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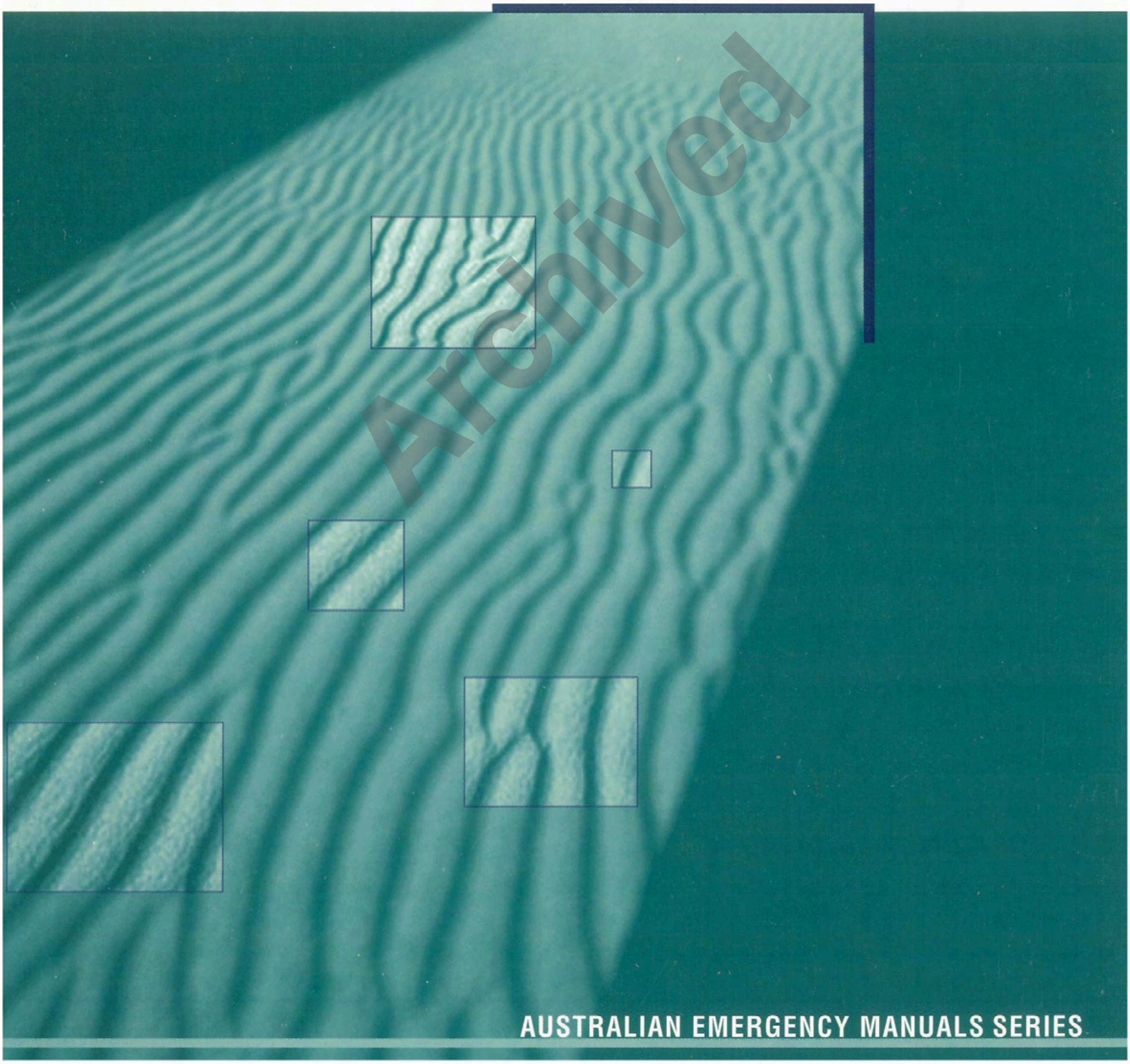
Australian Institute for Disaster Resilience

Emergency Management Australia

Implementing Emergency Risk Management

A facilitator's guide to working with committees and communities



AUSTRALIAN EMERGENCY MANUALS SERIES

IMPLEMENTING EMERGENCY RISK MANAGEMENT

A facilitator's guide to working with committees and communities

April 2001

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Part II

Approaches to Emergency Management

Volume I - Risk Management

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Contents

List of tables & figures

Why & How to Use this Manual

Chapter Summary

This chapter describes the objectives and background of this manual and highlights the issues involved in facilitating the emergency risk management (ERM) process in a community, in particular the need to engender community involvement.

Objectives

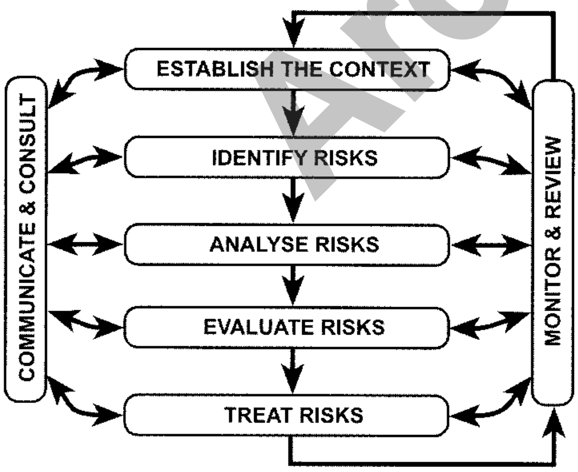
The objectives of this manual are to describe the strategies and tools that would enable facilitators to:

- implement the ERM process within any given community;
- extend their own skills in community communication, consultation, evaluation and review in relation to the ERM process;
- identify, analyse and evaluate risk in partnership with community decision-makers, and do so consistent with community needs and priorities; and,
- determine the treatment of risk as an ongoing process of community responsibility.

Background

The emergency management community in Australia is making a significant shift in moving to a 'risk-based' view of emergencies. This approach provides a better framework within which communities can control their own agenda and agencies can integrate their responsibilities.

Figure 1
The emergency risk management (ERM) process



The steps in the ERM process are described in the *Emergency Risk Management Applications Guide.* [1] They are:

- establish the context;
- identify risks;
- analyse risks;
- evaluate risks; and,
- treat risks.

The *Emergency Risk Management Applications Guide* also shows how these five steps of the ERM process are dependent upon:

- communication and consultation; and
- monitoring and review.

Most importantly, the risk management framework is a means to link emergency management to the community's overall objectives. In this way, emergency management can become an integral part of the community's decisions about economic and social development and long term sustainability. In turn, this will help agencies involved in emergency management to form more effective partnerships with the community and with individual community members.

Successful outcomes depend on personal, agency and community involvement at key steps of the process of ERM. Each of the steps of the ERM process must take account of different community and agency interests and responsibilities. ERM committee members should recognise that different individuals and agencies within a community may have significantly different values and perceptions. This will be due to a number of factors, which could include:

- agency affiliations;
- emergency experiences;
- specialist knowledge; and,
- personality.

For example:

- a hydrologist will see flooding differently from a resident on a flood plain;
- a fire-fighter will see trees planted close to houses differently from a garden lover; and,
- a person who has experienced loss in a previous storm could react to a storm warning differently from someone who has not.

This manual supports the steps of the ERM process with useful facilitation strategies and identifies the basic skills needed to implement the strategies. Examples are drawn from the experience of practitioners.

Working with a community & a committee

In asking a community to be involved in the continuous management of risk, the ERM process is setting up a long-term change management process.

A facilitator will therefore need appropriate skills for working in this context. The *Emergency Risk Management Application Guide* describes a technical process. Change management is, however, a social and political process. Also, working within a mix of community goals, agency goals and possible risk treatment options requires the process to be flexible and adaptable. It may not even be possible for the facilitator to begin at the beginning. Some possible points of entry might be:

- starting a new job with ERM responsibilities;
- undertaking a training program;
- engaging in recovery activities after an emergency;
- responding to a request for help;
- treating a new type of risk; and,
- helping a colleague in a difficult situation.

From wherever you start, competence in the social and political issues underlying each step are essential if the community is to be recruited as partners in the ERM process. You can interface with a community in several ways. You can work:

with your community

with a community

on behalf of a community

for a community

in a community

on a community

Where in this spectrum you operate will affect your degree of success with the community, and which strategies you may be required to apply. An ERM facilitator is not like an engineer who can put machines together in a tight logical order and have them stay there. A community does not function like a machine. A range of factors will determine your position on the spectrum and the strategies and tools you might use to re-position yourself.

The implementation process should be seen therefore as an interactive system between a community, an ERM committee, the steps in the ERM process and the strategies required to implement the process.

It is assumed that implementing the ERM process will be partially achieved through working with a committee that represents a community or communities. In different parts of Australia this group of people will have different names, such as 'planning' group', 'emergency management committee', 'advisory committee', etc. In this manual reference will be made to 'an ERM committee' or, where discussion is generally about team work, 'a team'.

What is a facilitator?

This manual is aimed at facilitators of the ERM process. But what do we mean by a facilitator in ERM?

In general, a facilitator is a person who works with a group of people and is responsible for providing a structure and focus for that group to work successfully. A facilitator is therefore a leader, and the form of leadership adopted is one that empowers the members of the team to solve problems and make decisions together. The facilitator may gradually decrease his/her involvement as the group begins to work well on its own.

In ERM, a facilitator works with a group of stakeholders within a community and drives and coordinates a process for managing risks within that community. The facilitator will primarily work with a committee, the members of which are drawn from different areas of expertise. The facilitator may have brought those people together, or may be working with an existing committee.

The ERM facilitator should also be aware of the role of other agencies and community stakeholders. All parties who should have involvement at different stages in the process are drawn into it as necessary, and may take control of certain aspects of risk management.

Figure 2
The place of the facilitator in the ERM process

Some qualities of a good ERM facilitator include:

- having knowledge of the ERM process;
- being a good organiser;
- being a good communicator (listening, summarising, documenting, as well as talking);
- understanding how groups of people work;
- having the interpersonal skills to involve all members of the team; and,
- being a champion for the process.

Working with People

Chapter Summary

This chapter is about the basic skills and principles associated with working with people effectively. It is aimed at the facilitator of an ERM process in a community. Here the focus is on the 'building blocks' of effective facilitation:

- communication;
- consultation;
- teamwork;
- leadership;
- negotiation; and,
- conflict management.

Communication

Good communication is the basis for working with people effectively. It is the bedrock of all forms of interaction and exchange in the workplace. In a highly complex process like ERM, many stakeholders are involved and the facilitator needs to manage a range of different interactions. The implementation of ERM in a community must occur on the basis of consensus, and on a shared understanding of the decisions being made. For consensus to be reached, good communication is fundamental.

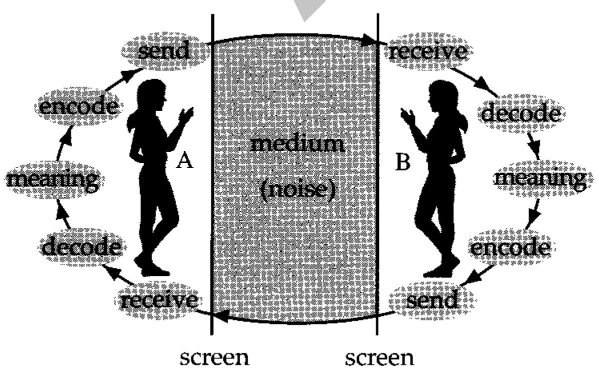
In this section some general aspects of communication are discussed, and then these are related to two main areas of the ERM process:

- communication within an ERM committee; and,
- communication between the committee and stakeholders in the community.

What is communication?

A simple model of communication can be presented as follows: [2]

Figure 3
A simple model of communication



The model shows the elements of communication between two people, A and B. Person A begins an interaction by sending a message to person B. This involves **encoding** the message, that is, turning a thought into symbols (eg. written, or spoken words) and then **sending** the message through a particular medium (eg. a letter, or telephone). Person B **receives** the message, **decodes** it (eg. reads the words, hears the words) and then interprets it—makes **meaning** out of it. Person B then responds in a way that takes the same form as the message sent. We can only separate the decoding – meaning – encoding steps theoretically—in practice they are thoroughly intertwined.

The **medium** refers to the space between persons A and B. It can be a telephone line, a video link or simply the air between two people talking to each other. **Noise** is any interference to the message that occurs within the medium. This includes things like background sounds, static on telephone lines, or unwanted tampering. [3]

The **screen** is the crucial aspect of this model of communication. The screen represents the whole range of factors that shape a person's experience of the communication. This includes a person's cultural background, their personality, experience, emotional and physical state, and their beliefs and attitudes. All these factors shape the way a person interprets the information they receive and send out. As a short hand term, we will refer to this range of influences as **perception.**

Perception

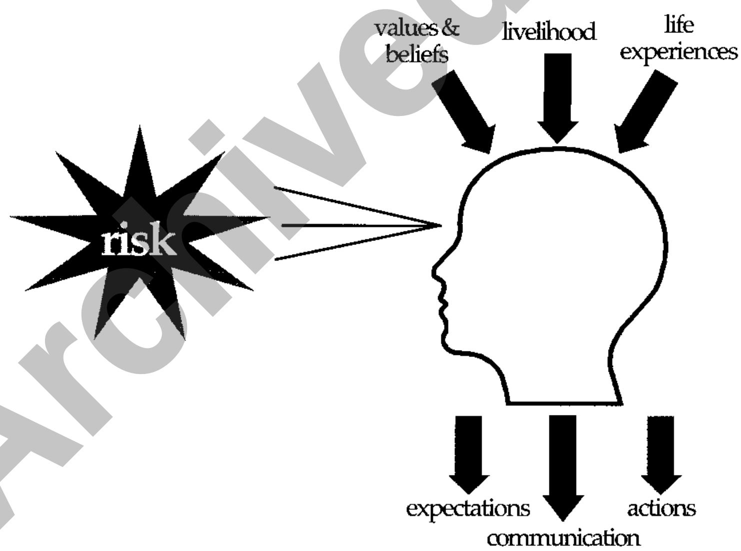
Perception refers to how we see and interpret the world around us. This includes the way we take in information, the way we make sense of it, and the way we turn it into language. The most striking aspect about perception is that everybody's perception is unique. This is because the set of influences on any person's perception relates to their own particular experiences and life history.

Importantly, when we refer to perception we are not talking about it as something negative or problematic. It is not something that has to be 'overcome' – something we should step outside of to see things 'clearly'. On the contrary, our perceptions of the world are part of the internal processes that allow us to make sense of the world.

Our perceptions, however, are not fixed. They are dynamic and shift as we continually experience and interpret the events and issues around us. The challenge is for us to broaden our perceptions of the world to understand other people's points of view.

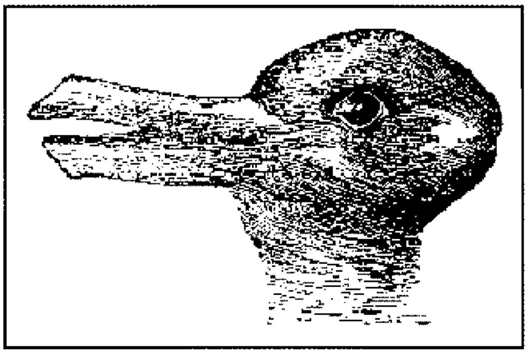
The box on the following page discusses a simple exercise in perception.

Figure 4
Influences on perception of risk



PERCEPTION

Take a look at the following picture. What do you see initially? Look again and again. Do you see something different this time?



How might this small exercise help us to understand what is meant by perception?

Using this understanding, picture the operation of an ERM committee. Some will see the risks differently, will interpret the committee's charter in a way that does not completely match yours or will have an entirely different expectation of the outcomes of ERM. Take the following as an example:

Four people sit on a committee to organise a community building for a green-fields site. Two of the four can envisage the building and agree that it is a great site. While one of the pair is excited at the prospect of an architecturally perfect construction, the other is more concerned with the building serving the human needs of the community, not its perfection. Tension is showing. Meanwhile, the third member of the committee is preoccupied with getting procedures and approvals for the plans and services while the fourth member is watching and wondering what on earth is going on. "The best way to go is to just jump in and get the project going—you can always change it as you go if it's not what you want it to be—no big deal!"

None of the committee members is wrong but has their own way of perceiving the requirements of the project. Without awareness of variation in perception, a committee is in danger of spending their energies fighting for their "way of seeing it" instead of focusing on the common ground and the project's goals.

Obviously, reaching that common understanding of the project's goals and the methods for their achievement is the challenge for the ERM facilitator. The process should be collaborative and as such requires the facilitator to not only have a thorough understanding of ERM, but the communication and interpersonal skills to bring the committee together as a team.

Principles of good communication

Good communication is built on the following principles:

- **The recognition that my way of seeing differs from those with whom I communicate**—My way of seeing will effect how I communicate with another person. Their way of seeing will shape how they interpret the messages that I send.
- **Another person's different point of view is just as 'rational' as mine**—Just because our points of view differ, it does not make another person less rational than me. They just have particular reasons for viewing things that way. Of course, this does not mean I have to agree with them.
- **Good communication is a two-way process**—It is about a dialogue where people attempt to get a better understanding of each other's point of view. Good communication is about being able to "walk in another person's shoes".
- **The success of any communication should be about how well the recipient of the message understands it**—If both parties approach communication in this way, mutual understanding will be reached readily.

Effective communication behaviour

The following skills are necessary for effective communication.

Initiating

Good communication requires thinking about how to begin a dialogue, since this will shape the direction it will take. This involves knowing the purpose of a dialogue, and also the context of a dialogue, eg. who is involved, why is everybody here, etc. There is skill involved in opening up a dialogue in a way that creates a sense of benefit for the listener. Thus the listener will respond in a more open way.

Initiating skills can also be used during a dialogue when it has stopped or broken down.

Active listening

This is a difficult skill to acquire but quite fundamental for good communication. Listening to what people are saying in a conversation is more than hearing them. It is about trying to understand the particular meaning of a speaker's words and their intentions in the conversation. Active listening therefore is about 'actively' trying to gain an understanding of the other person's viewpoint. This involves being attentive to both the content of the message, and the underlying feelings. It also involves the giving of *feedback*, which reflects back to the speaker the listener's understanding of what has been said, along with sharing new thoughts and information.

> "Active listeners are genuine in their desire to hear and understand and are alert to nonverbal cues. They suspend judgement and criticism, refrain from interrupting, and respect the sender's viewpoint and value system. They resist distractions, and confront the sender if he or she is inaudible, ambiguous or incongruent. They also confront and deal with any dislike or hostility between them." [4]

Building rapport

Successful communication relies heavily on the ability of a communicator to build and maintain rapport. Rapport is about a climate of understanding between the parties involved. It is about people being able to see each other's point of view. It does not mean agreeing with each other, but rather that people will feel comfortable in expressing their point of view. This is essential if communication is to flow easily.

Building rapport is necessary in trying to start dialogues, or trying to mend them after they've broken down. It uses the skills of initiating (already mentioned). *Maintaining* rapport relies on the skills of active listening as well as being supportive. It may only be necessary to maintain rapport over the long term if you wish the dialogue or communication to be an ongoing one.

Questioning

Asking questions can serve a number of possible ends. It is obviously a way of extracting information from people. We do this all the time in our everyday interactions. It is also, however, a way of encouraging people in a group setting to participate in a conversation. That is, it is a way of inviting involvement.[5] When questioning is actually used fully, it is a way of getting a much richer understanding of how someone is thinking about an issue.

There are basically two types of questions: open and closed questions. **Closed questions** can be answered with a yes or a no, or with a few words. They elicit basic information, but are limited in their ability to keep a dialogue going. **Open questions**, on the other hand, are used to encourage dialogue. They are important because they allow a person to respond in a way that they feel appropriate. There are different kinds of open questions, and knowing how to use different types of questioning techniques is a skill that greatly assists in communication.

Communication within the committee

An ERM committee will be made up of a diverse group of people – this diversity is its strength, because a broad range of views and expertise is drawn on. However, this diversity could also be a weakness if the committee is overcome be disagreement and conflict. A fundamental principle for the committee therefore is achieving *consensus.* Achieving consensus requires taking a range of issues into account, as well as drawing on a range of skills. A key ingredient is good communication within the committee.

Some important aspects to good communication within the committee are:

- the nature of the project is clearly articulated so that all members understand what they are doing;
- involvement by all members in communication loops—details of the project, and sharing of information;
- there is regular feedback to guide members along the way; and,
- time is set aside for discussion of issues to build up mutual understanding.

Communication with a community

"Effective communication is not about masking the real extent of problems in order to lure the community into accepting risks that they would normally fear. Effective communication involves enhancing community understanding of risks, increasing active community participation in debates about risks and acknowledging the conflicting values in decision making under conditions of uncertainty. As a result, the informed community can be more involved, interested, collaborative and solution oriented.

The process of communication should consider the following aspects:

- identification of major issues and focus groups;
- the ways in which information will be communicated to the community;
- the strategies that may be used to determine the concerns of the community regarding hazards within the community;
- the type of information that will be distributed;
- information materials should be presented in a simple, non-technical, clear and unambiguous form;
- it may be necessary to prepare messages in different ways for different groups of people;
- uncertainty of information, modelling techniques and risk assessment should be clearly communicated;
- it should also be acknowledged that freedom of information (FOI) enables citizen's rights for access to information;
- communication should enable and encourage individuals and groups to search for more information (powerful communication systems such as the Internet could increase public desire for more information); and,
- the role of the media in risk communication should be carefully examined and efforts made to ensure that messages are clear and unambiguous." [6]

Consultation

What is consultation?

Consultation is a process of two-way, informed communication between the ERM committee and the community. It is about obtaining input from the community *prior* to making decisions within the ERM process. It should not be confused with providing information.

"It is worth noting that there are five distinct uses of the term 'public consultation'. The five ways in which the term is used depend on the extent of public consultation, increasing along the following continuum:

- a means of convincing the public of the value of decisions already taken – more honestly described as **public education**;
- an activity undertaken at the discretion of decision-makers, if the situation warrants it and if the resources are available—better called **public contribution**;
- a contribution to project management, in which public opinion is canvassed at certain stages of the process – **public consultation**;
- a method of conflict management where there are a range of apparently incompatible positions, as in reviews and **public inquiries**;
- an integral part of the decision-making process, in which the relevant members of the public are regarded as partners in the policy development, management and monitoring of a natural resource, that is, **public partnership** in the enterprise." [7]

THE CONSULTT APPROACH [8]

Working with the community involves a partnership whereby community members are involved from beginning to end, where the sum of the community's values and expectations, expertise and experience are taken into account. The following process, called CONSULTT, is one that was first used in Melbourne City, to develop indicators of community *liveability*. Since then, the process has been adopted by communities around Australia taking strategic action on community issues and problems.

CONSULTT involves:

CLARIFYING the situation by interviewing key players, circulating a simple one-page survey, reviewing literature, evaluating existing and potential management systems, and preparing a public discussion paper, in order to establish a common baseline of understanding of the local issues.

OPENING up the issues to all comers, through circulating the discussion paper, meeting with city officials, holding workshops for special interests, holding a public forum. The responses must be reported back to contributors to ensure that the messages have been accurately received.

NEGOTIATING agreement on future directions with the community stakeholders, after all the issues have been aired (credibility vanishes if people believe they are being used as a rubber stamp).

SYNTHESISING contributions into a common strategy to achieve the negotiated agreement. This stage can take considerable time and effort and draws on all the expertise in a community.

UNDERTAKING a test of the strategy in practice, either as a feasibility study or a trial run of the real thing, before the process is cast in stone and community members can no longer readily influence the process.

LEARNING from the practical application and reporting back to both community members and those whose task it will be to entrench practice into ongoing city procedures—after an agreed space of time—say, two years.

enTRENCHING the management solution in community and council structures.

TAKE IT AROUND AGAIN, repeating the whole process at stated intervals so the system remains responsive and flexible, while still preserving the continuity needed for effective management.

Methods of consultation

> *"Working with the community involves a partnership – whereby community members are involved from beginning to end, where the sum of the community's values and expectations, expertise and experience are taken into account."* [9]

Formal consultation, as it implies, usually involves a written approach to community leaders to set up an opportunity for dialogue. In general terms, this may include the opportunity to address a group (of officials, office-bearers, legislators, lobbyists, etc.) during a segment of a regular meeting. Keep it brief, to the point, and while outlining a position, seek the chance to gain their responses.

While formality needs to be observed, opportunities to be inclusive can be sought. For example, if your approach marks the commencement of the process, ask members for their advice and assistance in opening up the less formal and targeted consultation processes (many of them will have affiliations with other groups or interests). Formal consultation may also involve seeking written responses to surveys and discussion papers (see CONSULTT, above). Formal consultations methods *may*, but do not have to, embrace public forums. These days, extensive use is made of participatory processes such as visioning, brainstorming and small group workshopping to open up issues and ensure that public forums are no longer static affairs favouring the loud or opinionated.

Targeted consultations are essential for inclusion of all stakeholders, particularly as a method of 'reaching out' to those not usually actively participating in community management processes. This may be because people feel disenfranchised, cannot afford to participate, cannot readily get to venues or if they do get there, cannot understand proceedings. Consultations may need to be targeted to such groups *on their turf*, that is, where they feel comfortable; in their language; with respect for different cultures*; in alternate media forms; using very simple conceptual tools—while drawing is a popular method of eliciting ideas from children, not only children love to draw! In order to effectively target consultations to particular groups, 'go-between' is required—do not abuse the trust established with this person, do some homework and exercise respect for the cultural domain you are entering. If in doubt, *ask*—it sure beats failing to consult out of fear of offending someone's sensibilities!

Table 1
Examples of formal & informal consultation channels

Formal	Informal
• legislative requirements, as for environmental health plans • constitutional, as in voting • lobby groups • joint data collection, as in local state-of-the-environment reporting • strategic planning workshops • key informant interviews • open public forums, widely advertised • policy juries • phone-ins and write-ins • commissions of inquiry such as royal commissions	• networking, as in person-to-person contacts • vision workshops, where an ideal future is designed and an action plan formed • focus group discussions • negotiation, as in round table discussions and arbitration • tele- and video-conferencing, by phone or electronic mail • whistle-blowing • morning and afternoon coffee breaks • three-way stakeholder analysis

Informal consultation methods may include establishing opportunities for dialogue at a community fair or public event; talk-back radio; extending invitations for messages to be exchanged or elaborated in alternate forms—song, poetry, drama etc; networking; gossiping. The last can be one of the most thorough. The principal community stakeholders can usually be identified by gender, income, education, profession, industry, trade, recreation and place of residence. Each group is reviewed in order to find:

- its nominated leaders;
- a group of ordinary members; and,
- the change agents in the group (often described as the trouble makers).

Three-way interviews with each group provides a dynamic, multi-dimensional perspective on all the local issues.

* Many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Councils have developed protocols to assist in consultation between indigenous and non-indigenous groups. Ethnic Communities' Councils in each State / Territory can also advise on culturally appropriate approaches to particular ethnic communities.

Consultation plan

For a community consultation process to be effective, it has to be well planned. The following aspects should be considered in the planning and implementation of a consultation process. [10]

Establish purpose and objectives

- The objectives from the perspective of the organisation that is conducting the process.
- The objectives from the perspective of the participants.
- What do we want to achieve?
- What do the participants want?

Identification of the participants

- Who should we communicate with?
- Which sectors of the community do we include?
- Who are the stakeholders in these sectors? For example, who are the stakeholders in government, private sector and the public?
- What is a 'sufficient' sample of the community? For example, in a city of 100,000 residents?

Timeframe

- How many times during one cycle of the process do we need to communicate and consult? Is it feasible to communicate at each step of the risk management process?

Determine resource requirement

- Both in terms of finance and people.
- How many people do we need to conduct the process?
- Is there internal capacity and the required skills to conduct the consultation process?
- Do we need staff training?
- Are there processes in place to ensure accountability?

Selecting appropriate avenues of communication and consultation

- List examples of possible options such as holding public meetings, interviewing and surveying. Describe appropriateness of each in different circumstances. For example, it is very likely that public meetings can be successful in areas where people have experiences a major disaster but different elsewhere. Consider the issue of how long ago a disaster occurred. For example, if a major flood event occurred recently, the interests of the community that experienced that flood would be very different from a community that never experienced a similar event, despite a significant potential for it to occur.
- Explore the advantages and disadvantages of possible avenues for communication and consultation. Perhaps the issue of establishing reference groups can be discussed here.
- Different groups of stakeholders and participants could require different forms of consultation.

Monitoring and Evaluation

- Feedback mechanisms should be designed to ensure that participants in the consultation process are made aware of how their input has been used. This engenders ownership and encourages ongoing involvement.
- How will the consultation process be evaluated?

Teams

In this section, we look at some general aspects about teams that apply to an ERM committee. The more particular aspects about working within an ERM committee are covered in the following chapter – managing the project.

A team can be defined as a group of people working together to achieve some specified goals. The characteristics of an effective team are listed in the table below. [11]

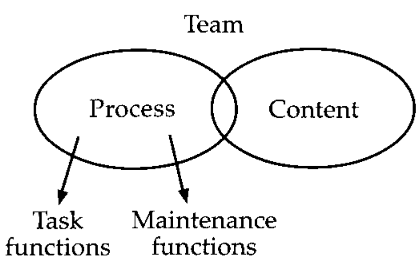
Table 2
Characteristics of an effective team

clear goals	Members have a clear understanding of the goal to be achieved and they believe that the goal is worthwhile. Members also know how they are going to work together to achieve their goals.
relevant skills	Members have the necessary range of skills and capabilities to achieve the desired the goals. These skills include the technical skills as well as the interpersonal skills to work together.
mutual trust	Members have confidence in each other's integrity, character and ability. Trust is influenced by a range of factors inside and outside the team.
commitment	Members are committed to the goals of the team, and are dedicated to working together to achieve them.
good communication	Communication between members of the team is clear and easily understood. Everyone is able to be involved in communication loops if they need to. There is also good feedback provided to members to guide them along the way.
negotiating skills	Given the flexibility of team members' roles and responsibilities, members are able to negotiate problems and differences as they emerge.
appropriate leadership	There exists effective leadership within the team, that may or may not reside in a single person. Leaders motivate team members, clarify goals, and assist in creating members' self-confidence. Effective leadership in this setting takes the form of facilitation.
internal & external support	There is solid internal support for the team, including training, incentives, and other human resources. Externally, the team has the necessary resources to achieve their goals.

Process & content

Teams work on two distinct but interrelated levels. These levels can be referred to as **process** and **content**. Process concerns how the members of a team act to make the team function, ie. how they operate and work together. Content refers to the actual work that the team does. For example, an ERM committee may be working on treatment strategies for potential floods. The way the team's meetings are run and the way the members communicate are examples of process. The things that people say, the decisions that they make and the flood mitigation policies that are drawn up are content.

Figure 5
Team processes & content



This section focuses on process issues. There are two dimensions of process that need to be addressed for the group to work successfully: managing the *task* functions, and managing the interpersonal functions (often referred to as *maintenance* functions). Task functions are more often in the spotlight because these are the behaviours that are focused on achieving the team's goals. This means that maintenance functions are often overlooked. It is also the case that maintenance functions are more difficult to deal with by people because they are more 'invisible'. We often only take notice when we experience problems or failures in the way a group works.

The table below shows a list of team behaviours .

Table 3
Effective & ineffective team behaviours [12]

Effective behaviour		Ineffective behaviour
Task behaviour	Maintenance behaviour	Behaviours focused on the individual
Initiating Proposing goals or actions; defining problems; suggesting a procedure	**Harmonising** Attempting to reconcile disagreements; reducing tension; getting people to explore differences	**Displaying aggression** Deflating others' status; attacking the group of its values; joking in a barbed way
Information giving Offering facts; giving an opinion	**Gate keeping** Helping to keep communication channels open; facilitating the participation of others; suggesting procedures that permit sharing ideas	**Blocking** Disagreeing and opposing beyond reason; resisting stubbornly the groups' wish; pursuing a personal agenda
Clarifying Interpreting ideas or suggestions; defining terms; clarifying issues before the group; ensuring people's comments are understood	**Consensus testing** Checking to see if a group is nearing a decision	**Dominating** Asserting authority to manipulate the group; valuing own contributions more than others'; interrupting; controlling through flattery or other patronising behaviour
Summarising Pulling together related ideas; restating suggestions; offering a decision or conclusion for the group to consider	**Encouraging** Being friendly and responsive to others; indicating the acceptance of others' contributions	**Abandoning** Displaying openly one's lack of involvement; tuning out; seeking recognition in ways not relevant to the group's task
Reality testing Making a critical analysis of an idea; testing an idea against some data	**Compromising** Modifying in interest of the group; admitting error	**Avoidance** Pursuing special interests not related to the task; staying off the subject to avoid commitment; preventing the group from facing up to controversy

The behaviours in the above table may be used as an indicator of how well a team is functioning. Ideally, members of the team are able to collectively enact the effective behaviours listed, and minimise the ineffective behaviours.

Team roles

It is also useful to understand teams in terms of the roles that team members play. All teams have people playing at least some of these roles which are explained in Table 4 below. An effective team has a good balance of all of them, as well as members who are aware of their roles and attempt to improve their capacity to perform them.[13]

Table 4
Team roles [14]

Coordinator	Coordinates the efforts of all members; clarifies goals and objectives; establishes roles; encourages contributions; often summarises progress, and suggests priorities; can sometimes get carried away with people issues at the expense of the task at hand
Driver	Directs and controls the work of a team; has strong views on objectives, timeframes and how team should work; task and results focused; will overlook people issues
Finisher	Focuses on detail; addresses gaps and loose ends; focuses on targets and maintains a sense of urgency; looks for potential problems that could hinder project's progress; can often get bogged down in too much detail
Implementer	Gets on with the job; turns plans into reality; adapts concepts to fit with what is achievable; can sometimes resist change or new ideas
Originator	Generates new ideas and new ways to solve problems; can sometimes ignore detail; can sometimes devalue existing practices
Monitor – evaluator	Challenges the ideas of other members; logical in analysing problems; often seen by others as too negative and can offend people
Supporter	Provides support to people and the relationships within the team; concerned with feelings; encourages participation; can sometimes be too focussed on people and not enough on overt objectives
Resource investigator	Networks and maintains contacts outside the team; collects information and ideas; lobbies and negotiates on behalf of the team; can sometimes be unavailable or uninterested in the actual work of the team

Each role does not necessarily correspond to an individual member of the team. Individuals will each bring to the group a range of abilities and attitudes which correspond to a number of different roles. They will, however, tend to gravitate to one or two of them. What is important is that the group engenders the right balance of the behaviours that correspond to this range of roles.

Leadership

What is leadership? There is an enormous literature on the subject of leadership and great differences of opinion on how best to characterise it. Most would agree though that "leadership is the art of influencing people so that the group is moved one step closer to its goal." [15] It is worth highlighting that it is an *art* or *craft*, and as such can only be developed through practice. All members of the group can practice leadership.

What kind of leader are you? At the end of this section is a leadership style questionnaire. Fill it in and find out. This is also a useful exercise for all team members to do together.

Leadership as facilitation

As this manual is aimed at facilitators of ERM, we are assuming that leadership is a central part of their role. As mentioned, the role of the facilitator is about encouraging other members of the team to work best in their own styles and roles. In fact, this is about the facilitator encouraging other members of the team to practice leadership in different aspects of the process. In short, the role of the facilitator is to help turn the team into a team of leaders!

Facilitating the ERM process therefore requires a special kind of leadership – a democratic rather than autocratic style of leadership, and a strong ability to focus on process issues.

A key role of a facilitator is to assist the group in becoming aware of its processes and to suggest interventions where members of the group do not produce these on their own.[16]

AUTHORITY & POWER

There is a confusing array of conflicting terminology relating to leadership. Many writers equate leadership with exercise of authority or power. It is important to distinguish these two dimensions. It is also unwise to assume that there is only one leader in a group.

We can challenge the conventional wisdom that power, authority and leadership necessarily reside in the same position. A study by William Foote White, of what goes on in a restaurant (all the transactions, workflows, who is dependent on whom, etc.) found that power resided early in the production chain, with the waiters, although authority lay with the manager.

Similarly, we can challenge the notion that there are 'leaders' and 'followers'. The person with the authority in a given setting may not be in the appropriate role to exercise leadership. Authority, because of restrictions associated with the position, and the expectations of the group, can actually constrain leadership from operating. Authority arises from a position, leadership does not. Thus, it is more useful to think about 'leadership' (an entity which is attached to a group, just as is cohesiveness) rather than 'leaders'. In this case, the definition of leadership is the capacity to mobilise groups to do work. Individuals can contribute to it, but ultimately it is a group resource. We should also think about the pressures that tend to disempower people in authority positions. The expectation that the authority figure will do a group's work is destructive of group achievement—a form of 'work avoidance'. It leads to cycles of raised expectations and disillusionment.

Practical advice for those wishing to exercise leadership is:

- to help the group clarify problems, distinguish between conditions and problems that can change and those that can't, and help it develop a practical vision;
- to listen;
- to withhold the temptation to solve the group's problems for them;
- to use allies, particularly if in an authority position; and,
- to be aware of work avoidance—the techniques groups use to avoid working on hard issues.

Leadership style questionnaire

What are the various leadership styles we each use? The following questionnaire explores a person's preference towards certain styles of leadership.

Leadership Style Questionnaire

Directions: For each item, tick the appropriate box, ie. yes, no, or don't know.

If I were a leader of a work group I would ...	**Yes**	**No**	**Don't know**
1. criticise poor work	❑	❑	❑
2. most likely act as spokesperson for the group	❑	❑	❑
3. encourage people to work overtime	❑	❑	❑
4. do personal favours for group members	❑	❑	❑
5. put most suggestions made by group members into operation	❑	❑	❑
6. treat all group members as equal to self	❑	❑	❑
7. work to a plan	❑	❑	❑
8. make sure all group members are working as hard as they can	❑	❑	❑
9. make sure all group members follow the rules	❑	❑	❑
10. take time to listen to group members even if they want to talk about things other than work.	❑	❑	❑
11. explain all my actions	❑	❑	❑
12. consult with all the group members before making a decision	❑	❑	❑
13. decide what should be done and how it should be done	❑	❑	❑
14. stress being better at the work than other work groups	❑	❑	❑
15. make sure everyone knows what is expected of them	❑	❑	❑
16. be friendly and approachable	❑	❑	❑
17. allow group members to do their work in the way they feel best	❑	❑	❑
18. do everything to make group members feel at ease when talking with me	❑	❑	❑

The table on the following page allows you to tabulate your scores in the various leadership styles. This is followed by a discussion of the results.

Leadership Style Questionnaire (Scoring)

Work out your own scores on the three styles of leadership (task-centred, people-centred and laissez-faire) by:

- Placing a tick in the Task-centred Style and People-centred Style columns below if you answered 'yes' to the items shown. Then add the number of ticks to get a Task-centred Style and a People-centred Style score.
- For an Laissez-faire Style score, simply add all the 'Don't Know' answers.

Task-centred Style	People-centred Style	Laissez-faire Style
Item 1	Item 4	
Item 2	Item 5	
Item 3	Item 6	
Item 7	Item 10	
Item 8	Item 11	
Item 9	Item 12	
Item 13	Item 16	
Item 14	Item 17	
Item 15	Item 18	
Total	**Total**	**Total**

Participants should not be asked to reveal their scores unless they wish to discuss them.

This checklist of leadership style puts everyone, somewhat artificially, into one of three styles.

- **Task-centred**—Wishes to get the job done, and achieve the intended outcome; more interested in the product of the activity than in the process of achieving the activity.
- **People-centred**—As interested in the process by which the task is achieved as in the outcome itself: spends time and energy on the people involved in achieving the goal.
- **Laissez-faire**—Allows the existing system to follow its course, without particular emphasis on either task or people.

Given that all these styles will be useful in some leadership conditions, the checklist is a way of identifying a preference or a prejudice towards a certain style.

Group members could discuss:

- the relationship between the three leadership styles and the needs of ERM;
- the aspects of leadership outlined above and the leadership styles from the checklist; and,
- ideal leadership characteristics in ERM.

Negotiation

Negotiation takes place every day. It involves a two-way communication designed to reach agreement and is a basic means of getting what you want from others. Both parties have interests that are shared and some that are opposed. The challenge is to reach agreement without creating conflict.

In a democratic society, everyone wants to be heard on issues that affect him or her. They are disinclined to accept decisions that are imposed upon them. In the sometimes-sensitive areas of ERM, reaching understanding and agreement requires principled negotiation that does not leave the parties feeling exploited or bitter.

Traditionally, positional bargaining has been used to reach agreement. Through this method negotiators take the hard or soft position with the hard negotiator insisting on concessions and making demands while the soft negotiator yields in order to avoid confrontation. You will have observed many variations in between these two extremes. The bottom line of course, is reaching an agreement but sometimes the outcome may not really be the best one.

A big part of working with stakeholders involves accessing information through community leaders and community members in a process which provides all parties with some measure of gain—a 'win-win' situation. Negotiation skills are essential for ERM, and for the building of multi-interest, multi-disciplinary teams. A few simple techniques will establish the parameters for ongoing dialogue between stakeholders. The best known of these techniques are part of the Harvard Negotiation process. There are four basic points to this method as shown in the following table, and further described in the following text.

Table 5

Harvard negotiation skills [17]

people	Separate the people from the problem, identifying the issue to be resolved, not blaming the person responsible.
interests	Focus on interests, not positions, identifying what each person actually wants, rather than what they can get by arguing.
options	Generate a variety of possibilities for mutual gain before deciding what to do. Spend time discussing how each can advance the interests of others.
criteria	Agree on objective criteria for assessing outcomes so that everyone is talking about the same thing.

A fifth point could be added for the purposes of ERM:

emphasis	Ensure everyone knows what the final agreement actually is—repeat it, make a ceremony of everyone signing it.

People being what they are, emotions are closely involved in the communication process. Typically, emotions can become entangled with the objective merits of a problem and peoples' egos become identified with their positions on the issue. Therefore, it is advisable to avoid taking a position; instead adopt the collaborative approach to identifying and solving a problem.

Tease out what is the underlying **interests** of those involved and ignore what might be their stated position on the issue. In this way you do not allow their overt stance to distract your focus on the desired outcomes.

Before trying to reach agreement, take time to invent **options** for mutual gain. In this way you can avoid the pressure of trying to find solutions under pressure or being forced into thinking there is only one right solution. Give yourself the time to be creative in problem solving.

Insist that the agreement reflects some **objective** standard and not be dependent on the single say-so of the negotiator/s. That does not mean you select the standard but rather it means you should use some fair, objective standard such as expert opinion, law or custom. By discussing objective criteria neither party need "give in" but instead focus on a fair outcome.

In summary this method has focuses on basic interest, mutually satisfying options, and fair standards typically resulting in a wise agreement.

Conflict Management

Managing change

ERM in today's context is largely about managing change. The old, traditional ground rules that saw emergency management as highly controlled and highly specialised, are becoming less and less relevant. Where responses were once managed separately and 'without limits', a rethink is under way. Today, changing landscape, weather, political and administrative systems, services, 'at risk' groups and communities at large are accepted as being part of integrated ERM.

The 'old' and the 'new' ground rules are characterised as follows.

Table 6
New & old rules in emergency management & emergency risk management

Emergency management: the old rules	ERM: the new rules
Risks can be managed piecemeal	Resources (including environmental resources) are finite
Response 'capacity' is almost limitless (ie resources could be 'found' on demand)	All parts of the system are interrelated
Social values do not change	Social values are changing
Emergency management is a technical matter	ERM is a people matter
Technology can make anything possible	Use of technology has its limits and its costs

The move from isolated technical experts and organisations to a consultative, precautionary management approach is rapidly taking place. The rate of change would generate internal tensions within any organisation. Such tensions lead to conflicts that are inevitable with social, environmental and economic change. For the foreseeable future, ERM will be the management of conflict and change; both internally within management teams and externally in coordinating ERM resources.

Conflict in itself is not necessarily a bad thing. It signals the recognition of a need to change. Change is the bridge between the old and the new, but it also inevitably brings conflict between the two.

In Chinese, two characters are used to represent the word 'crisis'. One specifies risk and the other, opportunity. This definition can be applied to conflict equally well. Conflict may result in harm, or provide a highly useful avenue for change, or something of both. For a positive outcome, resolution of conflict requires careful and skilled handling and a major revision of how our society regards conflict itself. The following table lists five characteristics of conflict which are often misinterpreted by participants and onlookers of the conflict alike.

Table 7
Conflict & emergency risk management

- **Conflict is an inevitable part of change**—It is not the result of personal failure, nor the failure of the system
- **Conflict is a step in the solution to the problem**—It signals the opening up of debate
- **Conflict is shared**—It is not the sole responsibility of any group or set of interests
- **Conflict is a process**—It is not a result, a barrier or an excuse
- **Conflict is manageable**—But management takes time and resources

A basis for resolving conflict

A conflict establishes that there is more than one point of view on an issue. The shift from the old ground rules of emergency management to the new ones of managing emergency risks, brings with it inevitable conflict. Changing social values bring confrontation between age groups and between the innovative and the conservative. Limitations to natural and economic resources and to technology mean that choices must be made.

ERM involves minimising risk and maximising opportunity. Diagnosis and reduction of risks to people and to the environment are coupled with the opportunity for enhancing existing community and environmental resources. It is inevitable that at some stage during the ERM process you will find yourself in a conflict situation. As outlined, it is an opportunity to move forward, so if you approach it constructively, the relationships and commitment to a longer-term view will be ensured.

The answer lies in how you systematically tackle any problem. Firstly break the problem up into a few logical, easy to manage steps, and then implement the steps. Key factors for success lie in understanding the problem, keeping your goals firmly in mind and knowing that things may not go according to plan. Five steps you will find useful in dealing with conflict are as follows.

1. Identify the problem

Are you sure what the real problem is? Could there be a more basic, underlying problem? Sometimes it is useful to think about the 'problem situation' rather than the 'problem'. Taking a situational view gives a wider perspective. It can help to make you aware of the hidden causes or effects of the situation.

2. Plan

- Identify your goal(s) for the situation. Completing this statement should give you a clear indication of what your goal is: "I will know I have successfully dealt with this situation when ..."
- List all the relevant issues. As you list them you may see some solutions immediately or someone who can assist you with solving the problem. It can also give you a guide to some of the forces operating and paths worth exploring.
- Identify participants' needs and wants. This way you are better placed to anticipate responses and think of ways in which their needs as well as yours can be met.
- Identify the main options for approaching the situation. There is no magic 'how to' method for dealing with conflict. List a range of options for managing the conflict and then ask yourself "What if ..." for each of them.
- Select the most appropriate strategy. Remember, things often do not go according to plan so have a **contingency**.

3. Communicate effectively

Know what is the best time and place to address the problem. This is just as important as planning out the process. Be clear about exactly what the problem is that needs dealing with and what each other's goals are.

4. Use an effective closure

It is essential if you are to ensure resolution to the conflict that you:

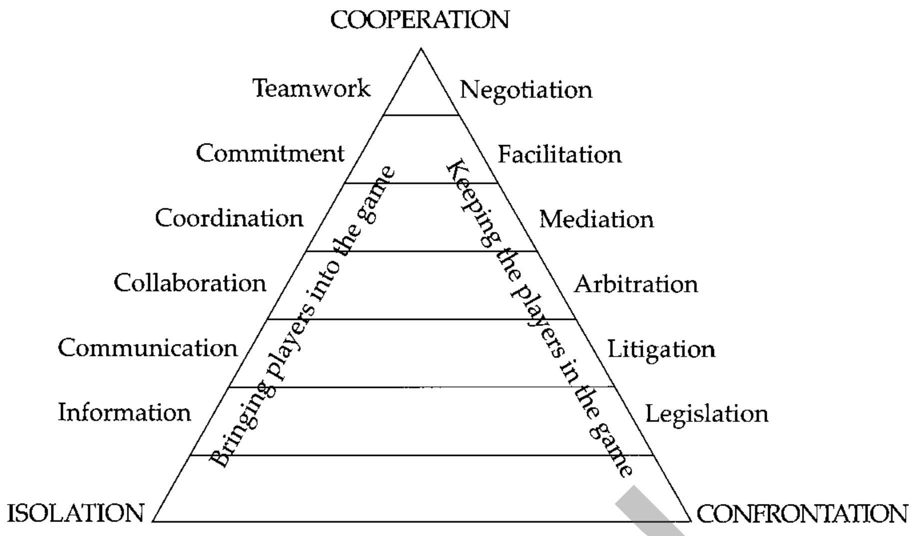
- summarise the outcomes;
- get agreement on the next stage;
- record the outcomes (where appropriate).

5. Follow up the outcomes

One of the features of good follow-up is effective feedback. You need to reach agreement on who is to do what, when and how. Having reached agreement on what is to be done, it is useful to agree on how to monitor progress.

The possible range of methods for conflict management is described in the figure below. At the extreme end of the management range are the approaches best described as failure of the system. **Apathy** on the one hand and **war** on the other are the opposite poles to cooperative management. **Isolation** and **confrontation** are the conflict management techniques applied at these extremes. The use of either by any of the parties makes constructive management difficult. Any strategies falling short of these extremes will be a step in the right direction.

Figure 6
Conflict management: scaling the mountain [18]



In this figure conflict management is shown as a mountain to be climbed. Each of the steps up the mountain is effective, depending on where the player is in the process. Achieving a cooperative team will involve all the key players in the management process. Since all the players almost certainly live and work in a specialised, competitive society, they are almost certain to start from a professionally isolated position. Reducing the individual isolation of specialised interests is desirable. It cannot be done, however, through force. The first incentive for the players to work together is **information** on shared interests. This may lead to **communication,** which will mean learning more of each other's positions and interests. Working together on the interests in common is **collaboration** when the information is shared and communication is established.

Collaboration implies a formal and possibly temporary working relationship. **Coordination** goes further, in that it sets up systems of communication with agreed ground-rules. For example, a formal meeting on reducing grass fire risk may bring collaboration but monitoring the effectiveness of fuel reduction will need coordination. Holding the community together through a fiery season will need commitment to common goals.

Sharing tasks and goals brings **commitment** to both the outcome and the team. Agreement on the need to reduce fire risk is a necessary step before commitment to effective action can be achieved—and many different solutions may come into play in that action. Once cooperation exists, active **team building** can follow, with members sharing resources and skills to mutual advantage.

Once a team has been formed, it will benefit greatly from joint training in **negotiation** and **facilitation**. Training in any of the conflict resolution methods can be remedial, after conflicts have arisen. Or, preferably, conflict management skills may become a part of routine professional training. It is more beneficial for members of the management team to develop conflict management skills for their own use rather than rely on external help.

When cooperation is threatened with collapse, or if it has yet to be achieved, remedial measures will be needed to keep all the players in the game. On the confrontation slope of the conflict management mountain, the task is either to reduce existing conflict (starting at the bottom) or to maintain the hard-won cooperation (stopping a slide from the top). In each case the aim is to keep the players involved in a constructive, cooperative type of game, rather than leave them free to turn to opposition or sabotage.

Short of outright war, **confrontation** is the next most destructive way of approaching conflict. This is often solved by **legislation** with sanctions for disobedience. This solution applies only after those wielding power or the bulk of the population has become sufficiently concerned.

Litigation, for example the citizen's use of the law courts, contributes to the development of case law. One hundred citizens of the Australian national capital took the Federal Government to court to block a telecommunications tower that they considered to be unsightly. They won the court case, lost the battle (the tower was built) and established the first citizen's action environmental case law in Australia.

Arbitration, through appealing to a specialised tribunal, reduces the cost of court intervention, and increases the level of expertise available for judgment. However, it requires that established agencies be available and brings with it the risk that the agency may develop a fixed agenda of its own.

Mediation, with the use of a trained negotiator, is increasingly being applied to disputes of all types, from neighbourhood disputes to health care complaints to environmental disputes. Mediation is a useful tool for solving entrenched problems. However, if it is introduced from outside the management process, a long-term solution may be lost through lack of real commitment by the participants.

The use of a facilitator is a less formal process than employing a trained mediator. **Facilitation** involves setting up and enabling a constructive problem-solving environment for the stakeholders in an issue. The facilitator, who is usually someone perceived as neutral by all the participants, sets and keeps the ground rules until resolution is achieved. Politicians are often skilled facilitators on national issues, although they are not often given the credit. The chair of a typical committee meeting acts in a facilitator's role. They supervise standard committee procedures designed to give everybody a voice.

Conflict management methods become increasingly less intrusive in the management process as one proceeds up the incline from legislation to facilitation. **Negotiation**, whether applied within the everyday processes of management, or specially convened to resolve a major issue, is a crucial strategy. Negotiation takes place between the players themselves and was traditionally aimed toward a win-lose outcome between the two sides.

A much more productive approach to negotiation is the Harvard Negotiation Process outlined in previous pages. Here, negotiation aims towards the mutual advantage of all players.

Conflict management strategies

Another aspect of conflict management is the range of strategies that people use. The five basic strategies are avoiding, forcing, smoothing, compromising and problem-solving. All of us use one or other of these strategies in different circumstances, and no one style is the best for every conflict. Rather, each strategy is appropriate in some circumstances. Having said this, the last strategy, problem-solving is the best strategy for long-term and sustainable solutions.

The following survey can be used to find out your preferred strategies. The proverbs listed below reflect 'traditional' wisdom for resolving conflicts.

Conflict management strategies questionnaire

Directions: The proverbs listed below reflect traditional wisdom for resolving conflicts and raise a number of different conflict-resolution approaches. Read each of the proverbs carefully. Using the scale of 1 to 5 below, indicate in the squares how typical each proverb is of your actions in a conflict.

5 = Very typical of the way I act in a conflict

4 = Frequently typical of the way I act in a conflict

3 = Sometimes typical of the way I act in a conflict

2 = Seldom typical of the way I act in a conflict

1 = Never typical of the way I act in a conflict

Score

1. Use soft words to win hard hearts ☐
2. Come now and let us reason together ☐
3. For your arguments to have weight, argue loudly and forcefully ☐
4. You scratch my back, I'll scratch yours ☐
5. The best way to handle conflicts is to avoid them ☐
6. When one hits you with a stone, hit them with a piece of cotton ☐
7. A question must be decided by knowledge and not numbers if it is to be a right decision ☐
8. If you cannot make a person think as you do, make them do as you think ☐
9. Better half a loaf of bread than no bread at all ☐
10. If someone is ready to quarrel, they aren't worth knowing ☐
11. Smooth words make smooth ways ☐
12. By digging and digging, the truth is discovered ☐
13. He who fights and runs away lives to fight another day ☐
14. A fair exchange brings no quarrel ☐
15. There is nothing so important that you have to fight for it ☐
16. Kill your enemies with kindness ☐
17. Seek until you find, and you'll never lose your labour ☐
18. Might overcomes right ☐
19. Tit for tat is fair play ☐
20. Avoid quarrelsome people—they only make life miserable ☐

The table on the following page allows you to tabulate your scores for the various conflict management strategies. This is followed by a discussion of the results.

Conflict management strategies (Scoring)

Work out your own score in conflict management strategies by transferring the scores from the previous page to this table, and then adding the scores down. The higher the total score for each conflict strategy the more frequently you tend to use this strategy. The lower the total score for each conflict strategy, the less frequently you tend to use this strategy.

Proverb Number	Score	Proverb Number	Score	Proverb Number	Score	Proverb Number	Score	Proverb Number	Score
5		3		1		4		2	
10		8		6		9		7	
15		13		11		14		12	
20		18		16		19		17	
Total score in avoiding		Total scorein forcing		Total score in smoothing		Total score in compromising		Total score in problem-solving	

Every strategy is appropriate under some circumstances.

- **Avoiding** is unassertive and uncooperative—the individual does not immediately pursue their own concerns or those of the other person. They do not address the conflict. Avoiding might take the form of diplomatically sidestepping an issue, postponing the issue until a better time, or withdrawing from a threatening situation.
- **Forcing** is assertive and uncooperative—an individual pursues their own concerns at the other person's expense. This is a power-oriented mode, in which one uses whatever power seems appropriate to win sanctions. Forcing might mean standing up for your rights, defending a position you believe is correct, or simply trying to win.
- **Smoothing** is unassertive and cooperative—the opposite of forcing. When smoothing, an individual neglects their own concerns to satisfy the concerns of the other person; there is an element of self-sacrifice in this mode. Smoothing might take the form of selfless generosity or charity, obeying another person's order when they would prefer not to, or yielding to another's point of view.
- **Compromising** is intermediate in both assertiveness and cooperation. The objective is to find some expedient, mutually acceptable solution that partially satisfies both parties. It falls on a middle ground between forcing and smoothing. Likewise, it addresses an issue more directly than avoiding, but it does not explore in the same depth as problem solving. Compromise might mean splitting the difference, exchanging concessions, or seeking a middle ground position.
- **Problem-solving** is assertive and cooperative—the opposite of avoiding. Problem solving involves an attempt to work with the other person to find some solution that fully satisfies the concerns of both persons. It means digging into an issue to identify the underlying concerns of the two individuals and to find an alternative that meets both sets of concerns. Problem solving between two people might take the form of exploring a disagreement to learn from the other's insights, agreeing to resolve some condition which would otherwise have them competing for resources, or confronting and trying to find a creative solution to an interpersonal problem.

We might illustrate the danger of fixed conflict management styles by the fable about the two sisters who were fighting over an orange.

- In **avoiding** the conflict, both sisters leave the orange rotting in the fruit bowl. For one to claim it would raise a conflict with the other.
- In **smoothing**, each sister says to the other "You take it" to which the response is "No, I couldn't". The orange still sits in the bowl.
- **Forcing**, simply means that the stronger sister takes it—wrenching it from the hand of the other, or possibly using some threat.
- A purely **compromise** solution would be for each sister to take half the orange.
- A **problem solving** solution would be for each to discuss with the other why she wants the orange. So goes the fable that one sister wanted the skin to make a cake, the other the inside to make juice!

Managing the Project

Chapter Summary

This chapter is about the 'people' aspects of managing an ERM project. It identifies some of the key areas of managing the project which require specific strategies and skills, and covers

- a project management framework;
- identifying and forming a committee;
- working with a committee; and,
- working with local government.

A project management framework

Using simple project management tools and ideas, the professionalism and quality of ERM can be greatly enhanced. Project management methods are recommended to ensure that the ERM project is:

- appropriate (it sets out to do something worthwhile);
- effective (it achieves the required results); and,
- efficient (it is completed within time and resource constraints).

Any project has a purpose, a series of **inputs** and **methods** that produce **outputs** that result in **outcomes**.

Figure 7
Parts of a project

- The **purpose** is a statement of what the project expects to achieve, ie. the expected outcomes.
- The **inputs** include: people's time and energy; people's perceptions of hazard, vulnerability and risk; money and resources; and, commitment and perseverance.
- The **methods**, in this instance, are the methods of ERM.
- The **outputs** include: information on hazards and vulnerability; organisations that are aware of their responsibilities in ERM; commitment to an emergency risk treatment strategies; and, implemented risk management strategies.
- The **outcomes** of appropriate and effective ERM are improved protection of life, property and the environment, enhanced community safety and the ability to sustain development.

There are three possible parts to a project management plan: [19]

- project definition;
- project planning; and,
- project implementation.

Project definition concerns the aim and objectives of a project, as well as its scope and authority. The project definition provides a brief outline of the intentions of the project to others, and provides a description of the project if funding is being sought. A project manager should be appointed to manage the project.

Project planning is the process of sequencing tasks to achieve the project objectives and to ensure timely project completion and efficient use of resources. It involves:

- determining tasks;
- assigning responsibilities;
- developing a timetable; and,
- determining resource allocation and timing.

Project implementation consists of project performance, monitoring and review, and taking corrective action.

The development of concise **project management plan** is recommended. The content of a project management plan could be as follows.

1. Project definition
   - 1.1 Background
   - 1.2 Purpose of project
   - 1.3 Objectives
   - 1.4 Scope
   - 1.5 Authority
   - 1.6 ERM committee
   - 1.7 Project manager
2. Project plan
   - 2.1 Method
   - 2.2 Tasks & responsibilities
   - 2.3 Timetable
   - 2.4 Resources & responsibilities
3. Project implementation
   - 3.1 Communication & consultation plan
   - 3.2 Monitoring & review
   - 3.3 Marketing plan
   - 3.4 Training plan
   - 3.5 Documentation
   - 3.6 Information management

Identifying & forming a committee

ERM requires the formation and management of a committee. A committee is essential to ERM for the following reasons.

- Committee members who represent the community can facilitate communication with a broad cross-section of stakeholders.
- Rapid access is required to diverse information. It is possible to gather this information through correspondence, interviews, and telephone calls, but this method will take time. Assembling the people who can provide information will make information gathering more efficient.
- No single person is expert in everything and so the input of subject experts is required. If local subject experts are ignored they may become the greatest critics of your ERM project.
- If ERM is to be taken seriously, then the commitment of all the relevant players is required. An effective means of gaining this commitment is through encouraging people to participate in ERM, and working together to produce the end result.

Forming a committee

There may be a group of people who are responsible for or have an interest in safety, crisis or emergency management in a given community. If such a group exists, then it may be ideal for the purposes of ERM because it may already have:

- the appropriate authority;
- appropriate representation;
- an efficient reporting system; and,
- sufficient expertise.

If a committee does not exist, then it should be constituted using the above four criteria and with reference to the project definition. An analysis of stakeholders may be necessary to determine who should be on a committee.

Identifying stakeholders

Who are the community stakeholders in relation to ERM? In one sense, all members of the community are stakeholders in the process. More specifically stakeholders are:

those who may affect, be affected by, or perceive themselves to be affected by the emergency risk management process [20]

In other words, stakeholders are those people or groups who have a legitimate interest in the process of ERM. Some stakeholders will need to be directly represented on a committee. Others will need to be drawn into the process at certain stages.

What is certain about the issue of stakeholders is that there will be differences of opinion on who should be included. All decisions made in this regard should be based on consensus. In determining stakeholders it is important to be as inclusive as possible. The more representation a committee and process is able to achieve, the more support it will have for its decisions. In putting together a committee, check that the following areas of expertise are present:

- expertise in ERM;
- relevant technical and scientific understanding;
- government – administrative;
- political;
- economic;
- regulatory; and,
- community interests.

Given the size of a committee, it is useful to have members who wear more than one hat.

In determining a broad list of stakeholders to be key reference points for consultation during the process, the following categories of people could be included:

- residents and property owners;
- customers and clients of services;
- community safety service providers;
- welfare groups;
- utilities such as power and water;
- public bodies;
- emergency service personnel;
- industry;
- community groups;
- conservation groups; and,
- agricultural sector representatives.

The structure of a committee

Once the key stakeholders are identified, there may be too many or too broad a range to include on committee. They can still be 'brought in' to the process through other means, however. It is possible to form sub-committees, or reference groups, for particular parts of the process or particular issues. A good example is when specialised expertise is required for a particular issue. Experts within a relevant field can be called in to assess the issue and make recommendations to the committee. In ERM, there may be a need to seek specialised information or consult with specific groups. These situations may call for the committee to set up secondary reference or task groups with the appropriate people on them.

Working with a committee

A committee is like a jury in that it:

- is using a large amount of incomplete information;
- must reconcile conflicting technical information;
- must work for the good of the community in an environment of high uncertainty;
- must reconcile conflicting ethics and standards within the committee.

Some aspects of working with a committee include:

- determining team-building goals;
- project goal setting (see chapter 4 for more details);
- setting groups rules;
- defining team roles;
- understanding your purpose;
- understanding the ERM process;
- training potential participants;
- managing meetings;
- working with the products the committee generates (see chapter 4 for more details); and,
- reporting.

Determine team-building goals

In the first meetings your goals should be focussed on two themes: building relationships between committee members and starting to work towards the desired outcomes.

Though the impulse is to get straight to work on the objectives, you will do better in the long term if you spend time in the first few meetings on these two considerations. The most successful committees often spend up to three meetings on team-building activities. [21]

- **Get to know each other**—take time to learn each other's backgrounds and strengths, explore each other's preferences for working and gathering information. Your aim is to work together in a frank and collaborative fashion, free of embarrassment and unproductive conflict.
- **Learn to work as a team**—find ways to use each other's strengths.
- **Resolve how decisions will be made**—This cannot be taken for granted particularly when a committee is comprised of people from varying backgrounds who may represent different interests.
- **Determine support services**—where is the photocopier; who do you see to gather supplies; what are the resources at your call?

Set group rules

Set the meeting ground rules: these are "norms" concerning how:

- meetings will be run, eg. everyone will be given the opportunity to voice their opinions, meetings will be held weekly, monthly or ad hoc;
- members interact, eg. listen attentively, don't interrupt;
- certain behaviour is viewed, eg. jargon, prompt attendance, participation expected;
- other areas for consideration when setting ground rules are when breaks will occur; rotation of roles and routine chores; record keeping process and format; whether phone calls etc. will be allowed to interrupt a committee meeting; attendance and procedure for informing leader when absence is unavoidable.

Define Team Roles

In order for each member of a committee to understand what is expected of them and to ensure that no one person carries the burden of all the work, it is important to assign and define team roles. Where appropriate, encourage members to volunteer rather than be given tasks. Often committees find rotation of roles on a regular basis, helps to minimise problems and keep members' interests. There are three main formal roles within a team – team leader, team member and team facilitator/coach. As well there are other roles such as scribe, subject matter expert, point of contact person and possibly process observer. The main three roles are team leader, team member and team facilitator.

Team Leader

- tracks the team's goals and achievements
- anticipates and responds to changes in timing, schedules, workloads and problems
- liaises with the hierarchy regarding actions, achievements and requirements

- removes barriers to team progress
- helps resolve conflict
- takes care of logistics such as meeting venue, supplies etc.

Team Member

- focuses on the purpose of the team
- thinks less about personal goals and more about the success of the team
- listens more than talks
- participates fully
- makes realistic commitments and then keeps them
- is mindful and respectful of team rules

Team Facilitator

This is a person who has expertise in group-dynamics, problem solving or running meetings to help teams. Generally this person focuses more on how the team gets it work done than on the content or subject of the team's work. This role might not be appropriate to rotate. If no member seems suitable for this role it might be practical to select the most promising and have them trained in the role or alternatively, co-opt someone specifically for that role.

- provides training as needed
- helps the team deal with conflict
- coaches on team skills and team leadership

The ERM facilitator is not seen as the expert in team operations. Your role is to facilitate a committee's effectiveness and productivity and ultimately to ensure the team produces a suitable ERM plan. If that requires construction of the team profile to suit the skills needed, even after a committee has formed, then you should act on that assessment, deploying your resources as deemed fit. It is not necessary for you to hold the above Team Leader role throughout the process.

Understand Your Purpose

- To give a committee a firm foundation, establish a common understanding of the committee's purpose and scope in coming together. Check documents relating to the establishment of the committee, eg. memos, data sheets, official documents.
- Clarify that purpose and scope so all understand and agree
    - discuss the purpose as a team
    - discuss the scope as a team
- Support this understanding with a purpose statement. This:
    - describes a specific focus
    - describes realistic goals
    - sets the scope of a committee's tasks
    - is clear, understandable and brief
- Use this purpose statement to guide a committee's actions

Understand the ERM process

Ensure that the committee starts from the same point of understanding about the ERM process. Find out how the ERM process came to be the way it is. If you have already some identified risks, determine if anyone is currently collecting data on them. This is an educative role and will fit neatly together with the development of the purpose statement.

Train potential participants

Participants in ERM may be divided into three broad groups:

- facilitators;
- community and organisational representatives; and,
- community decision-makers.

Facilitators should have skills in leading and influencing groups and a thorough understanding of the ERM process. Other participants in the ERM process should be provided with sufficient information to allow them to contribute fully.

Manage meetings

A meeting can have a number of purposes. These include:

- **To inform**—The easiest to achieve, because it is a broadcasting of information. Be careful to keep it interesting, and that all messages are heard
- **To decide**—The aim is to reach a decision acceptable to the majority of the meeting. The Chair must research the subject before the meeting and know the rules of debate
- **To make a plan of action**—The aim is to formulate a plan of action following a previous decision or imposed set of circumstances. Suggestions for a draft plan could come from the Chair, a separate committee, or the meeting.
- **To enjoy social contact**—Keep formal business to a minimum but make sure that formal rules have been argued. Make sure that visitors are introduced and welcomed. Forestall the development of cliques.

In preparation for the meeting, the chair and secretary (or, mayor and facilitator) must agree on the purpose of the meeting and work together on the administration and the agenda. It sometimes helps to prepare a 'flyer' explaining the purpose of the meeting, which can be handed/faxed/mailed to invitees *after they've had verbal contact with the facilitator, or the facilitator's representative*. Why is this critical? These people are the key stakeholders in the process. It is important they have a clear understanding of the purpose of the meeting/process and why they have been identified as integral to it, although they may (and should) be able to identify other key players to be invited in. A 'form' letter in the post is simply insufficient in these circumstances, and will be seen as such. If stakeholders volunteer to assist in the process of contacting others, it's one less chore on your list.

Checking that you have all the key players is an essential part of the process. Called 'triangulation', it simply involves asking 3 groups who they consider to be the key decision-makers in the town/district. Ask people in positions of power, service deliverers and ordinary citizens—when the 3 lists start to converge, you know you've cracked it! Some of the jobs can be delegated, but these need to be coordinated. These jobs include the following.

- **When and where?** —Notice of the meeting must give date, time, place and business to be conducted. Ensure adequate notice and think carefully about the medium (media) used, as well as the 'language' or tone of the invitation. Is the 'tone' of the invitation inclusive "Please come along, and encourage other people interested in or affected by this proposal to also take part" or exclusive "The Chairperson wishes to invite Mr Bloggs, representing the Grong Grong Volunteer Firefighters Association, to attend this important meeting."
- **Accommodation**—Meeting rooms need to be prepared. Who has the key? Are there enough chairs? Is there adequate lighting, effective ventilation, cooling or heating? Should smoking be banned? Are toilets available? Childcare? Is there parking? Note that although meetings in many towns are held in hotels, this may not be a conducive environment for business, nor for inclusion of particular groups you may be seeking to 'recruit' to the cause. If in doubt, find another venue.
- **Aids and equipment**—Are all relevant documents available? Enough copies to go round? Will visual aids such as black or white boards, chalk, felt pens, dusters. easels, butcher's paper, slides or a movie or overhead projector be needed? Are power points and extension cords available? Is there a need for a public address system? Who supplies and operates it? Is there a bell or gong to call the meeting to order? A timing device, to keep order?
- **Refreshments**—Will refreshments be served? Who will organise this? Check for heating, water and food, crockery, cutlery, tea towels, serviettes and rubbish disposal. A good rule of thumb is to think about whether participants are likely to be attending straight from a workplace, or travelling some distance or skipping a meal in order to attend. A simple refreshment (with a break) may be a means of keeping attention and at the same time promoting useful networking. Don't feel compelled to always keep it until the end. Think about the dietary needs of participants—this need not be elaborate, but is a thoughtful addition for those who cannot eat particular food groups.

- **Setting the agenda**—Every meeting must have an agenda. It must be realistic with respect to the priorities of participants and time available. The Chair should ensure the agenda is acceptable to the meeting, and amend if necessary.

Report

A committee needs to be mindful that it is not operating in isolation, a law unto itself, as such it must consider its reporting structures. To whom will the committee report its progress and findings? Will that include people further up the chain of responsibility; outwards toward the community; or to stakeholders not part of the committee? How will that reporting take place – verbal or written? Will it be informally face to face or formally through reports, memos or presentations? How often should reporting occur? Will it be on a different schedule for the different recipients? Will it be on an ad hoc basis or built into the project plan?

These are all issues that need to be addressed by a committee early in its formation. It would be useful to build this consideration into the planning process outlined above.

Working with local government

Working within a council's objectives

It is quite likely that emergency management, let alone ERM, will be fairly low down the list of your local community's priorities. Issues like employment, the state of the economy, health and schools, and the environment are more likely to take people's attention. This is why it is necessary to hook the objectives of ERM on to the key objectives for your local government.

Read the council's strategic plan and find out the council's objectives for their area. Use these objectives to help characterise the objectives of ERM within the community. In this way, ERM will be seen as contributing to the key objectives for the local community and will more likely be taken seriously.

Another way that could be used to broaden the support of ERM is to market it as part of community safety. In many councils, there are already existing programs to deal with crime or vehicle accidents, for example. It may be possible to develop an ERM process as part of, or in tandem with, an existing 'community safety' project. It is of course essential to market ERM as an essential component for a council's community safety objectives.

Securing support from a council

It is important to make sure that the ERM process has solid support at local government level. This includes support from the elected side of council, the councilors and politicians, and the council management. It is desirable to have support from the highest levels of council for the project to work successfully.

Lobbying and Marketing [22]

While we may believe that politicians and bureaucrats will instantly see the sense of our well-reasoned arguments and fall upon our plans with fervour and gusto, we need to stand back a little, take a deep breath, and acknowledge that **our** reality may not be **their** reality. That said, you can 'get political'—it takes time, and patience. Your strategic planning process will stand you in good stead, but rely on it alone at your peril.

Know what you want

Although it may sound absurd, many groups front up at a politician's office without a clear idea of what they want. Set out what you want, from whom, and at what specific time. Have a clear focus on your bottom line, and be prepared to settle for what is sufficient for now, knowing that to achieve all of what you want may mean a long haul.

Arrange an agenda beforehand—it is polite to provide a draft copy in writing before the meeting and confirm this preferably prior to, or at the meeting. The politician may have items they wish to add. At the end of the meeting, summarise the outcomes and confirm points of agreement. Confirm your understanding of the outcome in writing as soon as possible, before memory fades.

Keep your side of the bargain. If the issue has not been resolved to your satisfaction, it is up to you to provide publicity and public support for the decision.

Get to know the people in the machine

Find out the bureaucratic process for how a decision will be made. Who are the decision-makers at various key points in the process? Talk with them, so that you are familiar with their 'sticking-points' and so that when information passes over their desk they are familiar with your needs and wishes. Resist your need to 'prod with a sharp stick'—although you might free a log-jam, you risk making enemies who can distort your representations.

Do not assume logic or background

Many decisions are made in appalling ignorance, or utterly illogically. Often, it is because the person concerned is too rushed to do the necessary work to gather the background data. If you get to know the bureaucrat and provide information, your role will be respected. You can provide background information, which, although familiar to proponents, can be the cause of a blockage to the reader. For example, some report-writers fail to see that technical terms or acronyms are universally understood. Attaching technical appendices to a 'user-friendly' main report, with a clear Executive Summary is often the best approach.

Decision-makers resist decisions

It's an irony, but most bureaucrats and politicians hate to commit themselves. That's why you will see pilot projects, trial runs, draft submissions, etc. The logic of this is evident—who wants to be associated with a failure? Further, with a focus on accountability for public monies, it may be preferable for decision makers to proceed with 'small bites at the cherry' (staged approaches) rather than committing a large sum for a 'big picture' project. Sometimes, the more innovative the project, the more resistance there will be to funding its implementation. This is not an argument for mediocrity, however. You may need to harness persuasive powers (academic expertise, charismatic public figures, etc) who can demonstrate to 'powers-that-be' the 'workability' of the project. Has it worked successfully elsewhere? What does research tell you? How can their work be adapted to your circumstances?

Who should you approach?

Map out the range of politicians and bureaucrats you can approach to help with your project. It will be an extensive list. Now, don't 'shoot your bolt', as they say. Who are the 'do-ers' among the bureaucrats? Find out, informally, how they are reacting to your proposals. If you sense a negative reaction, try and determine the sticking points. Are these the matters most sensibly addressed in an approach to the political arm? Ask for advice, before proceeding.

It may be obvious, but be aware that for certain decisions, it is wise for bureaucrats to talk with bureaucrats, elected representatives to talk with elected representatives. The languages used are different—politicians provide the authority for something to happen, bureaucrats provide the machinery for something to happen. Allow for this—but ensure that the elected representative on your team is part of the preparatory *What do we want?* briefing process.

What's in it for them?

Present your ideas in a way that serves both your goals and those of the politicians and bureaucrats. No, this is not a suggestion of *The Godfather* techniques. Rather, it is an acknowledgment that there can be win-win outcomes. Similarly, there may be down-sides for decision-makers. What are the risks for them, and how can you help minimise these?

In negotiations with the Roads and Traffic Authority, protagonists of the now successful Sydney Harbour *Bridge Climb* were confronted with an initial list of some 70-odd reasons as to why a business inviting members of the public on escorted walks over the arch of the Bridge would not be allowed. The main protagonist asked: "If we can solve all these problems, will you consider our proposal?" It took some years, but each concern, from falling eyeglasses, to motorists distracted by brightly-coloured clothing were painstakingly addressed.

Who can you 'bring with you' in your project? Can you demonstrate to the polity that you have a substantial support base for your project? This will help them understand how far the constituency is likely to be behind them.

Where's the money coming from?

Find out all you can about specific funding programs, what is available for what purpose, what the pre-determined program outcomes are, and what the funding timelines are. That way, you have a better chance of tailoring your proposal to fit these criteria. If your idea does not fit in, work to have it budgeted for the next financial year, or seek political intervention to get priorities rearranged (it is possible to achieve, if you argue cogently). These days, politicians are keen to know what sorts of *partnerships* are being developed, to spread ownership, and financial burden. In calculating respective financial contributions, remember to include an 'in-kind' contribution, realistically costed, for the voluntary effort provided by community members on the management team and elsewhere in the system. Too often, this part of the 'partnership' is undervalued or devalued. Be aware that governments and large corporations have no qualms about including calculations for personnel in *their* contributions and be prepared to assert the value of the community's 'share'. This also has a positive effect within the community, feeling less as 'though it is coming 'cap in hand' and more as a full partner in the process.

Generating & Working with Ideas

Chapter summary

This chapter is about developing ideas when working with people in committees and communities. It lists and describes some practical tools that can be used by facilitators and groups for different problems. These tools are generic and can be used in a variety of ways at different points in the ERM process, or in any other management situation.

The *Emergency Risk Management Application Guide* itself describes a number of tools—the tools and techniques described here include:

- affinity analysis;
- brainstorming;
- brainwriting;
- cause and effect analysis;
- force field analysis;
- goal setting;
- multi-voting;
- nominal group technique;
- questioning techniques;
- Rank-It®;
- recording group ideas;
- site visits;
- storytelling;
- SWOT analysis; and,
- visioning.

Affinity analysis

Background

Affinity analysis (otherwise known as 'mind mapping' or 'affinity diagram') is about constructing a map of ideas, as an individual or group, without pausing to think, or evaluating the importance of the various ideas. Affinity analysis describes a relationship between all of the things about the chosen subject that are important to you or the group.

Uses

Affinity analysis can be used to:

- rapidly generate ideas for risk evaluation criteria, risk identification, and risk treatment options;
- structure ideas that have been generated by a brainstorming session;
- develop consensus on the relationship between ideas; and,
- encourage participation and commitment.

Advantages

Affinity analysis allows ideas to be generated, showing connections between ideas that may not have been obvious. These ideas can later be sorted, by either determining causes and effects or categorising the ideas.

Method

Two methods are described here.

1. A method to construct a diagram showing the affinity (similarity) of ideas is:

- clearly state the subject or question (adjust to achieve consensus if necessary);
- write the subject in the centre of a whiteboard or flipchart;
- write down ideas related to the subject in bubbles;

- join the bubbles to show relationships;
- keep going for as long as you can, so that not only the most obvious concerns get written down, but also some of the less obvious and more complex ones.

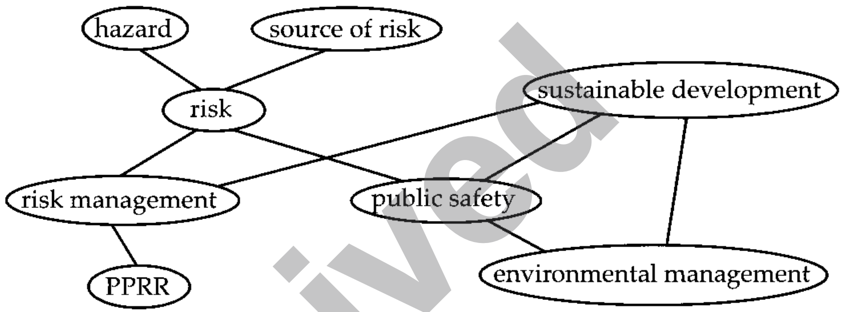
2. A method to develop lists of related ideas is:

- clearly state the subject or question (adjust to achieve consensus if necessary);
- ask participants to write ideas on separate pieces of paper;
- arrange the pieces of paper on a wall or on a table into categories.

Outputs

The output of method 1 is a diagram with a number of words and phrases that are circled and joined by lines to other words and ideas. This diagram displays ideas that are in some way related, although they are not categorised nor ranked in any way, as in the following example.

Figure 8
An affinity analysis diagram



The output of method 2 is a categorised list of ideas.

Brainstorming

Background

Based on the notion that 'no idea is stupid' or 'the best ideas come from left field', brainstorming is a process designed to:

- get all possible ideas on the table;
- encourage all participants to contribute; and,
- dig into the deep recesses of their minds for the most creative options.

Consider this example—some years ago, a remote, windswept seaside community was considering options for economic development. Asked to consider "what they had plenty of" one community member contributed "Salt water, there's not much else". There was some good-natured laughter, but not ridicule, and the community ultimately set about researching the possibilities of 'mining' salt from the sea.

Uses

Brainstorming can be used to:

- generate ideas for risk evaluation criteria, risk identification, and risk treatment options; and,
- encourage participation and commitment.

Advantages

The advantages of brainstorming are:

- it is very quick;
- it allows all members of a committee to contribute; and,
- it can generate new and unusual ideas.

However, if not managed correctly, more vocal people can overshadow quieter people.

Methods

Some general rules are:

- describe to the group the aim for the brainstorming session, establish the rules and method that will be adopted, and set a timeframe;
- clearly state the subject for the brainstorming session, which will often be in the form of a question (adjust to achieve consensus if necessary);
- enlist a recorder to write ideas onto a whiteboard or flipchart so everyone can see;
- ask a participant to repeat or clarify an idea if you don't understand it;
- write down the ideas word for word, or as close to as possible;
- do not allow any idea to be discussed, criticised or ridiculed;
- encourage participants to build on ideas that have already been expressed;
- maintain a fast pace and enforce the rules.

Three possible methods are described below.

1. An unstructured or 'plenary' method is:

- ask for ideas from the group, as a whole;
- ensure that all members of the group have the opportunity to contribute;
- without naming individuals, pause at intervals and note aloud that some people have not contributed, and that *now* is their opportunity to have a say;
- quieten participants who tend to dominate: "Thanks, Fred, you've contributed a number of valuable suggestions, could we now hear from others?";
- ensure that participants have been allowed to express all ideas before completion.

2. A more structured approach is:

- to ask for one idea from each participant in turn;
- allow individual participants to 'pass' in each round;
- continue asking each participant until ideas are exhausted.

3. Another approach is:

- invite members of the group, as individuals, to write down the ten most important ideas relating to the question;
- allow five or ten minutes for the exercise, but push participants to complete the list;
- while some will say "I only have one (or three) ideas", encourage them to see that the most creative ideas may come from having time to think more deeply about the issues;
- invite participants to share the ideas, without comment or criticism from others, and record them.

Outputs

A list of unstructured ideas that can be structured using:

- questioning;
- multi-voting;
- nominal group technique;
- cause and effect analysis;
- another analytical tool.

Brainwriting

Background

Brainwriting can be used to generate ideas where an issue is very controversial or where participants wish to spend more time thinking than is allowed by brainstorming.

Uses

Brainstorming can be used to:

- generate ideas for risk evaluation criteria, risk identification, and risk treatment options; and,
- encourage participation and commitment.

Advantages

It allows people time to reflect and to build on ideas of other participants in a non-threatening way.

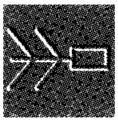
Method

- describe to the group the aim for the brainstorming session, establish the rules and method that will be adopted, and set a timeframe;
- clearly state the subject for the brainwriting session, which will often be in the form of a question (adjust to achieve consensus if necessary);
- draw up a set of squares on a piece of paper three columns across, with as many rows down as there are participants, ie. 18 squares in total for 6 participants;
- provide each participant with one of these pieces of paper;
- ask each participant to write down three ideas, then place their paper in the middle and select another paper that already has three ideas and add three more;
- encourage participants to build on ideas that have already been expressed;
- continue until all squares on the pieces of paper are filled;
- ask each participant to call out the ideas on a piece of paper;
- do not allow any idea to be discussed, criticised or ridiculed;
- write the ideas down word for word.

Outputs

A list of unstructured ideas that can be structured using:

- questioning;
- multi-voting;
- nominal group technique;
- cause and effect analysis;
- another analytical tool.



Cause & effect analysis

Background

Cause and effect analysis (also known as 'fishbone diagram' or 'Ishikawa diagram') is a tool for determining possible causes of problems.

Uses

Cause and effect analysis can be used to determine the possible causes of risk to provide a target for risk treatments.

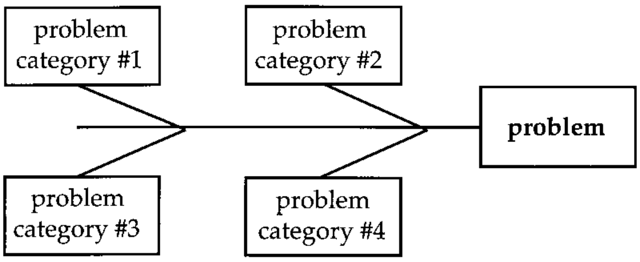
Advantages

Cause and effect analysis:

- allows analysis of possible causes of problems, eg. risks;
- allows broad input from a committee and community;
- can be used to determine possible root causes.

- clearly state the problem (adjust to achieve consensus if necessary and spend time discussing its nature);
- determine a number of problem categories (typical problem categories are: people, equipment, methods, materials, environment or procedures – community, environment, hazards and infrastructure may be useful in ERM);
- draw a fishbone diagram like the following with a 'head' (the problem), backbone, and branches (the problem categories);
- ask in questions each category, eg. "How does this problem category affect the problem?", "What are the components of this problem category?"
- ask participants to suggest causes of the problem, and write these next to the line leading from the appropriate problem category;
- causes may be further analysed as problems, using separate problem categories and fishbone diagrams;
- the diagram can be posted up in the community with a request for further possible causes.

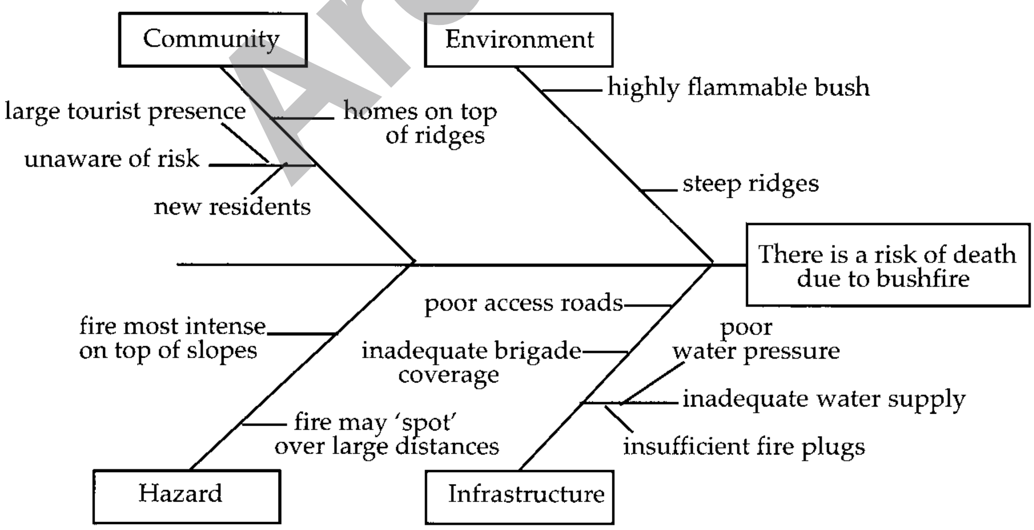
Figure 9
A blank fishbone diagram

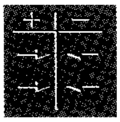


Output

The output of cause and effect analysis is a fishbone diagram such as that shown in the figure below.

Figure 10
A completed fishbone diagram





Force field analysis

Background

In managing change, or introducing new ideas or strategies, there will always be people, organisations or circumstances that will impede change or innovation. Force field analysis allows us to analyse the forces that may help or hinder a given change or innovation.

Uses

Force field analysis may be useful for the introduction of new risk treatment options.

Advantages

Force field analysis can assist decisions on:

- the likelihood that a change or innovation will be accepted; and,
- how to implement change by reducing restraining forces and strengthening driving forces.

Method

- clearly state the change or innovation (adjust to achieve consensus if necessary) and write it on top of a white board or flipchart;
- draw a line down the centre of the whiteboard or flipchart, write 'driving forces' and 'restraining forces' at the top on either side of the line, and underline these phrases;
- list driving forces which may assist the proposed change or innovation on the left-hand side, and the restraining forces on the right-hand side;
- highlight forces that can be influenced to ensure the success of the change or innovation;
- determine the likelihood of the success of the change or innovation;
- determine how to reduce restraining forces and strengthen driving forces.

Outputs

A list of forces that may help or hinder a change or innovation, with a description of which forces can be influenced for success.

Goal setting

Background

Setting goals is most important. If, as a group, you are not sure where you are going, how effective can the group be? Goal setting is an activity that helps a group to determine what it wants to accomplish and how.

Uses

Goal setting is important in establishing the context.

Advantages

Allows the group to:

- reach consensus on common goals; and,
- develop plans to reach these goals.

Method

The general rules for goal setting are:

- allow everyone to have their say;
- try to understand what they are saying;
- be creative, not critical;
- label 'hidden' agendas;
- deal with difficult issues; and,
- build on ideas that others offer.

In order to set goals:

- develop an initial definition of the group's goals (individually, list the goals that you think the group should pursue; put that list in order of importance; ask participants to call out their highest priorities; you may wish to vote to establish an overall priority order);
- list the people affected by the group's goals (this should be the same as your list of stakeholders);
- list the constraints within which the goals must be achieved (force field analysis may assist here);
- revise the goals in light of the above; and,
- develop an action plan to achieve these goals.

Outputs

A list of goals with strategies for achieving them.

Multi-voting

Background

Multi-voting can be used to reduce the number of ideas under consideration.

Uses

Multi-voting can be used to reduce the number of criteria to be used for selecting risk treatment options.

Advantages

Allows a large number of ideas generated by or provided by the group to be reduced to a more manageable number.

Method

Generate a list of issues, problems or solutions to be prioritised. This could be done through brainstorming or brainwriting for example. Then:

- each participant votes for as many ideas as they like;
- the ideas that receive the most votes are highlighted;
- remaining ideas are grouped and recorded;
- each participant votes again, but for only of the remaining ideas;
- multi-voting continues until the list of ideas is down to a manageable length.

Output

A list of ideas upon which a committee agrees.

Nominal group technique

Background

The nominal group process is a method for gathering committee and community ideas in a way that overcomes problems of unequal representation of opinions and that permits a common perception to develop. 'Nominal' refers to a set of items listed in order of preference and 'group' to the people who agree on the order. The method consists of a series of small-group procedures designed to compensate for the usual inequalities of social power that emerge in most planned meetings. Those who use the method should keep in mind that its purpose is to identify and rank problems, not solve them.

Uses

The nominal group technique can be used to:

- generate risk evaluation criteria;
- identify risks; and,
- identify risk treatment options.

Advantages

The method is effective for generating ideas and getting equal participation from group members. It is not a means of clarifying values, nor is it a decision-making strategy, but it is a method for arriving at informed agreement as to priorities.

Method

The general rules for nominal group technique are as follows.

- Groups for this exercise should not be more than *six to seven members* in order to allow for appropriate interaction.
- Those selected as participants should be representative of, and knowledgeable about, the community or task in question.
- Confirm the vote at the end. It is important to discuss the various explanations related to choosing. Discussion regarding the high vote-getters and low vote-getters may be of value. It may also be useful to redefine the meaning of selected items, to be certain that all group members are clear on their meaning.

The process is as follows.

- Generate a list of issues, problems or solutions to be prioritised. This could be done through brainstorming or brainwriting for example.
- The statements should be written down on a whiteboard or flipchart.
- Duplicate statements should be eliminated, and the meaning of statements clarified if necessary. However, this is not the time for argument and lobbying. The facilitator must direct the proceedings so that only clarification takes place.
- Record a final list of statements on the board. Give each statement a letter (A, B, C...)
- Each participant then writes the letters on their own piece of paper. Participants are then asked to rank order the statements.
- If there are more than nine items, it might be best to ask participants to select and rank the top five or seven, for example.
- A useful approach is to assign the highest number to the top priority—for example '5' is the most important, and '1' is the least important (see figure 10) for an example of a participants voting sheet.
- The rankings of all participants are then combined in a table such as that shown in Figure 12. The totals are calculated and the letter with the highest total is the priority, with the others in rank order of importance; as in the example shown in Figure 11. In this example, statement 'E' receives highest priority.

Figure 11
An example of a participant's NGT voting sheet

A	3
B	1
C	5
D	2
E	4

Figure 12
An NGT summary

Participants' rankings							Totals
A	3	1	2	1	1	3	11
B	1	3	4	2	3	2	15
C	5	4	1	3	4	1	18
D	2	2	5	4	2	5	20
E	4	5	3	5	5	4	26

Outputs

A list of statements, ranked in order of priority, reached by group consensus.

Variations

- If there is a large number of initial choices, it may be necessary to limit the number of items to rank. The One Half Plus One rule can be applied. For example, if there are 18 choices, participants could be asked to rank their top 10 choices (9 + 1). This can be repeated if necessary – ranking 6 (5+1) choices, until the number is manageable.

Figure 13
An alternative voting system

A	0
B	17
C	0
D	3
E	1
F	0

or

21
0
0
0
0
0

Another way of ranking is by weighting. If there are 6 items to choose from, allow participants to distribute 21 points (made up of 6+5+4+3+2+1) in any way they consider appropriate, as in the accompanying figure.

If there are 5 items the total to distribute will be 15 (5+4+3+2+1). There are many other variations of this approach.

Questioning techniques

Background

Some people do not like being asked direct questions when working in a group or with a controversial topic, and some questions will not bring out useful answers and ideas. So questions should be asked carefully, thoughtfully, and respectfully.

Uses

A facilitator will be required to ask questions at all stages of the ERM process.

General rules [23]

1. Start by asking the whole group (do not single out individual participants initially).
2. Wait to allow participants enough time to consider the question (relax and let people think).
3. When a participant responds, acknowledge their response and clarify or expand on the idea if necessary.
4. If no one volunteers a response, look for participants whose body language suggests they want to respond, then ask that participant by name.
5. If no one volunteers a response, rephrase the question or ask if participants understand the question.
6. Avoid questions that suggest an answer or a bias.
7. Avoid questions, which can be responded to with a simple 'yes' or 'no'.
8. Avoid questions that may threaten participants or put them on the defensive.
9. Do not ask people by name to answer questions if possible.

Types of question to ask [24]

- **Open-ended questions**—These questions cannot be answered with a single word such as 'yes' or 'no', and typically start with 'how', 'what' or 'why'.
- **Greater response questions**—These questions ask participants to clarify or expand on their answers and contain words such as 'describe', 'tell' and 'explain'.
- **Redirection questions**—Participants will often ask a facilitator a question, which can be redirected back at the group or at specific participants who have already spoken about this issue.
- **Feedback and clarification questions**—These questions are intended to draw out a summary or clarification from the group when an issue has been adequately discussed.
- **Close-ended questions**—These questions can draw out 'yes' or 'no' answers, or short answers that contain little information. They are useful to clarify points, or to ask permission of the group to move onto another discussion topic.

Rank-It® [25]

Background

The *Emergency Risk Management Applications Guide* describes a number of tools for ranking risks, and a set of criterion for ranking risk treatment options. However, committees may be required to rank other items.

Uses

Rank-It® can be used to rank:

- risk evaluation criteria;
- risks which receive the same risk ranking using probability and consequence;
- alternative risk treatment options.

Advantages

Rank-It® can form consensus within a group and allows each participant to vote.

Method

- The items to be ranked are clearly described by the facilitator.
- The criteria for ranking each item is clearly described by the facilitator issue (adjust to achieve consensus if necessary), eg. 'which item is most serious'.
- A matrix like the following (without the numbers) is drawn up.

Figure 14
A Rank-It® matrix

	Item #1				
Item #2	2 / 5	Item #2			
Item #3	5 / 2	3 / 4	Item #3		
Item #4	5 / 2	5 / 2	2 / 5	Item #4	
Item #5	4 / 3	4 / 3	3 / 4	6 / 1	Item #5
	12	11	17	13	17

- Each item is compared to each other using the agree criteria
- Participants vote for each item compared to another item
- Votes are recorded on the matrix, eg. if there are seven participants, and five people vote for item #1, and two for item #2, the votes are registered on the matrix as in the figure above.
- If a participant thinks one item is equivalent to another item using the criteria, then there vote is registered as a half each way.
- When all items have been compared with all other items, the total number of votes for each item is calculated and written in the bottom row of the matrix.
- Then, a ranked list of items can be drawn up as below.

Item #5 17 votes

Item #3 17 votes

Item #4 13 votes

Item #1 12 votes

Item #2 11 votes

Outputs

The outputs of Rank-It® are a list of ranked items and a record of the votes that led to that ranking.

Recording group ideas

Background

The ideas generated by a group should be recorded in real time on a whiteboard or flipchart. The writing helps to focus the group, allows the group to build on ideas already expressed, provides a sense of progress, and provides a clearly auditable trail.

Uses

A facilitator will be required to record group ideas at all stages of the ERM process.

General rules

- Consider asking a participant to record ideas, as long as that participant can still participate and the job is rotated.
- Recording directly into a computer is not recommended as it may distract the group, will certainly distract the recorder and stop them from participating, and the record can be manipulated at a later date.
- Always date and number sheets from a whiteboard or flipchart.
- Always write in large clear letters with a fresh pen of a dark colour (black or blue are best).
- Try to record the ideas word for word with minimal interpretation—the facilitator will ask for clarification if necessary.
- Ensure the recorder does not take over the proceedings from the facilitator.
- Ensure all participants can see the flipchart.
- If using an electronic whiteboard, provide participants at regular intervals with a copy of the notes taken.
- If using a flipchart, consider pinning or taping the pages to the walls at regular intervals to allow participants to track progress.

Site Visits

In the 1970s, a Canadian Urban Geography Professor used to encourage his students to take expeditions to the city. With the same zeal that jungle expeditioners applied in the past, students were invited to use their powers of observation *before they did anything* to the urban fabric, to the people who lived there and to those who depended on the urban community for their lives and livelihood. "Walking the town" is a useful skill to develop. Driving is of lesser value, as our senses, which need to be honed to each nuance, tend to be blocked by the comfort surrounding our mobile armchair. You only need consider the disastrous case of the survey of 'slum dwellings' (conducted from a cruising vehicle) which laid waste to much of Melbourne's inner city terrace housing in the 1960s, to see that this is not about applying the expert's blueprint, but rather, standing back and learning from your surrounds. What can you tell about this place from what you see around you? How are people dressed? Can you identify 'traditional' dress alongside western garb, or particular dress styles? Where do people live? Are houses the same or different, and what might that tell you about the inhabitants? How are people moving about? Are there buses and bicycles along with cars? What are people doing as they move about? What sounds do you hear? Birdsong, industrial noise, traffic? What do the sounds tell you? Take a deep breath—is that fresh air, or are you gulping down carbon monoxide with your *alfresco* sprout sandwich? Can you walk the pavement, unimpeded—indeed IS there a pavement?

Where do people worship, shop, conduct business, access emergency services? Visit the local Library—what does the pamphlet display tell you about local groups and clubs? Buy the local paper, sit in the Town Square. All the while—observe, absorb, drink it in. Write down your observations. Listen to your intuitive voice. This 'expedition' will give you reference points, and a battery of questions, but as you can see, it *can* be done systematically, and it can be fun!

A literature search can provide further information. What has been written about this place that is relevant to the task at hand? Take a trip to the local library—the information specialists there can be great allies. Talk to staff at the local Council. In particular, seek out the social plan, cultural policy or plan, environmental management plan and Council's overall management plan. What do the mission statements reveal about this community's aspirations?

Storytelling

Background

The information available, at our disposal, to effectively identify risk can include reports, data sets, local knowledge and expert opinions. But a crucial part of 'filling out the picture' comes through taking the time to truly listen to stories that add richness to bank of information available. This part of the process is often overlooked in the desire to be 'task-oriented', to 'not waste valuable time', but we need to remind ourselves that it is most often the stories and the mental images they evoke that will move individuals to action, not graphs and mountains of typescript.

Uses

Storytelling could be useful in:

- establishing the context;
- determining risk treatment options.

Method

Other peoples' experiences don't become real until we hear them as stories. A local government community development officer noted[1] that the experiences of migrants from other countries did not become real for him until he heard some of the stories of individuals involved from the people themselves. Until then, the numbers or scale of some of the inter-community violence had no meaning. Similar tales are told by almost everyone who has lived through a disaster. Only when hearing from people who were there can one begin to re-create the scene.

Exercise

Find topics that have meaning for the local community (the latest flood, the town fire, the chemical spill) and ask them, individually and or in groups, to tell it like it was for them. Allow time for 'story-telling'—build it in to your program of information gathering. You can also be creative about it—inviting individuals to submit their stories in prose, poetry, song, etc as part of formal 'presentations'. This has some clear advantages, being inclusive, breaking up sometimes boring anecdotes, 'lightening' the tone. Don't interrupt, but ask reflective questions, that is questions that reflect interest and understanding: *"tell me more about that; that must have been difficult for you".*

Debrief

Always feed back some comments that show you were listening, that you heard them, and that you have learnt something useful. In a group, don't allow anyone else to interrupt a speaker, or ask critical questions.

SWOT analysis

Background

SWOT analysis is a well-known process which can be used *both* for examining factors affecting a group's proposal, and for looking at the strengths and weaknesses of the group, itself.

Uses

SWOT can be used in:

- assess how the group's performance can be improve;
- establishing the context; and,
- assessing risk treatment options.

Advantages

SWOT assists decisions on:

- the likelihood that a proposal will be accepted; and,
- how to implement a proposal.

Method

Clearly state the proposal or purpose of the group. Ask the group look at the factors within the following framework:

- strengths—what aspects of the group/proposal are good? what are its strong points?
- weaknesses—what aspects of the group/proposal are weak?
- opportunity—if we do *x* what positive things might happen? what is happening externally to the group that we can make use of?
- threats—what could happen that might pose a threat to the group/proposal?

By following this, or a similar process, you can build on the strengths, overcome the weaknesses, grab the opportunities, and work towards diminishing the threats that face your group or proposal.

Outputs

The outputs of a SWOT analysis are:

- a description of the factors that may affect the implementation of a proposal or the success of the group;
- some strategies for ensuring a proposal is implemented or ensuring a group is successful.

Visioning

Background

Many people have some idea of how their future should be. Visioning is a way of assisting people to flesh out their concept of an ideal future.

Uses

Visioning may be useful in:

- describing a community context;
- developing risk acceptability criteria; and,
- selecting risk treatment options.

Method

Ask the group develop a vision of their community in terms of ERM at a point in the future—some twenty years hence. The community can be their own, or an imagined place. Spend some 2-3 minutes discussing *What would people most like to experience in an environment where ERM is practiced sustainably?*

Make sure the group is in a quiet room, with no interruptions. In a clear, slow, calm, deep voice read a script like the following. Give time for people to develop the images in their minds. Some people will have greater difficulty visualising than others. This does not really matter; they can still contribute to the activity later. Pace the exercise yourself. Leave plenty of time for everyone to visualise the images, and move slowly from one set of images to the next.

"We are now going to take a trip to the future, to an ideal Saxa Shire (or Smoke City) about twenty years from now. This is not Saxa Shire as it is today, nor as we think it probably will be—this is Saxa Shire as we would like it to be if all of our expectations had been fulfilled and we had achieved a healthy, sustainable environment in which ERM is fully implemented. All the problems of today have been solved.

Make yourselves comfortable—you may find it useful to close your eyes so that you can more easily imagine the landscape (or region, or city) in your mind's eye.

I want you to imagine that you are hovering high above the principal town in Saxa Shire; perhaps in a balloon or helicopter—an ideal Saxa Shire twenty years hence. Look down at the landscape beneath you. What does it look like? What colours and shapes do you see? What time of year is it? What would it look like at a different time of year? Look out across the landscape at the edges of the town, the paddocks and farms, the hills and valleys. What crops are growing? What stock is feeding? Where does their water come from? How is the water distributed? How pure is the water? What is it used for? Where does the waste water go? Where are the farms? Can you see people and goods moving to and fro? How are they being moved? What sounds come up to you from farm and town? What smells?

Now I want you to descend. Look around you as you come down into the middle of Saxa's main town. Look at the shapes and structures of the buildings. Look at the spaces between them. As you get closer, listen to the sounds and smell the scents of the landscape.

Are there people around? Who is there? What ages are they? How do they react to you—and to each other? What activities are going on? Are there people working? Are there people relaxing? What else are they doing? Who is doing it? Now walk around and see what else there is.

Join one of the people as they move about. What are they doing? How do they look? Is this a good place to be? How are the people interacting with each other? Now join some other people. What is happening here and how does it feel?

Now imagine yourself on a farm. How is it different to the situation today? What is happening? What is happening in the neighbourhood and in the community? What are people happy about? What are they worried about?

Imagine that it is lunchtime. Where do people go for lunch? What do they talk about? What sort of food are they eating? Where did it come from? What do they do after lunch?

As the day comes to an end, go home with someone. How do they get home? Where is home? How far are they travelling? Go with them in their neighbourhood. Remember that this is an ideal, well-managed environment. How does the neighbourhood feel? Do you feel safe? Do you feel secure about the future? How is the region being managed? What are the decisions being made? What important changes have happened recently?

Now go into the house. Who is there? Is it a family? Who is in the family? Are they all receiving an income? What do they do? What about the others? Are there children? Do they go to school? What are they learning about their district and their environment? Eat dinner with the household. What do they talk about? What do they do for relaxation?

Now imagine it is a weekend. Do they still have weekends? Pick any season of the year you like. Move around the district. What are people doing? What recreation do they have? Where are they going? Is anyone working? What are they doing? Now imagine it is a different season. What is happening in this season? Are the activities different?

Now, before we leave this ideal, well-managed district, think back on all you have seen. Think about how the country looked, who was in it and what they were doing. Did you see the very young and the very old? Where were they? How was life for them? Did you call on the Shire Office? What were they doing? What were their plans? Do the issues we discussed earlier appear to have been addressed? What still needs to be done? Who is meeting the challenge?

Now I want you to come back to the present time, reflecting on all you have seen. *(provide time here to return to the here and now).* When you are ready, write down the ten most noticeable things you saw, heard, smelled or touched. Write down the things that surprised you, the things that pleased you, the things that worried you."

Give the participants five minutes or so to write down the ten things that stood out for them. If necessary, put some pressure on the participants to go to ten items—the last two or three may be the most difficult, but often contain the most original ideas.

Spend another five minutes discussing the ten issues that people have written down. What did people see and hear? Did they find it hard to do? Don't let any of the participants be critical of anyone else's issues—although they are allowed to have the topic clarified.

There will always be someone who is very practical, or not at all visual, who has trouble doing the exercise—that's fine. They should be made to feel comfortable and asked to contribute to the next stage of the exercise from guesswork or their own experience, rather than guided imagery.

After this short discussion, have each person write on three cards, in five words or less and in big letter that people can read across the room, the three most important ideas among their ten. Each person is asked to stick their most important card of the three on the wall themselves, and then read out the idea. Others may ask questions of clarification, but they may not offer comments or criticism. Each person should either put their card in a group with the others or start a new category.

Then take a second round, then the third. No discussion and no criticism of any contribution is allowed. Short questions of clarification are permitted. Everyone puts their cards wherever they wish, and no one can move another person's card without permission.

When the cards have been put into a minimum number of groups (probably about three, perhaps five) each strand should be given a name/title encapsulating the central idea. This then gives the central conditions for sustainable ERM in Saxa Shire.

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