

SMS LIST BACKGROUND

In building the SMS Master List, your community organisations are seeking to build on the experience of the Strathewen community in Murrindindi Shire in the Black Saturday 2009 fires. Research in that region shows that after the fires, in small but varied communities like ours, people were already well connected through their various community organisations, and this cohesion was vital for the recovery phase. While the extended Deans Marsh community is reasonably well connected, we need to build that cohesion further.

Research also shows that, very quickly after the fires, all Strathewen community members were provided with the same information directly using SMS. This was essential, as everyone came to rely on that source of information as trustworthy. To have such trust in information is of course vital, in such difficult and often traumatic circumstances. Because infrastructure is so often disrupted, and many people are away from their homes, and thus from home-based computer systems, SMS was found to be the preferred and most reliable method to communicate with everyone at the same time about relief efforts, meetings and information sessions.

Please be assured that the SMS Master List will be held by the Hall and Cottage for use in communicating with residents after emergencies only, not in place of existing CFA apps and other fire warning systems, and not for the regular distribution of our many other community notices and newsletters. Nor will the list be passed to any other person, business or government agency.