

MADRA News



Behind the scenes at MADRA

Following on from our last article about ongoing recovery, this is how MADRA works behind the scenes. We are a voice for our community on bushfire recovery and resilience. What does this look like? Why is it important?

Our role as a community voice means we talk to community members and groups to identify needs and solutions. We ‘stick up’ for community members whose cases do not fall neatly within guidelines, and we convey those priorities and concerns to those who have the power to turn our recovery aspirations into reality.

MADRA’s authority comes from community. We don’t hold the purse strings and we can’t make policy decisions. That’s in the hands of government.

On our part, this means a lot of research and letter writing. Letters of advocacy on subjects such as housing, infrastructure replacement, environmental and economic projects. Letters of support for community groups for grants and assistance. Letters to our elected representatives outlining our priorities. We’ve recently clocked over 10,000 emails!

We also hold a lot of meetings. MADRA meetings, meetings with community groups, meetings with government and donors. We’ve developed good productive relationships and partnerships.

The table below shows you some of the numbers. These are conservative as we don’t always remember to note every meeting or ‘cc’ our admin staff on every email! (Sorry, Maggie).

This record keeping is important for many reasons:

- When government makes promises, we can hold them accountable. There have been times when our records have resulted in funding that would not have otherwise happened.
- We can assure the community that things are happening. Recovery doesn’t happen overnight – there is considerable time between asking for help and receiving it.
- We can direct donated funds to projects not funded from other sources.
- We are able to capture the story of how we regained our sense of community.
- We are better prepared for future disasters.

Is it hard work? Yes. But the load is shared. We have a groundswell of knowledge and experience – the Thinking Group, the first MADRA committee and all the talented community members who have willingly shared their expertise. Add to this, the community groups working hard in their own right on recovery initiatives.

Is it worth it? The results speak for themselves. Through our combined community efforts, we now have over \$50 million committed to our district. We’ve come a long way, but there is still work to be done. In our next article, we’ll talk about ‘where to from here’?

Your **MADRA**

MADRA stats at a glance – from July 2020 to now			
Meetings attended	Committee and executive committee meetings: 107	Other meetings: 140	TOTAL: 247 meetings attended
Emails received, sent and logged	Emails received: 6,066	Emails sent: 4,575	TOTAL: 10,641 emails handled
Letters of advocacy or support written	Advocacy letters sent to government and other organisations: 104	Letters of support for community groups: 48	TOTAL: 152 letters of support and advocacy sent