

Various groups working for Marysville

compiled by
Julie Foletta

On Friday 21 August a meeting was called to 'iron out' perceived rifts between the various groups working on recovery and rebuilding efforts in the Marysville and Triangle district.

VBRAA called together members of the Section 86 Committee, the MTCRC, MATDG, Council, Federal Member for McEwen Fran Bailey and Member for Seymour Ben Hardman. It was agreed that all parties work together for the future benefit of the Marysville and Triangle communities and a working party comprising three members of the MTCRC, three from MATDG and council representatives get together and sort out the differences.

What are all these groups and where did they come from?

MATDG

The Marysville and Triangle Development Group was formed to be an interim community group to represent and work for the bushfire-affected communities of the Triangle region following Black Saturday.

MATDG began when the Hon Fran Bailey, Federal MP for McEwen, recognised the need for a community based group to assist in the rebuilding and reconstruction efforts. She asked Jim Roennfeldt, President of the Taggerty Community Progress Group, to quickly involve other influential representatives of local community groups. The group that was to become the nucleus of MATDG met for the first time in mid February and established a charter and an operational strategy.

The original MATDG members were later supplemented by other citizens who were committed to the same principles.

The group and the community were supported in this effort by the Australian Children's Trust and Kim Wilkie, an ex-federal parliamentarian who volunteered his services.

The incorporated group now has more than 300 community members and has worked actively to assist in the rebuilding and reconstruction efforts since mid February.

MATDG has a charter with four principles: consultation and communication; initiative(s) from the community, not above it; aim for 'better' rather than for 'replacement'; and build confidence, and hence build aspirations.

The MATDG brought

tial community information session at the Marysville Golf Club attended by hundreds of residents of Marysville and the Triangle. A further emergency information meeting at the golf club was attended by 400-500 people on Sunday 22 February. On 1 March, 200-300 attended the first meeting for the business community.

MATDG published its first newsletter on 27 February and by early March called for representatives for seven sub-committees—finance; storage and distribution; communication and consultation; economic development; employment and training; reconstruction (i) Marysville (ii) rural; and community wellbeing—to plan, design and deliver services and resources into the community in a timely and effective manner.

The first MATDG annual general meeting and election of office bearers was held on 13 June.

Elected to the new committee were: Graeme Brown president, Doug Walter vice president, Jim Roennfeldt treasurer and Vicki Moritz secretary. There are also ten community committee members: Judy Frazer-Jans, Bruce Ackerman, Clive Clayton, Jim Kennedy, Diane James, Dirk Versluys, Glenn Dovaston, Dr Lachlan Fraser, Ken Adams and John Cann.

In addition to regular MATDG meetings and meetings of the seven sub committees, the MATDG holds fortnightly community information update sessions at the Marysville Golf Club.

MTCRC

Shirewide advertising calling for expressions of interest in being a member of a community advisory group appeared in council's Murrindindi Matters in the first and second weeks of March.

Murrindindi Shire's Chief Executive Officer Mark Henderson sent email confirmation to applicants of their appointment on 2 June.

The first official meeting of the Marysville Triangle Community Recovery Committee was convened by the shire and VBRAA on 9 July 2009, and the group has been meeting weekly since.

The role of MTCRC is to provide advice to MBRRC (Section 86) on planning and rebuilding of the communities.

Representatives of the MTCRC are: Tony Thompson chairperson, Jennifer Wood of Narbethong deputy chairperson, Richard

Cuzens, Graeme Brown, Jenny Pullen, Bruce Ackerman, Julia Peddie, Clive Clayton of Buxton, Geoff Pope and Rita Seethaler of Taggerty.

The MTCRC is just one of about thirty community recovery committees across nineteen local government areas affected by fire. In Murrindindi Shire there is one for Marysville and Triangle, Kinglake Ranges, Flowerdale, Strath Creek, Toolangi and Melba Highway.

The key role of the Community Recovery Committees is to develop a partnership between the affected communities and agencies involved in recovery.

The CRC is the main community advisory body to council and VBRAA in each fire-affected community in the Murrindindi Shire. One of the specific tasks of the CRC is to prepare a community-based recovery plan that is developed with the support and engagement of the community. To this end, the MTCRC has recently contacted some fifty local organisations and groups, as well as many individuals, and received submissions for over 100 community recovery projects, which will inform the community recovery plan for Marysville, Buxton, Taggerty, Narbethong and Granton.

MBRRC Section 86

A model for bushfire recovery was presented to councillors at their 25 March meeting. Imagine a pyramid model. The wider community is at the base, above them are the CRCs, then the Murrindindi Bushfire Recovery and Reconstruction Committee Section 86 (MBRRC).

Beginning with the community at the base, the needs and wishes of the communities and the various community groups (in the case of Marysville—kindergarten, Gallipoli Park, local sporting clubs, Lake Mountain, golf club, arts group, business group for example) feed their needs, wishes and concerns to the CRC.

This information is then fed via the CRC to the MBRRC (Section 86) committee, a decision making body which comprises representatives from VBRAA, Department of Planning and Community Development (DPCD), Department of Human Services (DHS) and councillors. When the MBRRC meets, project control groups (for example council officers) also provide relevant advice on various projects.

Sitting on the MBRRC

representative Genevieve Overall; Arden Joseph, Executive Regional Director, Community Development Group, DPCD; Craig Lapsley, DHS; and shire councillors and their substitute representatives (in brackets) Cr Kevin Bellingham (Cr Lyn Gunter), Cr Peter Beales (Cr Sally Abbott Smith), Cr John Walsh (Cr Chris Healy).

The MBRRC's role is to oversee the longer-term strategic management of bushfire recovery and reconstruction in the shire.

The MBRRC Section 86 Committee and VBRAA will be relying on the six CRCs to ensure projects and rebuilding has had maximum community consultation before it approves any project to be submitted to VBRAA.

The MBRRC Section 86 committee held its first public meeting on 10 June. The second MBRRC meeting was held on 8 July when draft terms of reference were tabled for the CRCs.

An open forum session prior to each MBRRC meeting allows members of the public to address the committee in person.

These meetings are open to the public, save for times when confidential items may be discussed. Issues to be brought to the attention of the MBRRC can also be sent by letter or email to msc@murrindindi.vic.gov.au.

Their next meeting dates are 9 September and 30 September.

MOCA

The Marysville One Community Association or MOCA was formed to 'bring the community together' (hence the name) rather than do the reverse.

Initially the association was open to all residents and while it initially represented the part time residents it did not expect that role to continue into the future and it has now become a committee within MATDG.

The group has a platform to inform residents who may have relocated to Melbourne and surrounds as well as part time residents. Meetings are held on a regular basis in Mount Waverley.

Committee members include Vicki Moritz; Vince Piccolo; Kerry Dr McIver; Ken Blaker; Dr Lachlan Fraser and John Cann.