those considered vulnerable demands innovative approaches including strategic partnerships. "Vulnerable" is a complex term and, for the purposes of this paper, is defined based on the definition used by the Victoria Department of Health and Human Services, Vulnerable People in Emergencies policy (May 2011) and consultation with CFA and BBNC. We will consider people as vulnerable who are frail aged, have a disability or cognitive impairment, live alone, live in a high bushfire risk and who experience barriers accessing information and/or services. Often vulnerable populations are considered "hard to reach" due to the barriers associated with accessing information. Current bushfire education approaches in Victoria range from formal presentations on fire safety such as Fire Ready Victoria, more community facilitated tactics such as Community Fireguard and Community Led Planning, practical community workshops, community events, local advice, social media, through to brochures and advertising.

This fire safety information generally focusses on developing bushfire safety plans centred on personal survival and preparation of property. Although, all these formal approaches are significant in education of community members, they are expensive in terms of time and resources. Another channel for information dissemination and education may be existing social relationships among key community leaders, such as staff in community health services and community members to pass important information with very low cost.

This highlights a question around the perceived definition of fire safety education and the potential value of augmenting formal information with key prompts and questions delivered by those who have relationships with "hard to reach" community members. Strategic collaboration with the community sector has the potential to extend the reach of vital safety messages in a resource efficient manner. In the context of "hard to reach" individuals and to maximise efficient use of resources, it is valuable to understand the extent to which expert fire safety education and advice and more informal approaches, personalised prompting and key questioning around the weather, personal safety and welfare can extend the reach of fire safety information.

Given their established relationships with the community – especially with disadvantaged members of the community - there is potential for community sector organisations to play a key role in disaster resilience. Understanding connections and relationships stemming from community sector organisations could further unlock vital potential avenues for enhancing community resilience. Emergency Management Victoria particularly promote the importance of building resilient and connected communities, acknowledging that more connected communities are safer communities (Emergency Management Victoria 2017). Similarly, Akama, Chaplin et al. (2014) note that people with well-connected social networks are more likely to recover from disaster than others whose networks are obliterated or non-existent. Furthermore, Akama goes on to state that the value of social networks is evident in bushfire situations, where information is passed between family, friends and neighbours. Here, social interactions are important in creating opportunities for residents to exchange information on shared risks, which can lead them to take collective action to address risks.

The Balmoral Fire Connect project set out to further understand the information dissemination from the BBNC to highlight the value of partnering with the community sector to extend the reach of fire safety information. BBNC is a central hub for the community of Balmoral and has a trusted relationship with some of the most vulnerable members of the community. With an Executive committee comprising community leaders and centre users, BBNC has connections to a diverse range of community networks. BBNC actively invests in community connection, which is reflected in its mission statement: “connecting people, promoting knowledge, investing in the health and wellbeing of our community, for the future”.



Balmoral is a small community situated 350kms west of Melbourne, located in a high fire risk area with significant exposure to bushfire risk emanating from the Grampians National Park, the Black Range, Melville Forest, as well as grassfire risk. There is significant farming around the district, ranging from wool and sheep production to cropping and small agricultural enterprises. The population in and around Balmoral is aging, due to demographic

transition combined with a significant drain of young people to cities and more regional centres. The young families in the district benefit from a Prep to year 12 Secondary College and access to day care and health care through BBNC. A significant percentage of the population are members of local CFA fire brigades, however this membership is traditionally male, resulting in women and families at home in the event of a fire.

3. Methodology

To measure and better understand flows of bushfire information through community networks and the actual and potential role of BBNC in facilitating such information dissemination, two methodological strategies were devised at the beginning of the project.

3.1 Strategy A

A pilot survey was conducted with staff at BBNC to trial a method to understand ego-networks of staff at the centre. The ego network is defined as the immediate social environment of an individual (ego), including all social relations (ties) between the ego and other individuals (called alters) (Robins 2015). Seventeen staff attended a 30-minute bushfire safety information session at BBNC as part of a full day staff meeting. All staff were requested to complete a survey designed to capture data to develop ego networks (see Appendix 1).

Following the pilot survey, semi-structured interviews were conducted with four BBNC staff who work in different functional areas: Community Services, Community Nursing, Community Education and Administration. The four staff interviewed were administered a survey and accompanying matrix (Appendix 2) designed to collect data on pre-existing relationships with clients (outside of their clinical relationship), the relationships between clients (if known), perceived vulnerability (subjectively rated from 0 as not vulnerable to 5 as highly vulnerable) and the dissemination of fire safety information to clients. Interviewees were also asked to reflect on the fire safety session delivered as part of the project.

3.2 Strategy B



The design of strategy B was based on a chain referral method, where each participant recruits someone from their network to pass on a parcel of information (Hechathorn, 1997). Ten Fire Connect Parcels each consisting of five packages were disseminated throughout the Balmoral Community using the Pass the Parcel approach (Brown 2013) (this approach was trialled by SGGPCP in 2013). The chain of referral could end up being long, i.e. when all five parcels were passed along to one person,

who would then pass it on to another, etc. or very short when respondents did not pass on the parcels to anyone or to one person only.

Five parcels were designed to be disseminated from the Planned Activity Group (PAG) at BBNC – a

group of older community residents who attend BBNC weekly for social activities - and included the following contents:

- Balmoral Fire Connect Welcome letter and instructions
- Project consent forms and plain language statements
- *Can I Can't I* brochure: General information about what you can and can't do during declared Fire Danger Periods and on days of Total Fire Ban
- *Warnings and Emergency Information*: Outlines the Fire Danger Ratings and Fire Districts
- *Bushfire: Preparing to Leave Early*: Published in partnership between the Victoria Government and Australian Red Cross, this publication is a step by step booklet focussed on planning to leave before a fire
- *Your Guide to Survival*: A booklet developed to assist with developing a Bushfire Survival Plan
- *CFA Wallet Cards*: Small credit card sized card with the phone number of the Victoria Bushfire Information Line and short fire safety messages
- *Fire Danger Rating rubbish bag*: Designed for use in cars with information on fire danger ratings and simple safety messages
- *Plan and Prepare Glasses cover*: Soft glasses case printed with CFA logo and Plan and Prepare slogan
- *CFA pen*
- *CFA balloon*



Five parcels were designed to be disseminated from the Balmoral Kindergarten and included the same contents, with the *Bushfire; preparing to leave early* replaced by *Planning with Children brochure* (a document developed by Bushfire CRC designed to be used to involve children in bushfire planning).

A CFA Bushfire Safety Presentation was delivered to the Planned Activity Group (PAG) at the Balmoral Bush Nursing Centre. Taking into account the experience within the group, previous presentations delivered to this group and time restrictions, a discussion around fire myths was the focus of the presentation. Five participants of the PAG group volunteered to take a parcel; they then removed a fire safety pack from the parcel and passed the parcel on to someone else. This process continued until the parcel had been passed five times. An additional fire safety presentation was delivered at the Balmoral Kindergarten as parents were picking up children. This presentation was designed to be short, allowing for the limited time available to parents during pick up. Five parents volunteered to take a parcel using the pass the parcel approach over five rotations as per the process implemented

with the PAG group. The location of the parcels was tracked by the coordinator at BBNC by phoning participants to record names and phone numbers of the next person to have the parcel.

All participants were invited to a focus group lunch to gather feedback about the project. To begin the feedback, participants were presented with all the copies of fire safety materials included in the parcels and asked to rank these using a score of 10 for most useful and interesting to 1 for least interesting or useful. Participants were also asked to consider the processes of the approach, including who they received a parcel from and who they passed it on to, their actions as a result of receiving the parcel, and any other reflections on the process.

A survey was also sent to all participants of Pass the Parcel (see Appendix 3) with instructions to send completed surveys via reply paid mail to be entered into a draw to win a \$50 voucher from the local grocery store.

4. Results

4.1 Strategy A

The interviews with four staff at BBNC revealed a snapshot of their perceptions around bushfire safety information in Balmoral and at BBNC. In general interviewees reported being very familiar with the bushfire safety information presented to them at the staff training session, due to the amount of information available to them in Balmoral, connections to local fire brigades, and attendance at previous sessions. They all reported that the short, focussed session was very effective, as longer sessions are problematic given the limited capacity and availability of staff. In fact, all reported reconsidering their plans when travelling during high fire risk or during a bushfire and one reported developing safety packs for work and home vehicles. An overview of interview responses is available in Appendix 4. The qualitative analysis of the four interviews and the ego-network maps related to each interview are presented in the following section.

4.1.1 Interview one- B207: Computer tutor

The interviewee is a computer tutor and she will be called B207 in this report. She nominated seven clients as her clients ego network. She considered four of these clients as vulnerable due to being of frail age, disability, medical conditions, living alone, or living in a high-risk fire area. Vulnerable is coded as red colour in the map (Figure 1). Figure 1 shows that most clients have strong connections among themselves, including those coded vulnerable. Closeness of the relationship is demonstrated by the width of connection lines among clients. In addition, the interviewee also knows her clients outside of the working relationship as acquaintances.

The interviewee indicated that, during computer tutorials, she passed on information about computer-related matters such as safety discussions about scams, passwords and security. However, she did not report passing on any fire related information over the past fire season to her clients. We assume that perhaps because this was not defined in her role or she did not perceive it as part of her role to have such conversations. Here, the interesting observation is that a computer tutor could have an opportunity to pass on information about fire safety to clients while teaching them about cyber safety during internet searches. The question is if and how she can use this opportunity to prompt and educate clients to search the internet for relevant and beneficial fire safety information. This possibility is discussed further in the recommendation section. Applying a social network framework shows the value of everyday interaction between staff and clients and among clients themselves, as depicted by Figure 1.

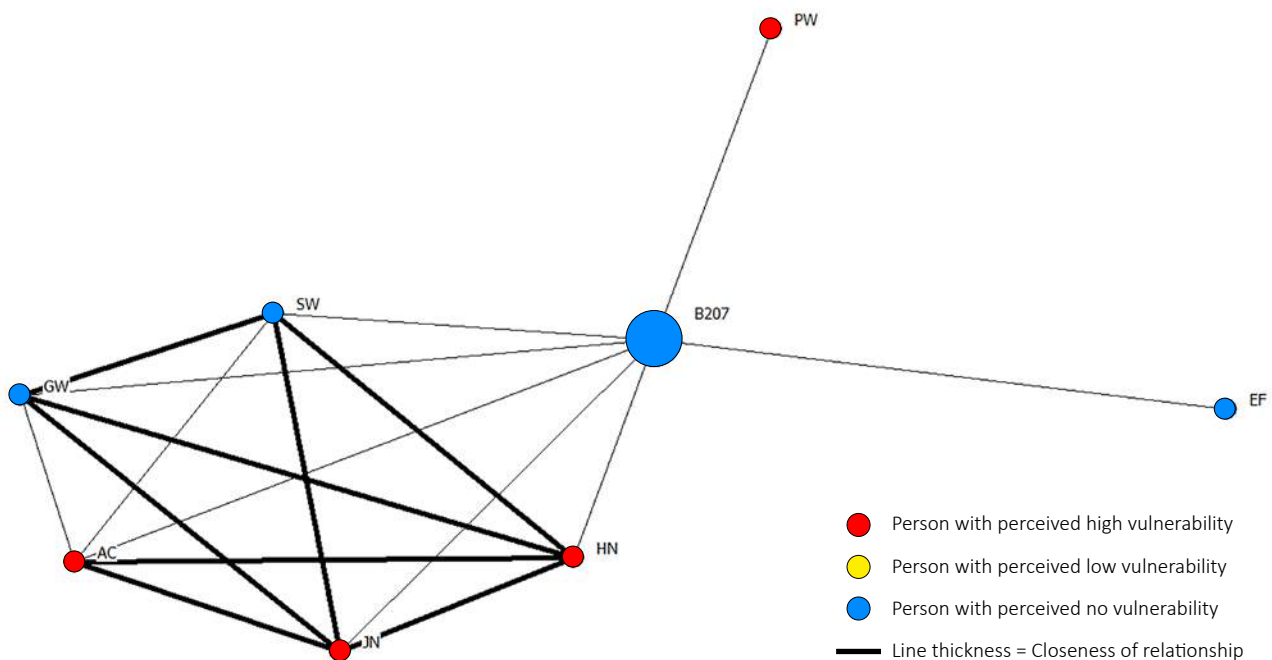


Figure 1. Clients ego network of the computer tutor (B207)

4.1.2 Interview two- B105: Administration/reception staff

The interviewee has an administration/reception position and she will be called B105 in this report. She nominated seven clients for her clients ego network. She considered six of them vulnerable. Two of her clients were considered high on the sliding scale of vulnerability, which is coded as red colour circles in the map while the other four considered coded low on the vulnerability scale. This is coded as yellow colour nodes (Figure 2.1).

The interviewee reported that she had a relationship with two clients outside of work: one neighbour and one family member. Regarding passing on fire safety information, the interviewee responded:

"I feel like in my position as receptionist, I shouldn't be passing on fire safety information".

This view illustrates an interesting facet that may point to why some staff hesitated to pass fire safety information on to their clients – they do not feel that it is appropriate to pass on information that is outside the remit of their professional role. The same interviewee, however, stated that she had conversations about fire safety during the past fire season with one neighbour, who was also a client and whom she considered to be very vulnerable (e.g. heatwave messages, offering support, and welfare checks) (Figure 2.1). Therefore, it seems that having a personal relationship with clients encouraged passing on fire safety information.

This interviewee also explained that she passes general information about weather and travel concerns to her clients, such as asking them to be careful during stormy conditions, or reminding them to look after themselves in times of extreme heat (Figure 2.2). These types of everyday social conversations could be used to prompt and remind clients to seek fire safety information. The receptionist in a bush nursing centre may not have expert knowledge on fire safety and she may not feel qualified or authorised to discuss fire safety warnings and other types of information with her clients. However, customer service staff, such as receptionists, have frequent interactions with people and professional connections to large numbers of people. Hence, they have many opportunities to prompt clients to seek fire safety information. For instance, in their social conversation about weather, they can inform clients about upcoming fire safety sessions or prompt them to take and read a brochure on fire safety.

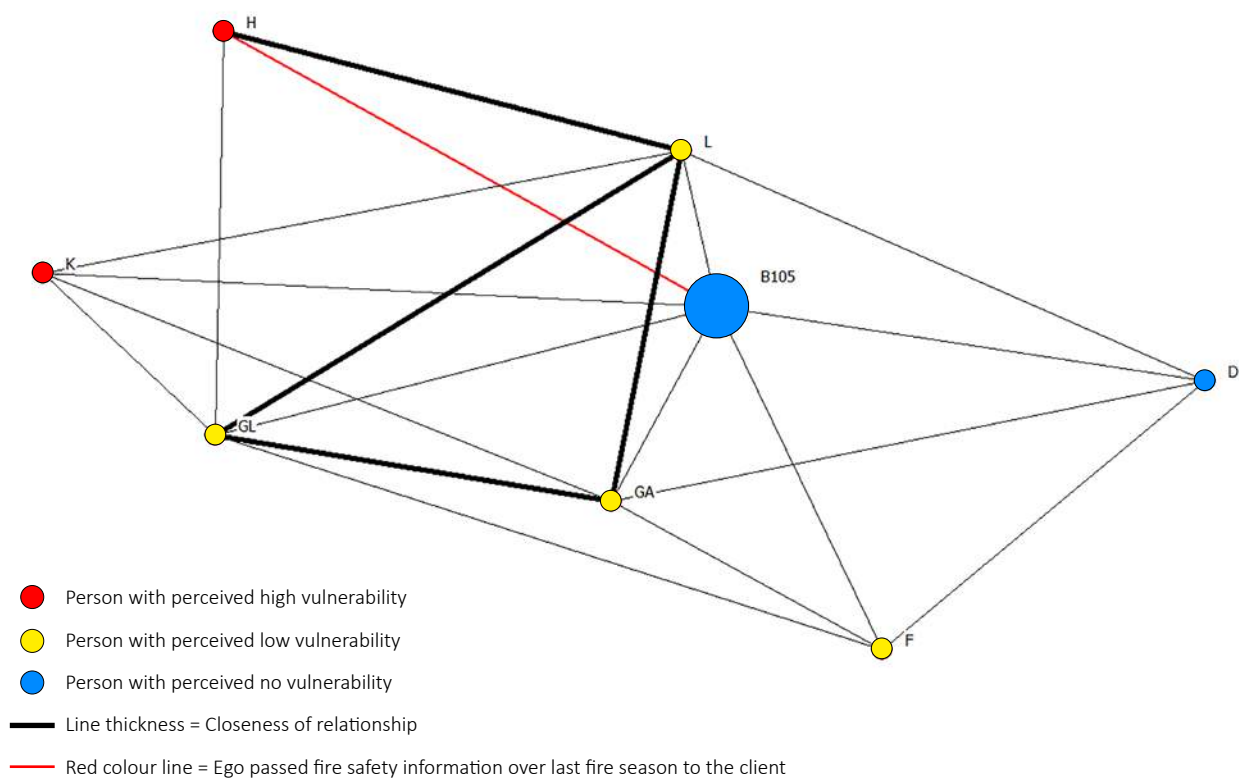


Figure 2.1 Clients ego network (#1) of the administration/reception person (B105)

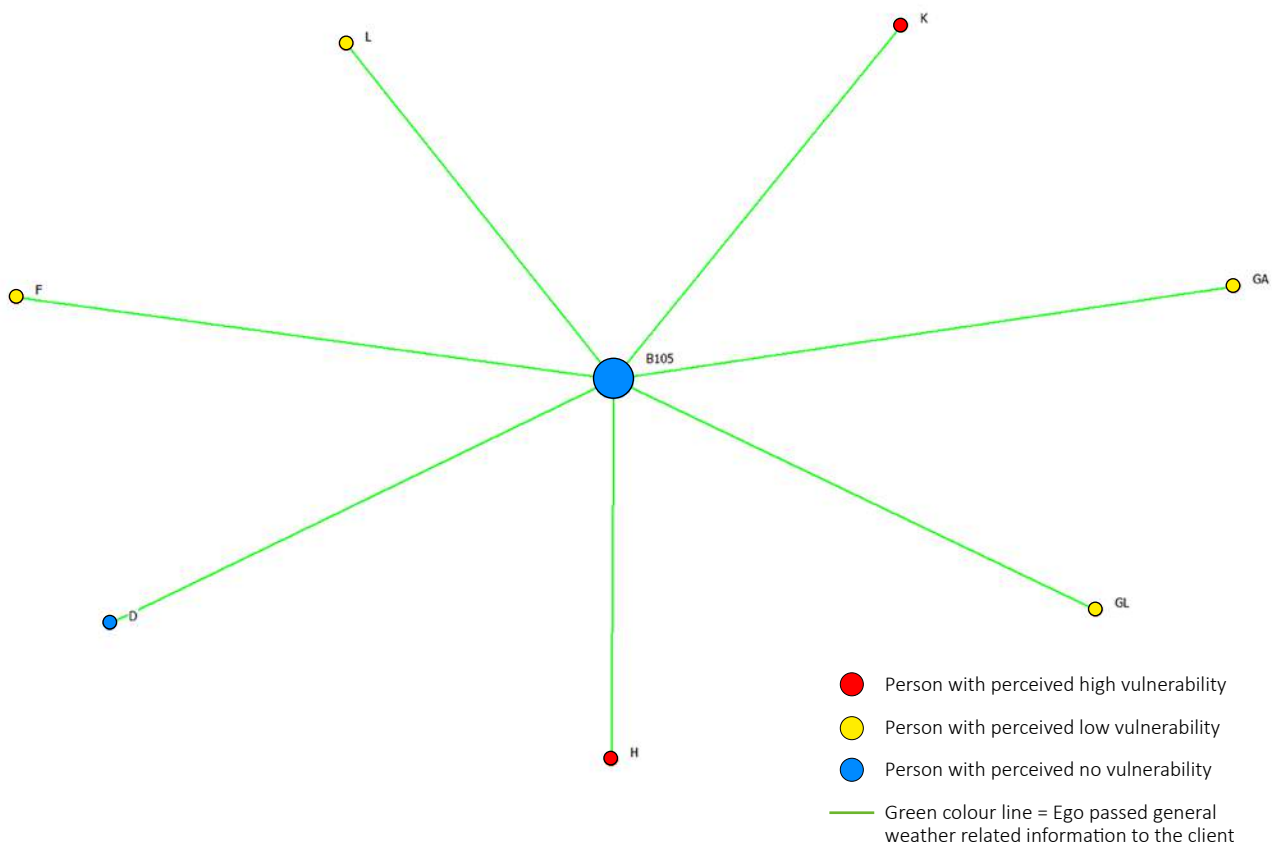


Figure 2.2 Clients ego network (#2) of the administration/reception person (B105)

4.1.3 Interview three- B205: Nurse

The interviewee is a nurse and she will be called B205 in this report. She nominated seven people as her clients over the last fire season. Two of these clients she rated high on the sliding scale of vulnerability, which is coded as red circles in the map and others coded low on the vulnerability scale, which is coded as yellow circles (Figure 3.1). The interviewee had relationships outside of work with two of the clients: one neighbour and one family friend. In regard to passing fire safety information to clients, she had fire related conversations with all of her vulnerable clients (Figure 3.1), including asking *“common sense questions about plans, such as what would you do if..., have you thought about..., suggest leaving early and asking where you may go to, awareness of heat, hydration”*.

The interviewee also passed on other general information regarding overall health and wellbeing, heat and hydration messages (Figure 3.2). She mentioned that general “rural” conversations about weather, seasonal information, and local happenings are common between staff and clients. Again, this type of conversation can be strategically used to diffuse necessary information to the vulnerable population.

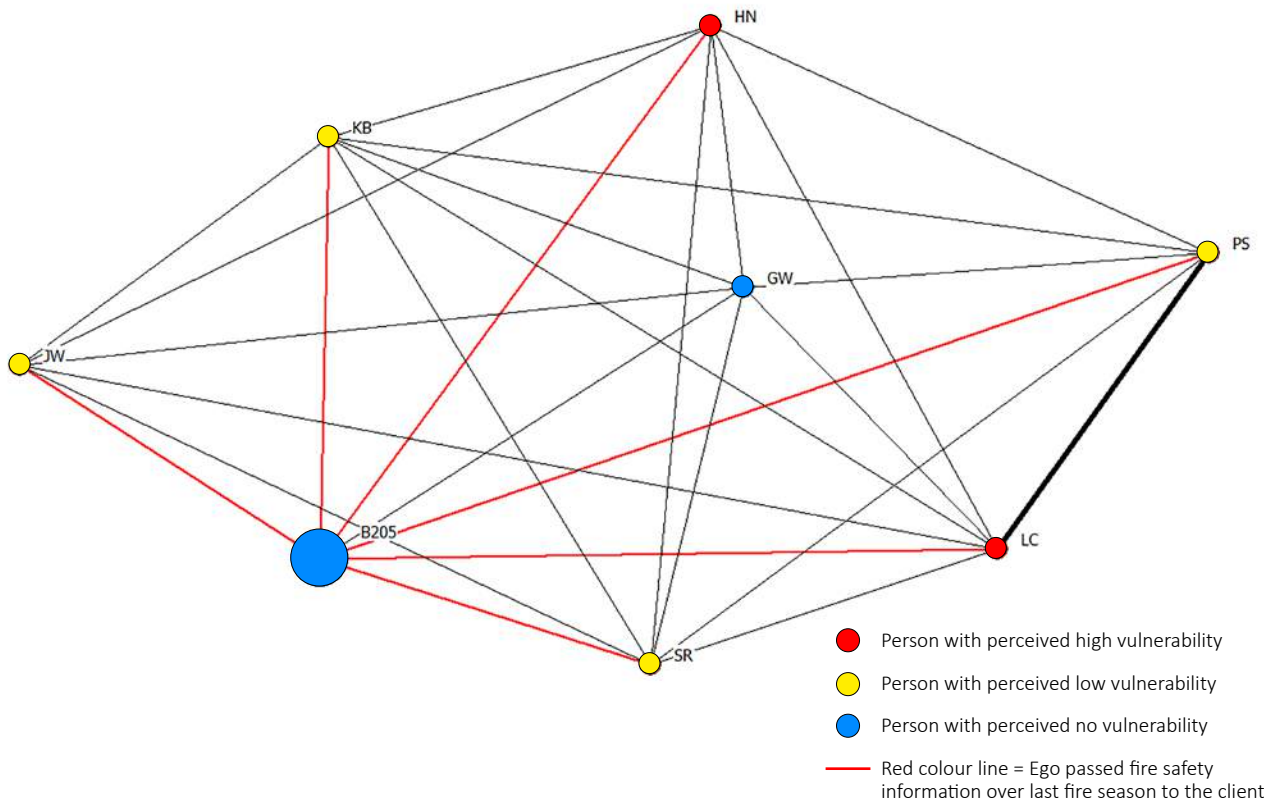


Figure 3.1 Clients ego network (#1) of the nurse (B205)

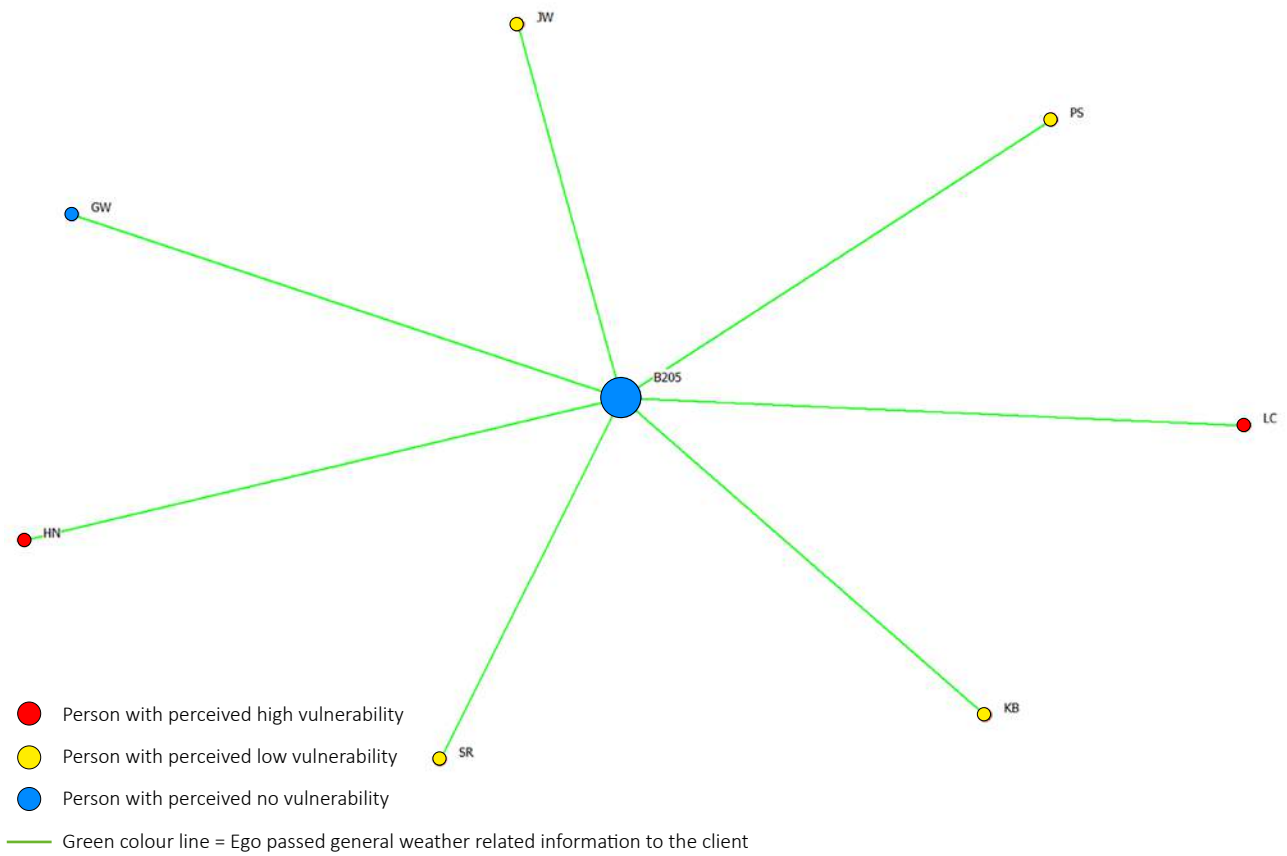


Figure 3.2 Clients ego network (#2) of the nurse (B205)

4.1.4 Interview four- B104: Community services coordinator

This interview is a community services coordinator and she will be called B207 in this report. She nominated fifteen people as her clients over last fire season. She considered all of these clients to be high on the sliding scale of the vulnerability, which is coded as red circles in the map (Figure 4.1). This interviewee had relationships outside of work with six of the clients: two neighbours, as well as one friend and three acquaintances.

Regarding passing on fire safety information to clients, as part of her role she arranged fire safety sessions for everyone on the list as part of Planned Activity Group and often led discussions after sessions based on local knowledge and understanding of personal situations (Figure 4.2). She would contact those she perceived as vulnerable in the event of a fire in the area or a high risk day to talk about plans, awareness, and safety.

Again, naturally other conversations happened between the interviewee and clients such as enquiry about general health, health of family, access to shops, mobility, medicines, family, seasonal issues, ongoing concerns and local happenings (Figure 4.3). This sort of conversation indicates that staff have a positive and supportive relationship with community members. These valuable connections could be utilised to diffuse information through the community. Additionally, maps show that clients have strong connections among themselves. This density may reflect that this group meets weekly (and some may meet more often if involved in other groups) and therefore may have established relationships over a significant period of time, which is common in small rural communities. Therefore, if a staff member passes a piece of fire safety information to only one client, there is a potential for that information to be spread among other clients through their networks. This is especially apparent when the spread of information is encouraged by the staff (e.g. when the staff member requests that the client to pass information to their friends and family).

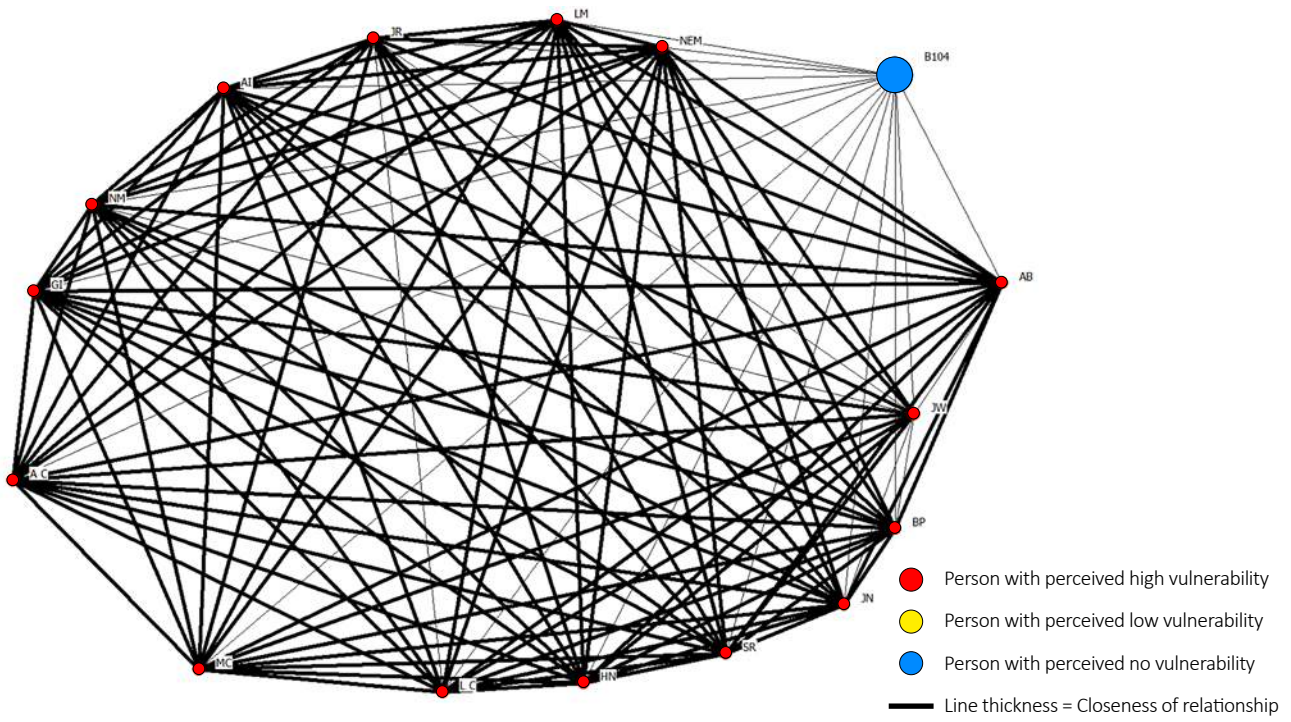


Figure 4.1 Clients ego network (#1) of the community services coordinator (B104)

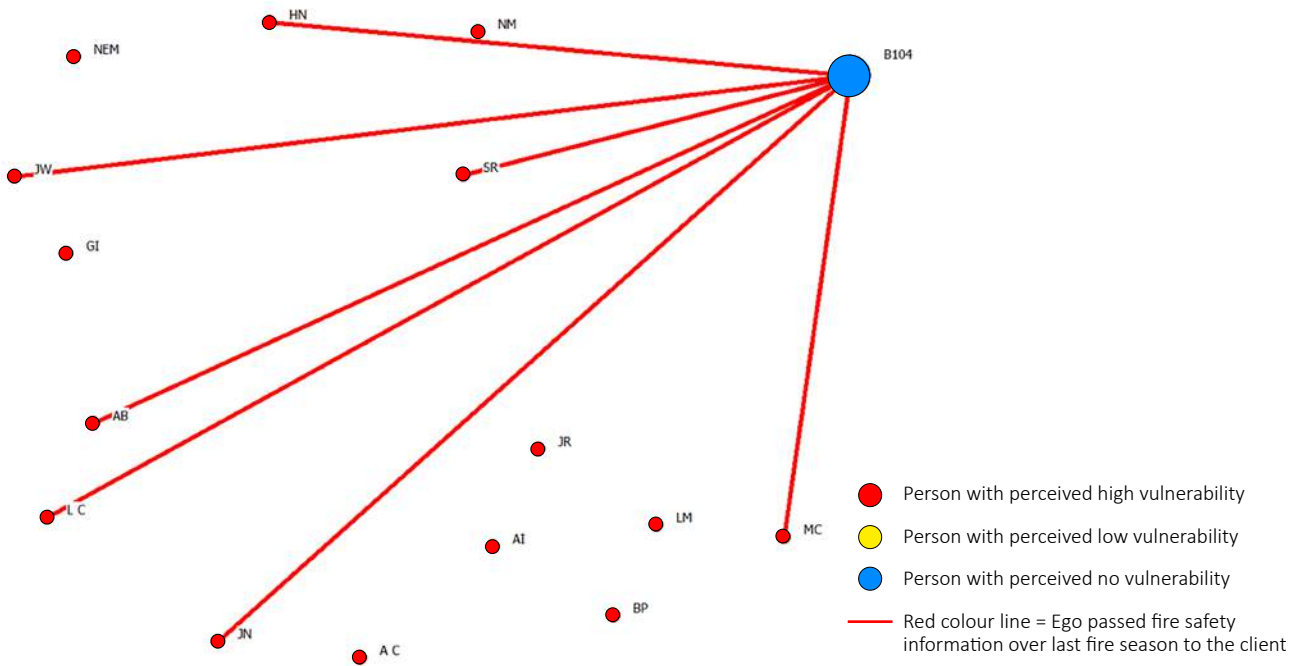


Figure 4.2 Clients ego network (#2) of the community services coordinator (B104)

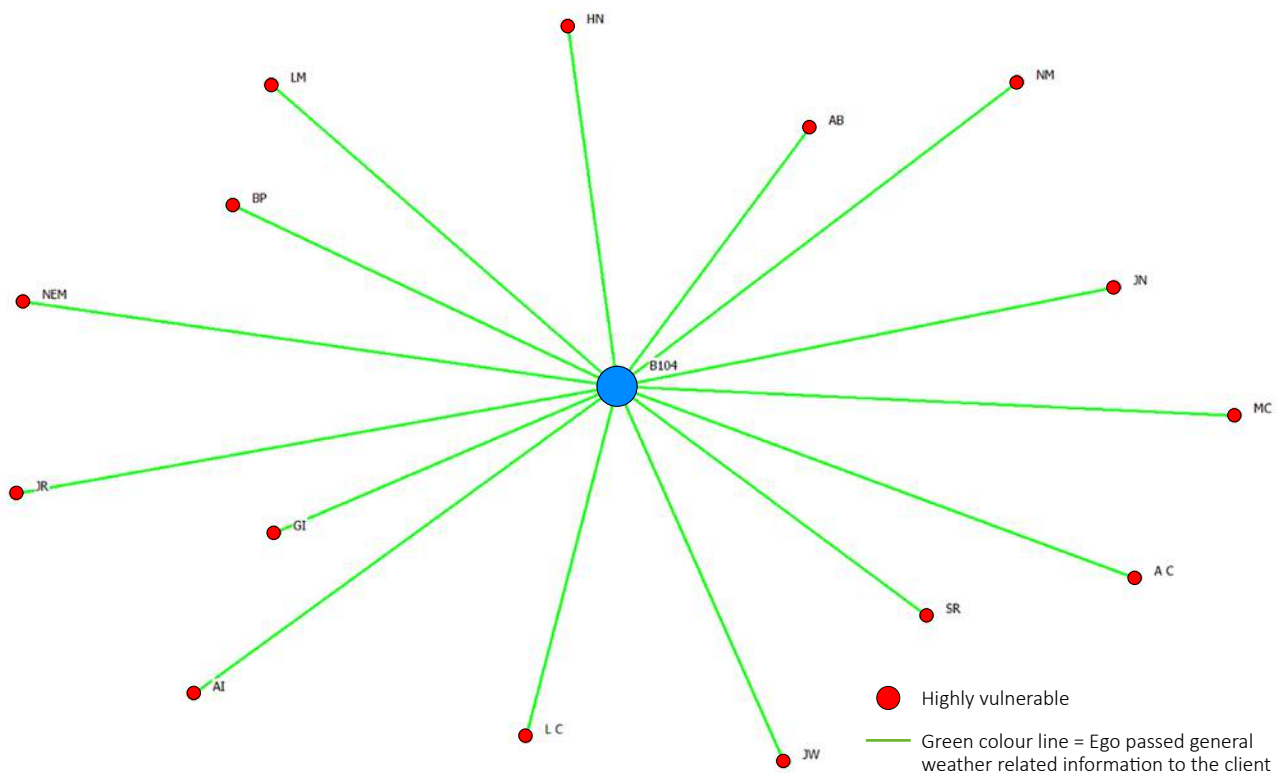


Figure 4.3 Clients ego network (#3) of the community service coordinator (B104)

In summary, these four interviews reveal several points about the role of staff-client relations regarding information diffusion. Firstly, staff were connected to the vulnerable community members, and the majority of clients had close relations among themselves. Two staff were hesitant to pass on fire safety information because they did not consider themselves experts with the responsibility and authority to do so. On the other hand, two other BBNC staff were more inclined to talk to clients about fire safety information, because training community members was part of their job description.

4.2 Strategy B results

Focus Group

In total forty-four people participated in the Pass the Parcel approach, including 37 females and seven males aged between 31 and 90 years. All participants lived either in Balmoral or on farms within 50 km of the township. Nine people attended the focus group held at the end of the project (seven aged 65 years and over and two BBNC staff who received parcels through the Pass the Parcel approach).

The materials in the parcels, the focus group participants ranked the “Warning and Emergency” brochure as the most useful, with a combined ranking of 79 (see methodology page 10), followed by “Can I Can’t I” with a combined rating of 70 and “Your Guide to Survival” with 69 points (Figure 5).

Strategy B focus groups: most useful fire safety materials

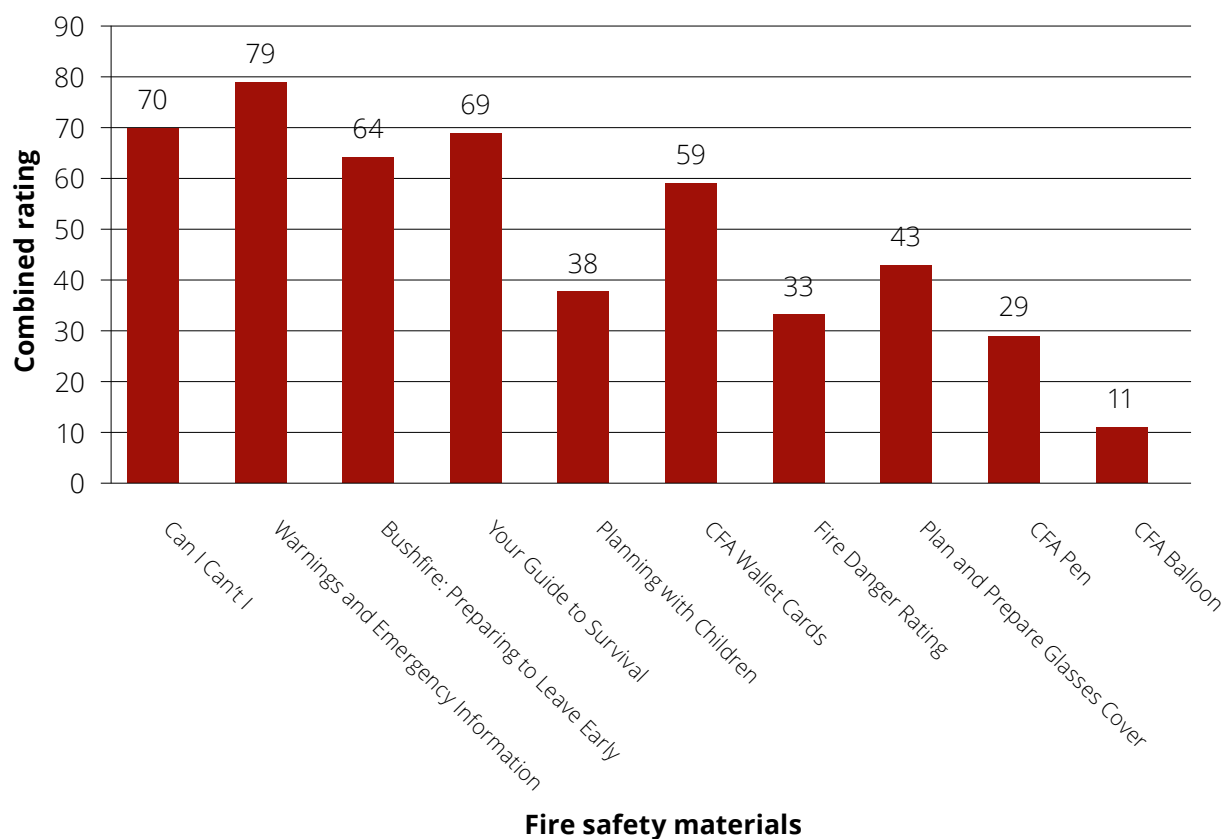


Figure 5: Combined ranking of fire safety materials (focus group; strategy B)

Most participants reported receiving their Balmoral Fire Connect parcel from a neighbour or friend. Many reported looking over the materials in the parcels, however most of the group commented that they had seen these types of publications on several occasions and therefore didn't read them comprehensively. When passing the parcel, everyone reported having a discussion about the project based, not only around instructions, but mainly around bushfire safety and planning such as how is your fire preparation, what are you plans, etc. one participant talked about reviewing support arrangements with a neighbour, how they would assist each other, and how they would stay in contact in the event of a fire. Another reconnected with a neighbour in an isolated road, recalling a fire safety meeting (possibly Community Fireguard) held at that house and commented that it was good to reconnect and chat, particularly as the road is very isolated. A further participant reflected on making changes to add to their fire plan by purchasing batteries for torches and radios. Whilst the majority of the group took some further action, one participant commented that they didn't do anything as it was very late in the season, that fire planning is part of life in a rural community, and that it becomes part of everyday planning to prepare before summer.

"I talked to my neighbour about my plans when passing on the parcel"

When asked to reflect on the overall process of passing the parcel, participants generally commented that the idea of passing information around in the community using existing social structures would be useful. The project was constrained by research and data collection timelines, including tracking the parcels, which may not reflect the natural flow of information. One participant reflected that being prompted to pass the parcel on quickly limited her selection of the parcel recipient to be centred on convenience rather than need. All commented that the instructions were clear and simple and everyone received a reminder from BBNC to pass the parcel along.

Many commented that there was too much information in the parcel, making it very bulky to carry, but also too much to read. Some participants also mentioned that the brochures looked too generic. Participants reflected that they would have preferred information specific to the local area.

One focus group participant noted that it is important to understand that sometimes passing on a parcel in remote areas can be challenging due to distance: "I only go into town maybe once a week and I don't drive myself so rely on someone else – my neighbour is too far away to walk to or chat over the back fence". Geographic distance, therefore, can be an impediment to using a process where information relies on being physically passed on from one person to another.

"the presenter was great – it was not so much being talked at (we have sessions twice per year) but a chance to almost test our knowledge and ideas – we were all chatting about our plans and previous fires afterwards"

All participants commented that the bushfire safety session delivered to the PAG group at BBNC was very useful, acknowledging that this group receives a regular fire safety presentation as part of the annual program. One participant commented that "the presenter was great – it was not so much being talked at (we have sessions twice per year) but a chance to almost test our knowledge and ideas – we were all chatting about our plans and previous fires afterwards". There were no focus group participants from the Balmoral Kindergarten session, although an observation of that session made by a participant in the focus group was very similar with a discussion focused on safe travel and an allowance of time for questions which relied heavily on local knowledge.

Survey Results

Of the 14 participants who completed the survey, five reported being the first to receive the parcel (i.e they received it directly at a fire safety session), three said they were given the parcel by a neighbour, another three by a friend, and two by a work colleague. One survey participant received the information from a family member.

Participants were asked to tick the CFA fire safety materials they found most useful from a list of materials in the parcels. The results are reasonably consistent with findings from the focus group, with four publications rated as most useful by both groups: *Warnings and Emergency Information*, *Can I Can't I*, *Bushfires*, *Preparing to leave early and Your Guide to Survival* (Figure 6).

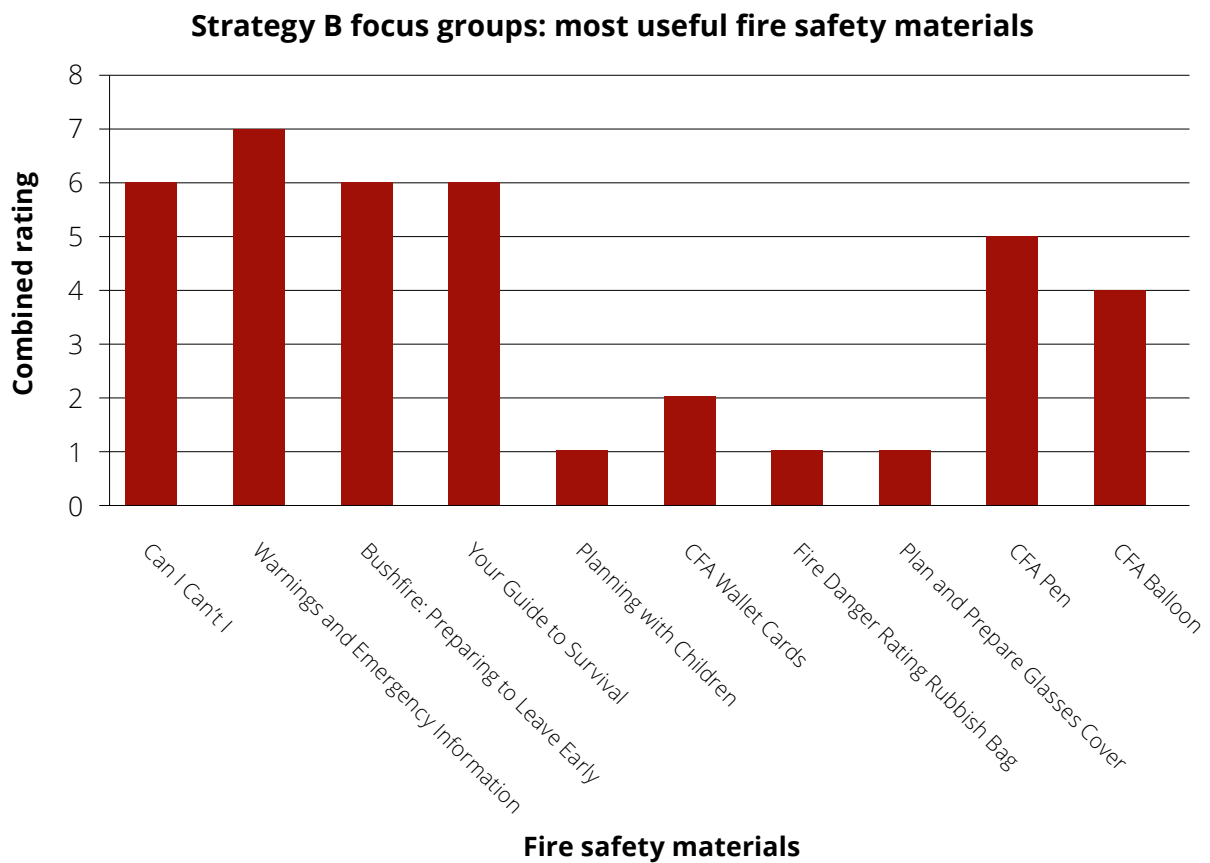


Figure 6: Combined ranking - Most useful fire safety materials (survey; strategy B)

Participants were also asked to select actions that they completed as a result of receiving a parcel. All but one person selected at least one action here, with the most popular actions being reading some of the information (64%), keeping the brochures to refer to later (42%), talking to a neighbour or friend (36%), and making changes to fire plan (29%). No survey respondent reported doing nothing as a result of receiving a parcel.

Action as a result of receiving a Parcel

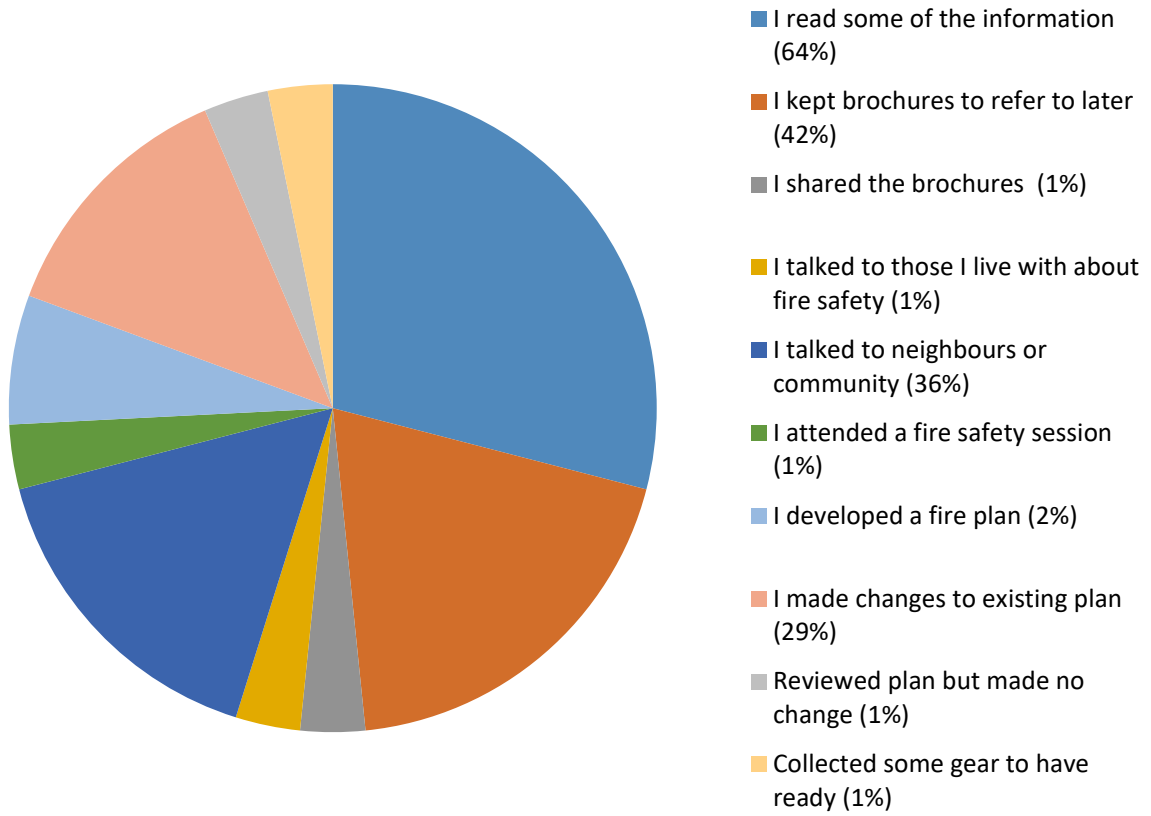


Figure 7: Action as a result of receiving a parcel (multiple responses possible)

5. Conclusions and Recommendations

- It is not surprising that people in small rural communities are well connected and that those who work in the community sector have relationships outside their professional role. Harnessing these relationships whilst appreciating the nature of these networks may be key to extending the reach of fire safety education. Rather than feeling obliged to equip key informants in the community with specialised fire safety education, promoting the value of key prompts and questions that can be integrated naturally into conversations could encourage fire safety discussions among the community and add to formal education options already available. In other words, the relationships between staff and clients, that built on everyday interactions, have valuable potential for the transmission of critical information. Therefore, it is essential that facilities, such as bush nursing centres and similar services (e.g. neighbourhood houses and community centres), recognise the value of these connections and utilise them to pass important information throughout the community over the course of the year. This more informal diffusion of information could then complement traditional methods, such as education sessions, social media, advertising and brochures during the fire season. This recommendation is in line with the Sax Institute evidence review (Hawe, 2009) for the Victorian Department of Human Services, which recommended identifying and supporting natural leaders and connectors as information providers and “lay” referral agents, while being mindful not to over-train or extinguish natural helping styles.
- If identifying the opportunities to pass fire safety information is defined in staff roles (e.g. nurse, community service coordinator), they may be more likely to converse, and prompt conversation, about fire safety. Importantly, rather than taking on expert fire safety knowledge, the focus could be on understanding the role of community sector staff as informal rather than formal educators. Although further research into information dissemination processes and efficiency are needed, it can be argued that information dissemination is more efficient if all staff understand the value of, and include, fire safety prompts in their everyday conversations with clients of bush nursing centres, instead of relying on one formally trained individual. For instance, a computer instructor can prompt and educate clients to search the internet for relevant and beneficial fire safety information.
- Through strategy B of this project (passing the parcel), neighbours were commonly the recipients of the parcels. The Victorian Heatwave “look after your Neighbour” approach is a good example of using existing connections to facilitate conversations within the community to augment formal approaches. Please refer to the following link for more information for this approach: <http://www.abc.net.au/news/emergency/plan-for-an-emergency/heatwave/>
- Ego networks maps of clients indicated that clients have dense and tightly knitted personal and professional networks. Existing connections among clients are a valuable avenue that can be used to diffuse fire safety information through the community. Working with existing social networks for information dissemination is particularly relevant in the given example of the BBNC, where most of the centre’s clients are either vulnerable themselves or connected to vulnerable community members. The CFA could implement a “pass the parcel strategy” to further improve getting critical information to vulnerable “hard to reach” individuals using existing connections within the community.

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7. Appendix 1- Pilot Survey

Name:

Gender:

Age:

Position:

- Who do you communicate (i.e. talk, meet or text) with at least once a week that lives in the Balmoral community? This person could be your family member, friend, client, or a co-worker. Please provide their details below. You can name as many people as you want.

| Id | Name (first and last name) | age | Does this person have a disability, mental or physical condition that prevents them from community engagement? | Living in remote areas (specify where) | Living alone | Relationship to you | Is this person communicating with anyone else from this list? If yes, put their id here | Do you intend to pass on the fire safety information that you learnt today to this person? |
|----|----------------------------|-----|--|--|--------------|---------------------|---|--|
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| 20 | | | | | | | | |

- What are three things you learn in the session that you consider useful?

8. Appendix 2- Interviews and Egonetwork of Clients

1. Please list the initial of all your clients over past six months. Using initials only is to ensure confidentiality. Please make sure to use a unique initial that so that you can identify the person at a later time. [if less than five names, interviewer probe; anyone else?]
2. This task is to describe the strength of relations between the listed people. You do this by filling initials in the matrix. This is a complex question, but by answering one column at the time it becomes simpler. Begin with the first person listed in the first column, indicates his/her relationship with the person in each row in one of three ways:

Write **C** if there is **CLOSE** relation between the row person and the first person.

Write **D** if the row person and the first person are **DISTANT** in the sense they rarely spend time together.

Write NA if the two people **don't know each other**.

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|----------------------|----|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| Nickname/ Initial | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
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| | 3 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
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| | 14 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | 15 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 |
| Nickname/ Initial | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

3. Diffusion of information through your role at BBNC

As mentioned before, this research is particularly interested in understanding how information such as fire safety information is diffused through the community from BBNC. The surveys filled in by staff during the session mostly indicated work, colleagues, family, friends, general community and some clients. It would be great to understand a little more about how information such as fire safety information is disseminated to your clients/patients.

Some of your clients/patients may be connected to you in more than one way – For example a client may also be your friend or neighbour. I am going to read back to you the clients you have listed and ask you a couple of questions for each client:

- 3.1 Please tell me all of the ways this person is connected to you other than your working relationship?
- 3.2 Do you consider that this person might be considered vulnerable or hard to reach? (frail aged, have a disability or medical condition, lives alone, lives in a high risk area,
- 3.3 Over the last fire season, did you pass any fire safety information on to this person? Think about not just formal information but informal news, ideas, comments etc? If so what kind of information was this?
- 3.4 During normal interactions with this client, would you pass on information about other issues or is the focus solely on clinical goals etc..?
4. Fire Safety and data collection session
 - 4.1. In terms of the information presented during the session by (presenter) from CFA, to what extent was this information familiar to you? Probing questions such as: Why was this information familiar to you?
 - 4.2. What are your thoughts on the timing of the session, both the length, time of day and the time in terms of the season (i.e. held in early March)
 - 4.3. What do you think about the amount of fire safety information in Balmoral in general – is there enough, just enough, too much? Explain why?
 - 4.4. During that session, you completed a survey where you listed names of people you speak to at least once a week. How did you feel about completing that survey – was there sufficient time, explanation of how and why you complete the survey etc...
 - 4.5. Do you have any other reflections for us about the session in March?

9. Appendix 3 – Strategy B Survey

Thank you for your participation in Balmoral Fire Connect by Passing the Parcel.

In order to provide some feedback to CFA about Passing a Parcel of information around in the community and encouraging conversations about fire safety, we would love it if you would take a few minutes to complete this short survey and place in the reply paid envelope provided. **On completion of the survey, you will go into a draw to win a \$50 grocery voucher from the Balmoral Community Store.**

Although we ask for your name, you will not be identified in any research but instead allocated a code to maintain anonymity.

You are also invited to share lunch with others who passed the parcel on **Thursday 27 April** at Balmoral Bush Nursing Centre (see invitation attached).

Name:

1) Who did you receive the Balmoral Fire Connect Parcel from?

- Family member Friend Neighbour Work Colleague

2) Did any of the following brochures/parcel contents particularly interest you?

- Can I Can't I
 Warnings and Emergency Information
 Bushfire: Preparing to leave early
 Your guide to survival
 Planning with Children
 CFA wallet cards
 Fire Danger Rating Car rubbish bag
 Plan and Prepare Glasses cover
 CFA Pen
 CFA Balloon



3) As a result of receiving the parcel did you do any of the following (tick any or all that apply)?

- I didn't do anything
- I read some of the information
- I kept the brochures to refer to later
- I shared the brochures with others
- I looked for further information online or talked to others
- I talked to those I live with about our fire plan
- I talked to neighbours or other community members about fire planning
- I attended a CFA Bushfire safety session or workshop
- I developed a fire plan
- I made changes to existing fire plan
- Other – please list

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Do you have any comments to make about the Balmoral Fire Connect Pass the Parcel Project?

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.....

Thank you for your valuable feedback – you will go into the prize draw

Please return in the reply paid envelope supplied

If you have any questions about the project please feel free to call Jo Brown, Southern Grampians Glenelg Primary Care Partnership on 555 18563 or joanne.brown@wdhs.net


10. Appendix 4 – Collation of Interview responses

Balmoral Fire Connect – Interviews

The following table is a collation of the responses from the four interviews at BBNC

| Question | Combined Responses |
|---|---|
| 1. Familiarity of Fire safety information presented | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• All were very familiar with the fire safety messages (some have attended other sessions).• When you live in a rural setting fire safety becomes part of everyday life.• Most is common sense. Good to have a reminder however.• Some are involved in local brigade.• Some had attended other sessions• All took away some information about safety when travelling.• One prepared travel kits for cars as a result. |
| 2. Timing of session | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Consensus that the session was late in the season – need to do this much earlier before fire season.• Integrated into all staff meeting was very effective – good change to have further discussion with staff later• Staff only gets together as a whole about twice per year.• Short session with a focussed message was good because the messages were very familiar and many were part of local brigades but reminder and chance for discussion is needed.• Staff have very limited capacity to attend a longer session Anything longer or spread out over a number of sessions would not be a viable option. |

| | |
|---|--|
| <p>3. Amount of fire safety information in Balmoral</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a lot of fire safety information in Balmoral and generally people are very aware – Staff were more concerned about the reach of information to those who don't access available information. • The people who come to these sessions are already aware – the challenge is how to get the people who are not aware to attend • There are usually one or two fire safety sessions in Balmoral per year as well as brochures available. Those who attend fire safety sessions are likely to be those who are already motivated not necessarily those who need information • Many are “over it”. There's lots of information around each year – people tend to only take it on board when there is a fire so it is hard to keep people motivated. It would be concerning if the community became complacent. • There is a place for more specific information sessions such as awareness on clearing up property and looking after gas cylinders etc.. • Maybe it should be part of school orientation package or back to school each year • There are lots of brochures around town and at BBNC and many people have connection to CFA brigades. • Sometimes people can't go to sessions because of time – recent breakfast meeting for farmers was good timing in terms of catching farmers at breakfast however the topic was on harvesting safety and the harvest for that year was generally all completed. |
| <p>4. Reflections on the survey</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Due to limited time available for the session the explanation of the survey was a bit rushed. It would have been good to have some examples like we have had for the interviews, then we may have understood more why we were completing the surveys. • Explanation could have been a bit better – i.e why we were doing it – was a bit confusing. • The columns on the survey form were a bit small to write in. • There was enough time to complete the actual survey and completing the survey was easy. • Some concern about confidentiality, even though ethics was clearly explained |
| <p>5. Other reflections</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A short focussed session integrated into all day staff meeting was very good was to cover the fire safety messages. • Looking forward to reading the paper |



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