



Image: cbf.org.au

# “Oily rags, shoestrings and gaffer tape”

## Granting for Station Resilience

Community Broadcasting Foundation



# Contents

<b>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>1. INTRODUCTION</b> .....	<b>5</b>
<b>2. UNDERSTANDING RESILIENCE</b> .....	<b>7</b>
What is resilience?.....	7
<b>3. DEFINING RESILIENT COMMUNITY BROADCASTING STATIONS</b> .....	<b>8</b>
3.1 A connected station.....	8
3.2 A future-aware station.....	10
3.3 A well-led station.....	11
3.4 A learning station.....	12
3.5 An appropriately resourced station .....	13
3.6 A representative station .....	14
<b>4. RESILIENCE HORIZONS</b> .....	<b>16</b>
4.1 Resilience Horizon 1: Short term disruption .....	16
4.2 Resilience Horizon 2: Adaptation to structural change .....	17
<b>5. CURRENT GRANTING APPROACH</b> .....	<b>18</b>
<b>6. RECOMMENDATIONS: PROPOSED APPROACH TO GRANTING FOR RESILIENCE</b> .....	<b>21</b>
6.1 Align funding activities with aspects of resilience.....	21
6.2 Simplify and clarify grant application process .....	23
6.3 Support the development of emergency reserves .....	24
6.4 Support the development of localised or shared support structures .....	25
6.5 Develop cultures of resilience .....	25
<b>CONCLUSION</b> .....	<b>27</b>
<b>APPENDIX A - STATION RESILIENCE SELF-REFLECTION TOOL</b> .....	<b>28</b>
<b>APPENDIX B - EXTERNAL MODELS OF RESILIENCE</b> .....	<b>29</b>

# Contents

## List of Tables

Table 1 CBF’s grant streams.....	19
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## List of Figures

Figure 1: The six aspects of resilience in community broadcasting stations.....	8
Figure 2 The relationship spectrum.....	9
Figure 3: Aspects of resilience, Horizon 1.....	16
Figure 4: Aspects of resilience, Horizon 2.....	17
Figure 5: Total grant funds allocated in 2018 .....	18
Figure 6: Attributes and indicators of a resilient organisation .....	29
Figure 7: The Red Cross six characteristics of a safe and resilient community .....	30
Figure 8: Resilient Organisations four factors influencing resilience.....	31

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# Executive summary

Throughout the engagement activities in developing this strategy, three surprising expressions were all-too-often mentioned when stakeholders sought to characterise the sector – *oily rags, shoestrings and gaffer tape*. While often used tongue-in-cheek, “running on an oily rag”, “operating on a shoestring”, and “held together with gaffer tape” were all expressions used to illustrate the sense of scarcity which pervades the sector.

CBF seeks to change this situation and develop a granting strategy more focused on building station resilience rather than granting to prop up fragile organisations.

This report builds on research and engagement with stakeholders across Australia’s community broadcasting landscape to develop the recommendations outlined in this report. Given the circumstances community broadcasting has faced during the consultation period, which included unprecedented 2019/2020 summer bushfires and the protracted impact during 2020 of COVID19 on the sector considerable care is taken to balance representation of stakeholder voice with concern for over-consultation with organisations under considerable duress.

Through a process of engagement and research, we have co-created a granting strategy for CBF that will result in improved station resilience. It is recommended that the development of CBFs granting strategy is monitored and amended regularly with ongoing input from stakeholders.

This report outlines our understanding of the unique circumstances influencing stations and, by extension, the organisations supporting them. Based on this understanding, we propose a model of resilience that captures the characteristics, or ‘aspects’ broadly required for station resilience. In short, a resilient station is:

- A future aware station
- A well-led station
- A learning station
- An appropriately resourced station
- A representative station
- A connected station

These aspects are defined in Section 3, and their application is discussed broadly. Adding further context to this model, two distinct ‘Horizons’ are presented, representing resilience in the two contexts shared by all stations: short term shocks and long-term transitions. The implications for stations at each horizon are discussed.

Finally, a set of recommendations in five themes are recommended to influence a grant strategy that will support station resilience. These themes include:

1. Align funding with aspects of resilience
2. Simplify and clarify the grant application process
3. Support the development of emergency reserves
4. Support the development of localised or shared support structures
5. Develop cultures of resilience

Through implementation and sector support for the necessary changes we look forward to seeing resilient stations meeting community needs for generations to come.

# 1. Introduction

The Australian community broadcasting sector is globally recognised as one of the most successful grassroots media communities. It comprises more than 450 organisations with a weekly audience of nearly 6 million people in Australia.<sup>1</sup> This output is sustained by the efforts of an estimated 30,000 volunteers who contribute their time, effort and expertise to keep independent and diverse voices on the airwaves.<sup>2</sup>

Through its funding arrangement with the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications (DITRDC), Community Broadcasting Foundation (CBF) currently grants more than \$19.7 million to 216 community media organisations annually – bolstering the communication, connection and knowledge-sharing that takes place through radio, television and digital media platforms.

The resources CBF distributes to the sector and the detailed understanding of sector dynamics it holds places CBF in an important position to influence the future direction and sustainability of community broadcasting in Australia.

Australian community broadcasting exists in a dynamic environment, with recent decades seeing a significant change in broadcasting technology, media consumption patterns, increased compliance requirements on volunteering and community organisations, media ownership and media policy. This has been made all the more complicated by the significant shocks brought on by the catastrophic bushfires and global COVID-19 pandemic throughout this engagement.

In the face of this dynamic environment and through consultation in the sector, CBF has determined that its granting strategy is best served if it delivers ‘station resilience’.

The CBF is listening intently to the sector to develop granting strategies which build station resilience in the near and long term. It is recognised that there are inherent challenges in establishing a granting strategy that consistently satisfies the needs of every stakeholder.

The authors would like to extend their thanks to the people of the following stations and organisations who contributed their valuable time, knowledge and perspectives to inform the understanding of resilience in community broadcasting and shape the recommendations in this report.

- 2SER, Sydney, NSW
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- 4RPH, Brisbane, QLD
- 8CCC, Alice Springs & Tennant Creek, NT
- Australian Community Television Alliance (ACTA)
- C31 TV, Melbourne & Geelong, VIC
- Christian Media & Arts Australia (CMAA)
- Christian Media Hub

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<sup>1</sup> CBF. Community Broadcasting Foundation Annual Report 2019. Retrieved on 11 March 2019 <https://cbf.org.au/documents/2020/01/2019-annual-report.pdf/>

<sup>2</sup> CBAA. Staff & Volunteers. Retrieved on 11 March 2019 <https://www.cbba.org.au/staff-volunteers>

- CMH Regional NSW
- Community Broadcasting Association of Australia (CBAA)
- Community Broadcasting Foundation (CBF)
- Community Media Training Organisations (CMTO)
- First Nations Media Australia (FNMA)
- National Ethnic and Multicultural Broadcasters' Council (NEMBC)
- RPH Australia
- Southern Community Media Association (SCMA)
- The Pulse 94.7, Geelong, VIC

## 2. Understanding Resilience

The CBF is striving to invest in building the resilience of community media organisations through its grant programs. The foundation of this project is to develop a shared understanding of what we mean by resilience. Desktop research and consultation with the organisations in the community broadcasting sector have helped establish the resilience model for community broadcasting

### What is resilience?

At its most fundamental level ‘resilience’, derived from the Latin verb ‘resilire’, means to rebound or recoil.

*...the recent history of global organisational development could be seen as a relentless march towards the need for resilience...*

The term resilience is adopted by many disciplines including sociology, economics and psychology. Resilience typically relates to the ability of systems to respond and adapt effectively to changing circumstances. Over the past decades, the concept of resilience has been increasingly applied to organisational development. The recent history of global organisational development could be seen as a relentless march towards the need for resilience. Until the 1950s and 60s, it was *efficiency* which could be said to be the driving force, as organisations sought to maximise returns from inputs. In the 70s, it was *quality*, as the total quality movement took shape. In the 80s, it was *continuous improvement* as the pace of change and technological development continued to accelerate. Quality could no longer be considered a finite destination, but rather, something that had to be continuously improved. As the limits to growth became increasingly apparent through the 90s and into the new millennium, *sustainability* became the key question as organisations wondered how to sustain themselves and the systems in which they operate. Now we live in a world of rapid change, systemic breakdowns, limits to growth and increasingly frequent and severe shocks and so *resilience*, the ability to rebound or recoil, has come into its own in the world of organisational development.

It will come as no surprise, therefore that many models have evolved to define the nature of organisational resilience. Many of these were examined as part of this study. The following three were used as a point of departure for understanding resilience and combined with results of the industry consultation, formed the basis for the Resilience in Community Broadcasting model used to guide this strategy. Further information on these models can be found in Appendix B.

- **The Australian Government Organisational Resilience Good Business Guide** includes three attributes of resilient organisations; *leadership and culture, networks and relationships* and *change-ready leadership*, along with 13 indicators under the overarching attributes to describe further the nature of organisational behaviour that contributes to resilience.
- **The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies** identifies six characteristics of a safe and resilient community; *infrastructure and services, economic opportunity, natural resources, organisation, knowledge and health, and connectedness*.
- The New Zealand-based, **Resilient Organisations** suggest *valuing culture, leadership culture, sharing culture* and *learning culture* as four factors influencing resilience.

## 3. Defining resilient community broadcasting stations

Following a distillation of the above models of resilience and subsequently validated with industry stakeholders, the following Resilience in Community Broadcasting model has been adopted. It outlines six essential aspects that are necessary to establish a state of resilience (Figure 1).

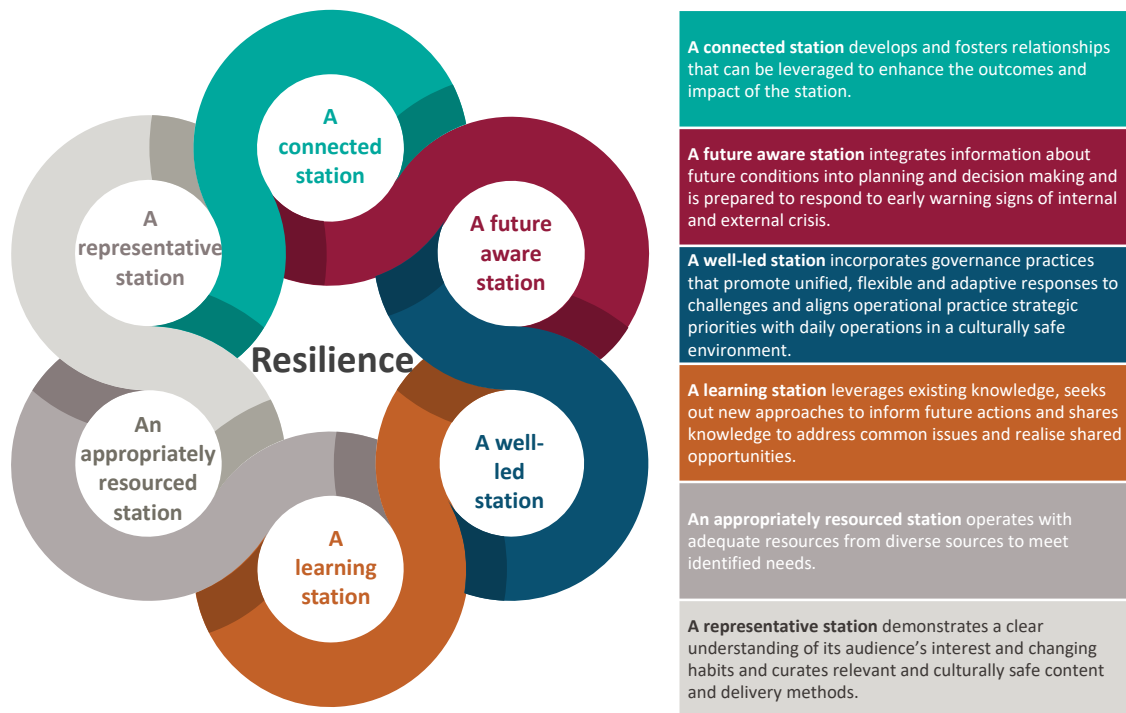


Figure 1: The six aspects of resilience in community broadcasting stations

### 3.1 A connected station

Connected stations develop and foster relationships that can be leveraged to enhance the outcomes and impact of stations and support resilience. For example, well-connected organisations may be less likely to become siloed in their thinking<sup>3</sup> and will consider different approaches to problem-solving and make better-informed decisions more quickly.<sup>4</sup>

These approaches to building these connections vary widely and may cover a wide range of relationships. Figure 2, below, provides a useful spectrum of relationships and considerations surrounding each.

<sup>3</sup> Commonwealth of Australia (2016). Organisational Resilience Good Business Guide.

<sup>4</sup> Walker B, et al. (2019). Becoming Agile, A Guide to Building Resilience. Resilient Organisations. Accessed 11 February 2020 <https://www.resorgs.org.nz/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/Becoming-Agile-Building-Adaptive-Resilience.pdf>



The resilience of stations can be enhanced by developing capabilities to understand what types of relationships may be beneficial for individual organisations, and tools to broker them successfully. Key strategies to build successful partnership include building diversity, building equity, fostering openness, generating mutual benefit, and displaying courage in the face of uncertainty.<sup>5</sup>

Figure 2 The relationship spectrum<sup>6</sup>

		Partnerships				
Compete	Co-exist	Communicate	Cooperate	Coordinate	Collaborate	Partner
Compete for clients, customers, partners, funding, resources, attention.	Operate independently with no systematic connection.	Ad-hoc networking and sharing of information.	Discrete activities or projects as needed. Often informal.	Deliberate effort to adjust and align activities with each other to enhance outcomes or impact.	Long-term relationship based on shared objectives, decision-making, risk taking and resource contribution.	Sustainable, co-created relationships, shared vision, plans and programs. May involve co-locating, shared staff and systems.
		<i>For example: Stations share information while at industry events.</i>	<i>For example: Stations organise a shared presentation at a conference.</i>	<i>For example: Stations share equipment and other resources in times of need.</i>	<i>For example: Stations pursue joint funding and contribute discreet resources to develop and produce ongoing programming together.</i>	<i>For example: Independent stations re-organise under shared management.</i>

Collaboration has become increasingly important for success in a changing and resource-constrained environment.<sup>7</sup> Strategic alliances can allow organisations to create a more comprehensive network of support and leverage their limited resources. For example, by combining various administrative functions and overhead expenses, community broadcasters can realise economies of scale and use collaboration as a strategy for reducing costs.

*“We can’t operate as an island anymore... There is strength in sharing resources and audience generating opportunities.” – Sector representative*

*“There are many opportunities in collaborating to share and promote content and getting technical support across the sector. [...] work on issues that are too big to build/solve for one organisation.” – Sector representative*

This study found the importance of sector organisations in supporting collaboration and resource sharing among community broadcasters. Sector organisations hold a deep understanding and high-level perspective of issues at station level and have established trust among constituents and are therefore able to connect organisations with a similar or related mission. The relationships and resources from

<sup>5</sup> Adapted from Partnership Brokers Association <https://www.partnershipbrokers.org/> and The Partnering Initiative <https://thepartneringinitiative.org/>

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (2011) Characteristics of a Safe and Resilient Community Based Disaster Risk Reduction Study, ARUP International Development.

these organisations support stations and may allow stations to maintain a focus on the day-to-day. The alliances formed between stations and sector organisations is an important relationship for stations.

*“The sector is fractured, and there are power politics in play. There is no cooperation, but a lot of duplication and the reason for that is policy positions and not getting collaboration money to do things together.” – Sector representative*

The diversity of the sector is a necessary and appropriate reflection of the audiences served. However, this very diversity can restrict collaborative ability. In a resource-constrained environment with competitive funding arrangements, the differences between stations or constituencies can seem more important than their similarities.

## 3.2 A future-aware station

Resilient organisations are better able to react quickly to changing environments when they have an awareness of the contexts in which they are operating as well as the associated risks. In this context, risk can be understood as “those events which are not planned for, might never have been experienced by an organisation before or where the consequences are significantly greater than assessed.”<sup>8</sup>

This awareness supports organisations to become ‘change ready’ which includes preparedness to respond to the early warning signs of crisis, both internal and external to the organisation. This includes appropriately aligning their organisational objectives and allocating attention and resources.<sup>9</sup>

Importantly, becoming future-aware includes an understanding that past activities may not be sufficient to respond to current and future changes. Additionally, perception bias – discounting or minimising the potential for future scenarios - may be a risk in and of itself.<sup>10</sup>

A solid business model will include an awareness of future scenarios and risk planning.<sup>11</sup> A strategic plan should reflect an understanding of the factors most likely to influence the health of the organisations. This should also include contingency planning<sup>12</sup>, such as the establishment of an emergency fund, or plans to re-allocate existing resource to respond to changing conditions.

*“[A] resilient sector is staying ahead, driving and shaping and has the capacity to meet audiences where they are.” – Sector representative*

In the face of a rapidly changing media environment and increased listening options, stations have to be forward-thinking and integrate information about future conditions (technology, audience habits, risk and opportunity etc.) into planning and decision making.

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<sup>8</sup> Commonwealth of Australia (2016). Organisational Resilience Good Business Guide.

<sup>9</sup> Institute of Community Directors. Establishing a context for risk management help sheet. Accessed 30 January 2022. <https://communitydirectors.com.au/help-sheets/establishing-a-context-for-risk-management-in-your-organisation>

<sup>10</sup> Commonwealth of Australia (2016). Organisational Resilience Good Business Guide.

<sup>11</sup> Barr, K. (2017) 8 Lessons from the Front Lines of Nonprofit Arts Management. Propel Nonprofits Accessed 9 February 2020 <https://www.propelnonprofits.org/blog/8-lessons-from-the-front-lines-of-nonprofit-arts-management/>

<sup>12</sup> Our Community, Financial Management and your community group, help sheet. Accessed 9 February, 2020 <https://communitydirectors.com.au/help-sheets/financial-management-and-your-community-group>

*“The future is having audio and video interchangeable.” – Sector representative*

To be future-aware, stations need to understand the changing audience habits better to stay relevant. Stations will also need to consider the changing landscape for funding sources and the risks of over-reliance on any single source or process. They also need to ensure they have the right equipment and staff that can operate new technologies. This will enable stations to build a multiplatform presence that responds to changing future audience habits.

### 3.3 A well-led station

Strong governance practices are an essential component to establishing resilience among organisations, covering areas such as leadership, decision-making, staff engagement, board structure, strategic planning, and financial management.

Effective leadership is central to the strength of organisations and the sector. Good leadership promotes unified, flexible and adaptive responses to challenges. In an environment of effective leadership, board members and management align big picture view with day-to-day operations, developing and executing the station’s vision and setting the tone and the culture for the station. Having a strategic plan steers a station to implement the vision as it identifies goals, resources, activities, and measures of success.

*“Leadership [is] being able to steer organisations in the right direction, being financially viable and having the right people with the right skills.” – Sector representative*

Research shows the health and function of community organisations are heavily influenced by governance structures. A common pitfall for stations is to focus their energy and resources responding to essential needs and de-prioritise station governance. It’s crucial that leadership understands and has structures and strategies to build stations that are financially and operationally fit.

Aligning the skills of leadership, staff and board roles lays the foundation for strong management and oversight of governance. Best practice examples recommend that restructure of staffing may be necessary to accomplish this.<sup>13</sup>

*“Skills in the management of the station is important for the sustainability of the organisation...” – Station representative*

*“Management should be focusing on operations and the board on governance. Managers shouldn’t be governing.” – Station representative*

A common challenge for many stations is a reliance on volunteer services, which may not guarantee a qualified pool of candidate options, and a lack of funding to adequately remunerate skilled staff – particularly in areas of the highest importance to the strategic imperative to the stations.

*“[When considering paid staff, I consider] ... how to directly influence financial sustainability of the station. How does this role help to generate income?” – Sector representative*

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<sup>13</sup> O’Keeffe, M., Lamshed, R., and Melzer, D. (2018). Station review generic summary. Binary Blue

Some stakeholders indicated that stations which employ a mix of both paid and volunteer staff might experience tensions that may arise between the volunteer and paid staff. This tension may be particularly pronounced for stations which introduce paid staff alongside legacy volunteers.

*“Volunteer radio stations [are now applying] for salary [positions]. The response can be: how come this person is getting money and I’m not?”*

*– Sector representative*

Boards are another critical consideration for the successful contribution and development of successful governance. Our Community provides an overview of board governance models and expectations for a range of board types, each with unique considerations.<sup>14</sup>

For successful performance, a board should be structured to add value to an organisation.<sup>15</sup> Analysis from the literature and stakeholder engagement shows four key aspects in high-value boards:

- align members’ skills with strategy, mission and audience
- provide induction and training processes
- assign portfolios and establish KPI’s
- review performance.<sup>16</sup>

*“There is a difference between operational and governance...Pushing the board out of the day to day operations is important ...”*

*– Station representative*

### 3.4 A learning station

An important component for resilience is building on experience and integrating it with existing knowledge to inform future actions. Resilient stations are flexible, adapt to long-term trends and create a learning culture to share knowledge and expertise, address common issues and challenges and realise shared opportunities.

*“Understanding what transition is and how to adapt to it. Doing more with less.”*

*– Sector representative*

A critical factor that influences organisations’ adaptive resilience is the extent to which learning occurs in the organisation. Organisations with a learning culture are faster at understanding the new setting, making better-informed decisions and adapting more rapidly to the changing environment. A genuine learning culture requires both individual and organisational learning. It requires leaders who are open to learning and change in their own lives, and who promote learning among their staff.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Our Community. Governance Models for Community Groups: Help Sheet. Accessed 17 December 2020

[https://www.ourcommunity.com.au/financial/financial\\_article.jsp?articleId=2334](https://www.ourcommunity.com.au/financial/financial_article.jsp?articleId=2334)

<sup>15</sup> Australia Council for the Arts, Essential governance practices for arts organisations. Accessed 18 December 2020 <https://www.australiacouncil.gov.au/workspace/uploads/files/essential-governance-practices-for-arts-organisations.pdf>

<sup>16</sup> O’Keeffe, M., Lamshed, R., and Melzer, D. (2018). Station review generic summary. Binary Blue

<sup>17</sup> Walker B, et al. (2019). Becoming Agile, A Guide to Building Resilience. Resilient Organisations. Accessed 11 February 2020 <https://www.resorgs.org.nz/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/Becoming-Agile-Building-Adaptive-Resilience.pdf>

The research identifies three building blocks needed for a culture of learning:<sup>18</sup>

- a supportive learning environment
- defined learning processes and practices
- leadership that reinforces learning.

*“Skills at management level such as mentoring, mutual learning are needed... Facilitating cross-pollination of experience.” – Station representative*

Creating a culture of learning also includes documenting knowledge and making it accessible throughout the organisation to socialise internal and external expertise and lessons learnt.

As noted earlier, past activities may not be sufficient to respond to current and future changes. As such, gaining new insights and training staff and volunteers in new methods of operating are of great importance to stations. With constraints in time and resources, sector organisations are seen to provide essential services, including access to learning assets.

However, this is not to discount the legacy knowledge and understanding established within organisations. In several instances, interviews highlighted tensions between the existing knowledge and practices being essential to the resilience of stations. In contrast, others felt that a complete refresh is necessary for the health of the organisations. It will be important to strike a balance between legacy knowledge and innovation.

*“It’s about time these old people get out and make a place for young people. It’s an attitude that could have big consequences for organisations” – Sector representative*

### 3.5 An appropriately resourced station

Resilient organisations are financially and operationally fit with sufficient income from a diverse range of sources. They understand the resources needed, such as the skills and experience of staff, or funding streams and allocate them strategically.

The sector is largely independently funded, with national averages reflecting three-quarters of total revenue generated through fundraising, sponsorship, member and subscription fees. The remaining quarter of the sector’s total funding is via grants, including Federal, State and local government grants, philanthropic organisations and educational institutions.<sup>19</sup>

While sponsorship is reported to be the primary source of income for community broadcasting stations, comments during interviews indicated the changes in grant funding structures over time have created undesirable implications for station resource management. For stations who operate with little ability to enact strategy due to extremely limited resources, the process of competing for funding and the lack of flexibility in grant funding may compromise their operational capacities.

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<sup>18</sup> Gavin, D.A., Edmondson, A.C and Gino, F. (2008). Is Yours a Learning Organisation? Harvard Business Review.

Accessed 12 February 2020 <https://hbr.org/2008/03/is-yours-a-learning-organization>

<sup>19</sup> Community Broadcasting Association of Australia (CBAA) (2019). Community Broadcasting Sector. Financial Health of Community Radio Survey. For the 2016-17 Financial Year. Conducted by Survey Matters.

*“20 years ago, the government sold broadcast infrastructure... Untied money turned into tied money and became an issue.” – Sector representative*

Stations are struggling and need to diversify their income sources to achieve financial sustainability. Other sources of income, such as fundraising are increasingly important to generate income. Fundraising revenue trended up from 15% in 2007-2008 to 22% in 2016-2017.<sup>20</sup> However, fundraising requires higher levels of skills to produce successful campaigns. Successful fundraising efforts often rely on the skills, time and commitments of paid staff; however, forty-five per cent of stations do not have any paid staff, making it very difficult for stations to concentrate on fundraising and development activities.<sup>21</sup>

*“Sponsorship is going down due to Facebook and Google advertising. Donation revenue is trending up, which is good for community-based organisations, but that requires a higher level of skill. You must have an integrated campaign and be on social media to get your message across. How could you get skills to do that when there is a high turnover of volunteers/staff in radio stations?” – Sector representative*

Having sufficient human resources that are equipped with the right skills and equipment enables stations to increase their financial resources and meet their audience’s needs.

### 3.6 A representative station

Community broadcasters serve their community in meaningful ways which commercial broadcasting organisations cannot. They represent local geographic communities or special interest communities, such as indigenous, art, faith, and their interests – particularly those not typically represented in mainstream media. Successful representation requires understanding the audience and their changing habits and curating content that is relevant for them.

*“It is important to reflect on the need for a unified message, but honour stations’ diversity.” – Sector representative*

It is not only academics who see community radio in terms of empowerment and a source of cultural maintenance and local information; community radio consistently sees these aims as integral to its existence.<sup>22</sup> Hence, individual stations must consistently express localism to reflect the diverse communities within Australia. At the same time, the sector as a whole must work on a unified voice that expresses the sector’s purpose and explain their role. Having a unified voice will enable the sector to represent diverse communities through coordinated advocacy activities.

*“The more you are focused on your community, the more resilient you become. Eclectic stations have difficulty growing listenership because the content is not relevant to all.” – Station representative*

<sup>20</sup> Community Broadcasting Association of Australia (CBA) (2019). Community Broadcasting Sector. Financial Health of Community Radio Survey. For the 2016-17 Financial Year. Conducted by Survey Matters. Accessed on 24 January 2020 <https://www.cbaa.org.au/sites/default/files/media/CBA%202017%20Financial%20Health%20of%20Community%20Radio%20Survey%20FINAL.pdf>

<sup>21</sup> CBA, submission no. 61, p. 10.

<sup>22</sup> Jolly, R. (2014). Media of the people: broadcasting community media in Australia. Research paper series 2013-2014, Parliament of Australia. Accessed on 12 February 2020 [https://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/download/library/prspub/3087187/upload\\_binary/3087187.pdf;fileType=application/pdf](https://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/download/library/prspub/3087187/upload_binary/3087187.pdf;fileType=application/pdf)

The Community Radio Broadcasting Codes of Practice states that it is a station's responsibility to have written policies and procedures in place that promote diversity and encourage community participation.<sup>23</sup> Practising two-way communication and consultation with their communities of interest is vital in ensuring the relevance of community broadcasters. Whilst catering for local audiences is important, stations should also be representative of the community they service and have a diverse workforce.

*“Responding to community is fundamental. Boards should be representative of the diversity of the community.” – Station representative*

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<sup>23</sup> Community Broadcasting Association of Australia (CBA) (2008). Community Radio Broadcasting Codes of Practice.

## 4. Resilience horizons

The model of resilience presented above identifies the range of characteristics that, together, embody resilience. While individual stations responses to any situation may vary, all stations can anticipate facing two distinct resilience ‘Horizons’ with distinct challenges influencing all community broadcasters. The aspects identified in each section below will set shared priorities across all stations in each circumstance.

*“Stations may have similar challenges, but solutions are all different.”*  
– Station representative

From this foundation, consideration can be given to how other aspects may shape a strategic response, thus reflecting the unique needs of different organisations. These needs may be shaped by various factors, such as location, the maturity of the station and ease of access to resources.

### 4.1 Resilience Horizon 1: Short term disruption

The first, ‘Horizon 1’ is marked by rapid-onset, often unpredictable disruptions. The recent bushfires and COVID crises are two recent examples. Though nothing can fully prepare a station for these types of shocks, the ability to respond quickly to support themselves and the communities they serve and maximise efficiencies can help alleviate the stress created by these scenarios. The aspects outlined below indicate the basic elements of a response by stations of all kinds.



Figure 3: Aspects of resilience, Horizon 1

To establish resilience in these circumstances, stations will need to be:

- **Well-led:** Stations need the leadership to drive strategy in response to identify future needs.
- **Appropriately resourced:** Stations need easy access to both financial and non-financial resources to apply strategies to navigate these disruptions effectively.



- **Representative:** In circumstances such as the recent bushfires, community broadcasters provide important community services. To fulfil this role, stations must listen to and respond to the needs of the community of interest.
- **Connected:** Staying connected to sector and partner resources helps enables stations to leverage resources of one another amidst disruptions.

## 4.2 Resilience Horizon 2: Adaptation to structural change

The second resilience horizon, ‘Horizon 2’, is characterised by predictable, structural changes that occur over an extended period. These may include changes in:

- Technology (for example: the shift from FM to digital)
- Media ownership
- Audience consumption habits (streaming, podcasts, etc.)
- Regulatory environment
- Generational shifts
  - Listener demographics
  - Volunteer/Management demographics



**Figure 4: Aspects of resilience, Horizon 2**

Stations will need to develop strengths to cultivate long-term thinking and apply strategies to adapt to changing circumstances. These aspects typically include:

- **Future aware:** the will, capability and capacity to engage in future scanning activities. This enables them to understand and plan for long term transitions.
- **Learning:** the ability to embed learnings around preparedness for change.
- **Representative:** Responsive to the needs and habits of their community and audience.

## 5. Current granting approach

In 2014, CBF started the process to revise its organisational structure and governance arrangement to better manage and distribute funding to community broadcasters.<sup>24</sup> These changes, completed in 2016, resulted in a revised grant strategy that established three distinct granting streams: Development & Operations (D&O), Content, and Sector Investment. These three granting streams intended to create a more applicant-focused and demand-driven process. Table 1 outlines the features of the current granting streams, including Quick Response grants, which are available at any point for unanticipated changes or opportunities.

In 2018, CBF allocated 418 grants to 223 organisations with a worth of \$16,877,164 in total (Figure 5). The majority of the grants were funded to Sector Investment (44%) followed by Development & Operations (38%) and Content (19%).

While this distribution was not challenged by stakeholders, it can be expected that a greater focus on investing for longer-term resilience will see a higher proportion of funding distributed to activities likely to result in this, notably; strengthening governance, building community, sustainable operations and technical capacity. These typically are considered Development and Operations Grants.

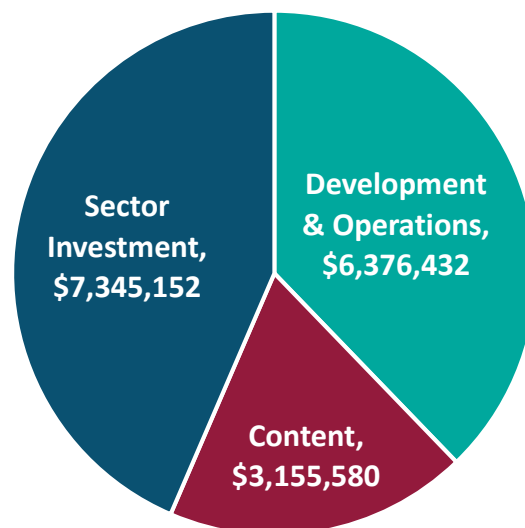


Figure 5: Total grant funds allocated in 2018

<sup>24</sup> Community Broadcasting Foundation (2016). Supporting a thriving sector: Introducing a new structure and governance model for the Community Broadcasting Foundation.

Table 1 CBF's grant streams

Grant stream	Content	Development & Operations	Sector Investment	Quick Response
<b>Grant description</b>	<p>Content grants support the development, production and distribution of content via Australian community broadcasters.</p> <p>Specialist Radio Programming funding falls under the category of content grants and is available to support ongoing ethnic, Indigenous and RPH programs. This funding requires applicants to submit a separate grant application.</p>	<p>Development &amp; Operations grants aim to support community media station resilience by strengthening governance, building community, sustainable operations and technical capacity.</p>	<p>Sector Investment grants aim to support leadership and development that has broad impact across the Australian community broadcasting sector.</p> <p>This fund will support sector coordination for sector organisations and sector-wide projects such as the Digital Radio Project, Amrap, CBOonline Project and the National Training Project.</p>	<p>Quick Response grants are available to support community media organisations experiencing emergencies that risk discontinued transmission or operations, or who are provided with a time-limited opportunity.</p>
<b>Limit of financial requests</b>	<p>No limit, however, proposals requesting more than \$50,000 must demonstrate financial contributions from other funding sources.</p>	<p>No limit, however, proposals requesting more than \$30,000 must demonstrate financial contributions from other funding sources.</p> <p>Organisations with an average annual income over the past three years greater than \$700,000 seeking support for core operations need to make an exceptional business case.</p>	<p>No specific limit.</p>	<p>No specific limit.</p> <p>Emergencies can apply for 100% of the financial cost of the project.</p> <p>Opportunities can apply a maximum of 50% towards the total financial cost of the project.</p>

Grant stream	Content	Development & Operations	Sector Investment	Quick Response
<b>Route to grant</b>	Competitive granting for General Content. Non-competitive for Specialist Radio programming.	Competitive granting.	Invite only.	Only available in exceptional cases.
<b>Grant rounds</b>	Two rounds, with the majority of grants allocated in round 1.	Two rounds, with the majority of grants allocated in round 1.	N/A	Available any time outside of open grant rounds.
<b>Length of funding arrangement</b>	One year, however some organisations are allocated multi-year funding.	One year, however some organisations are allocated multi-year funding.	No specific length. Length is project-based.	Outside of granting rounds, usually shorter term.
<b>Must demonstrate/ contribute to</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase community participation and diversity in community broadcasting and/or</li> <li>• Support creativity and excellence in content production.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Governance – strategic planning, technology planning, developing open and transparent governance policies and procedures, recruiting and maintaining a governance team with diverse skills and experiences.</li> <li>• Sustainable operations – improving the financial sustainability, and/or reducing the environmental impact of community media.</li> <li>• Building community – engaging the diverse members of your community.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Perceived need in sector.</li> <li>• Capacity to deliver.</li> <li>• Impact of activities for sector benefit.</li> <li>• Plan to evaluate success.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unexpected and urgent need that cannot wait until the next round and cannot be covered by organisations reserves.</li> </ul>

## 6. Recommendations: Proposed approach to granting for resilience

The following recommendations have been developed to inform CBF's granting strategies in a way that is responsive to the context of the individual station, minimises the investment in time and resources for both CBF and grant applicants, and ensures the grant investment produces positive impact on station resilience.

It is acknowledged that time, resources, and expertise will be needed to enact any changes; it is not expected nor recommended to commence all recommendations simultaneously. The priority for implementation based on an assessment of likely impact and ease of implementation are indicated below.

### 6.1 Align funding activities with aspects of resilience

Most current granting from CBF is currently conducted with a general expectation of supporting station resilience. However, it is often a fine line between "propping up" and "resilience". Further, resilience is difficult to detect and measure and is influenced by many factors. How can CBF know whether it is propping up organisations or building their resilience?

*The sector will benefit from a reduction in investment in activities which prop up stations and an increase in investment in activities which support stations to evolve, develop and adapt. This is the major opportunity for the sector.*

There is evidence of dependency on CBF grants for survival. While it is recognised that community broadcasting is not driven by commercial imperatives – and is therefore always likely to need subsidising – those subsidies would be better used to support evolution, development and adaptation rather than survival. The sector will benefit from a reduction in investment in activities which prop up stations and an increase in investment in activities which support stations to evolve, develop and adapt. This is the major opportunity for the sector.

The six aspects of resilience for community broadcasters detailed in Section 3 now provides an opportunity to more deliberately grant for resilience.

The D&O Grants Advisory Committee (DOGAC) draft Terms of Reference CBF currently sets out three evaluation measures to determine its success:

6. **Governance** – strategic planning, technology planning, developing open and transparent governance policies and procedures, recruiting and maintaining a governance team with diverse skills and experiences
7. **Sustainable operations** – improving the financial sustainability and reducing the environmental impact of community media
8. **Building community** – to better reflect diversity in community media

These evaluation measures relate to, but do not fully align with the resilience aspects identified. Further the targets and benchmarks for *Governance* and *Building Community* strongly reflect the importance of gender diversity in these areas. There is an opportunity to supplement these targets with other measures which more broadly focus on the factors which lead to station resilience.

Current practice	Recommendation	Anticipated impact	Priority
D&O grant decision-making principles are guided by DOGAC evaluation measures detailed in the DOGAC draft Terms of Reference.	<b>Review DOGAC Terms of Reference evaluation measures to better align with resilience aspects.</b> <b>Review DOGAC Terms of Reference targets to better align with resilience aspects.</b>	Determining success as improved station resilience (in all its forms) will focus investment in those areas.	High
Grant strategy is largely short term with grant terms of reference, evaluation measures and guidelines reviewed annually, but with minimal change from year to year. Strategy is broad to attempt to meet the needs of a diverse range of stakeholders and applicants	<b>Target granting towards activities which are more likely to lead to station resilience. This is likely to result in an increase of D&amp;O funding as a proportion of total funding. Build an understanding of this intent among grantees and other stakeholders.</b>	Build clarity of and alignment around CBF's approach to supporting station resilience for internal and external stakeholders.	High
Granting seeks to be responsive to sector needs rather than deliberative investment in resilience aspects.	<b>Identify aspects of resilience that can most readily be enhanced and focus on those aspect(s) for a limited time (nominally, one year).</b>	Build then scaffold resilience aspects across sector.	High
Multi-year funding is offered through Sector Investment, by invitation only. D&O and Content grants are eligible for multi-year funding only if similar activities have been supported in the previous year. New activities are not eligible.	<b>Track and report proportion of funding going to multi-year grants. Increase the proportion over next two years and seek to identify impact on station resilience.</b>	Stations are more likely to achieve success in multi-year endeavours with assurance of consistent funding. Release time and resources of annual grant applications to apply to project activities.	Moderate

Current practice	Recommendation	Anticipated impact	Priority
Measures of success tied to broad funding objectives	<b>Conduct annual assessment of station resilience. This can be done by combining objective data (e.g. overhead coverage) combined with subjective data such as the Self-reflection tool shown in Appendix A.</b>	Unify activities by creating a connection between funding objectives and resilience (potential to track over time).	Moderate
	<b>Grant for adaptive capacity (D&amp;O grants). These could take the form of specific grant rounds which are released to support stations to adapt to changing conditions. For examples, changes in:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• consumption habits</li> <li>• regulation and policy</li> <li>• Local market conditions</li> </ul>	A more deliberate approach will result in improved leadership skills needed to develop well-led stations.	Moderate

## 6.2 Simplify and clarify grant application process

Stations invest valuable time and energy into grant applications. Striving to continue building user-friendliness into the application process can reduce the burdens of both CBF and applicants. This includes thoughtfulness for grants that are easy to access, clear in expected information and decision-making criteria, and align investment in application with potential rewards.

Current practice	Recommendation	Anticipated impact	Priority
Questions that are not used in grant-making decisions are mixed with decision-making criteria in grant applications.	<b>Clearly distinguish between questions used for decision-making purposes and non-weighted items.</b>	Improves transparency and understanding of how application information will be used.	High
Grant applications for \$10,000 or less have fewer application and	<b>Review application process for opportunities to reduce application</b>	Reduce efforts in the application process for both CBF and stations.	High

Current practice	Recommendation	Anticipated impact	Priority
reporting requirements.	<b>burden for applicants. Application process should be equally accessible in consideration of the diversity of skills of applicants.</b>		
Stations can apply for quick response grants at any time for unexpected changes or opportunities. Expected response is within 1 week. Eligibility is determined through discussion with CBF.	<b>Develop simplified guidance and process for stations to access quick response financial support.</b>	CBF and stations can more easily cope with short term shocks and have an agreed process to administer them.	Moderate

### 6.3 Support the development of emergency reserves

Emergency reserves are financial resources to be used exclusively for emergency scenarios. Holding emergency reserves support organisations’ ability to respond to Horizon 1 scenarios including CBF itself. A review of the existing regulatory limitations for maintaining financial reserves should be pursued, with efforts to amend, if necessary.

Current practice	Recommendations	Anticipated impact	Priority
CBF’s financial reserve is the result of incidental financial surplus.	<b>Establish deliberate emergency reserves at a level agreed by the sector and funder.</b>	Improves CBFs ability to respond to station needs in response to short-term shocks.	High
Many stations operate with low levels of overhead coverage. Some may be struggling to remain solvent. CBF currently recommends stations develop emergency reserves in guidance documents.	<b>Establish guidelines for station solvency including number of month’s overhead coverage. Ask grantees to report on same.</b>	Stations are incentivised to plan for and develop emergency reserves. More resilience funding is retained at station-level.	Moderate



## 6.4 Support the development of localised or shared support structures

Stations have diverse characteristics and needs. Frequently, the individual needs or characteristics are shared by other stations through affinity groups (for example, Indigenous stations) or through a shared set of characteristics (for example, remote stations or high-risk stations). Developing support structures that recognise the features that bring stations together can help groups achieve common goals and amplify impacts of grant activities.

Current practice	Recommendation	Anticipated impact	Priority
Outside of formal radio networks, there is evidence of ad-hoc arrangements where stations share capability, volunteers, equipment etc. This results in resilience from mutual support.	<b>Prioritise grant rounds which support collaborations and local/regional support network development.</b>	Distributed networks of support create efficiencies of effort and supports greater stability through disruptions.	High

## 6.5 Develop cultures of resilience

Though CBF's grants are an important element establishing station resilience, they are, on their own, not sufficient to produce the desired results. To unlock the full potential for resilience requires the cultivation of cultures of resilience; alignment between actors working together to establish shared understanding, capabilities, and norms to collectively work toward shared goals. The efforts of stations should be matched with participation and coordination of sector leaders.

Current practice	Recommendation	Anticipated impact	Priority
Existing tools and resources cover general topics and are available from multiple sources. For example: CBF guides, CBAA resources library	<b>Fund the development and marketing of additional resources for stations to self-direct resilience planning materials.</b> <b>For example: crisis toolkits, resilience self-reflection tools.</b>	Organisations developing tools and stations using them develop shared understanding of how to think, plan, and act for resilience.	High
The prevailing rhetoric in this sector is one of scarcity.	<b>Support sector-wide conversations and understanding of resilience.</b> <b>For example: conference sessions, standing agenda items</b>	Creates consistency of approach and understanding at interaction points. Build common language when speaking outside of sector, such as	High

Current practice	Recommendation	Anticipated impact	Priority
	<b>at CBAA roundtable and other cross-sector meetings.</b>	advocating for Government support.	
	<b>Implement consistent annual resilience reporting among sector actors</b>	Demonstrates progress on grant activities ability to support resilient stations. Encourages further discussion/analysis among stakeholders	<b>Moderate</b>

# Conclusion

The recommendations in this report outline opportunities for CBF to align their granting strategies to produce greater resilience in Australia's community broadcasters. It is noted, however, that while grant funding is clearly vital for the ongoing viability of stations, it is only one of many tools and processes that will be needed to produce station resilience.

*CBF's investments can enhance the ability for stations to develop individualised resilience mechanisms that reflect their unique values, audiences, and circumstances.*

Though the sector is comprised of organisations representing diverse viewpoints and positions, what is shared among them all is a desire to serve their communities through broadcasting. As CBF is a common touchpoint for community broadcasters, their influence, through their granting strategies, can be used as a lever to build resilience across the sector. CBF's investments can enhance the ability for stations to develop individualised resilience mechanisms that reflect their unique values, audiences, and circumstances. For this reason, the resilience model that informs the recommended strategies is presented with the intention to be shared with and adopted by others in the sector.

The approach taken in producing the recommendations is one that builds on CBF's decades of experience working with community broadcasters, listening to, and understanding their needs. The proposed recommendations seek to create shift in focus from stations 'competing' for funds, to stations demonstrating the ability to align activities with strategic goals to achieve resilience.

Applied well, these recommendations will help CBF to define and consolidate their role in building the future capacity of the sector, and strengthen CBF's ability to support the resilience, integrity and independence of the community broadcasting sector.

# Appendix A - Station Resilience Self-Reflection Tool

CBF Station Resilience Self-Reflection Tool			
Resilience category	What it means	Indicator	Measurement approach
A connected station	Connected: develop and foster relationships that can be leveraged to enhance the outcomes and impact of stations.	Our organisation is really good at building strong working relationships with other community broadcasting stations	Strongly agree - strongly disagree
		Our organisation has systems in place for sharing resources and knowledge with the broader community broadcasting sector	Strongly agree - strongly disagree
		Our organisation actively participates in industry groups and forums	Strongly agree - strongly disagree
A future aware station	Future aware: aware of operating context and potential risks. Are prepared to respond to early warning signs of internal and external crisis.	Our board or management committee regularly assess our risk	Strongly agree - strongly disagree
		Our organisation formally identifies and manages emerging threats and opportunities	Strongly agree - strongly disagree
		Our organisation has the ability to quickly change a normal business operation to respond to a crisis or disruptive event	Strongly agree - strongly disagree
A well-led station	Well-run: Governance practices promote unified, flexible and adaptive responses to challenges. Aligns operational practice strategic priorities with daily operations.	Our organisation is really well managed on a day to day basis	Strongly agree - strongly disagree
		Our board or management committee is highly effective	Strongly agree - strongly disagree
		Our organisation understands why it exists and what it is trying to achieve	Strongly agree - strongly disagree
A learning station	Learning: leverage existing knowledge, seeks out new approaches to inform future actions. Shares knowledge to address common issues and realise shared opportunities.	Our organisation does a good job of documenting new knowledge in a way that is accessible to the whole organisation	Strongly agree - strongly disagree
		Our organisation regularly provides high quality professional training opportunities for our staff and volunteers	Strongly agree - strongly disagree
		Our organisation has a really good learning culture	Strongly agree - strongly disagree
An appropriately resourced station	Appropriately resourced: Financially fit with adequate resources available from diverse sources to meet identified needs.	Our organisation is well-resourced	Strongly agree - strongly disagree
		Our organisation is not over-reliant on any particular income source	Strongly agree - strongly disagree
		Our organisation has adequate and available financial resources when needed to adapt to changing circumstances	Strongly agree - strongly disagree
		Our organisation maintains sufficient human resources to cope with unexpected change	Strongly agree - strongly disagree
A representative station	Representative: Use a clear understanding of their audience's interest and changing habits and curate relevant content and delivery methods. Organisational behaviour and broadcast content reflects cultural safety and appreciation of diversity.	Our organisation has adequate equipment for the foreseeable future	Strongly agree - strongly disagree
		Our community of interest is actively consulted and involved in developing the goals we are trying to achieve	Strongly agree - strongly disagree
		Our organisation supports a culture of two-way communication with our community	Strongly agree - strongly disagree
		Our organisation strongly represents the views of our community	Strongly agree - strongly disagree

# Appendix B - External models of resilience

Community organisations have developed resilience models. While the function and intent of these models may vary, their models offer themes that are applicable to community broadcasting. Three examples are described below to highlight similarities and points of departure.

## B.1 Australian Government Organisational Resilience Good Business Guide

In 2016 the Federal Government published this guide to support organisational resilience. This work provides a useful guide to three attributes of resilient organisations and 13 indicators. These are summarised below in Figure 6 **Error! Reference source not found..**

### Organisational resilience

#### Attributes and Indicators

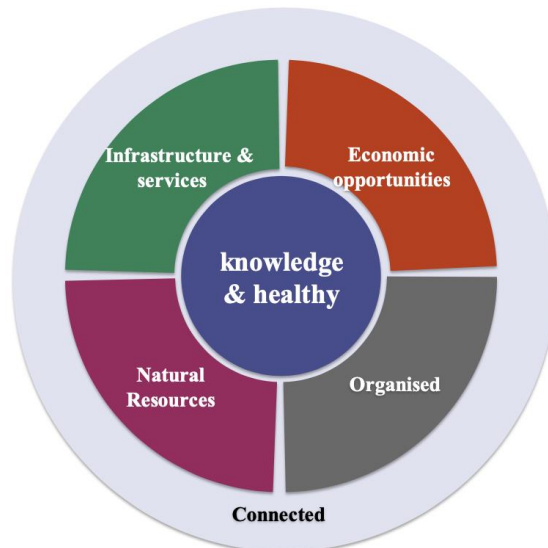


Figure 6: Attributes and indicators of a resilient organisation

The three attributes at the core of this model provide a useful base from which to examine resilience in the Australian community broadcasting context. Importantly, this example directly informs the framework provided later in this document in the areas of leadership (“a well-governed” organisation”), change readiness (“a future-aware station”) and networks and relationships (“a connected station”).

## B.2 The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

Commonly, resilience in the community context focus is viewed through the lens of environmental resilience. The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies identified six characteristics of a safe and resilient community; infrastructure and services, economic opportunity, natural resources, organisation, knowledge and health, and connectedness (Figure 7Error! Reference source not found.).<sup>25</sup>



**Figure 7: The Red Cross six characteristics of a safe and resilient community**

The Red Cross' model is beneficial because it contextualises resilience in the construct of a community: individual actors connected by common interests. Consideration for shared interests is useful when assessing the needs to maintain a healthy community beyond these individual actors and re-enforces the influence of community connections in establishing resilience.

<sup>25</sup> International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (2011). Characteristics of a Safe and Resilient Community. Community Based Disaster Risk Reduction Study, ARUP International Development.

## B.3 Resilient Organisations - Four factors influencing resilience

New Zealand-based Resilient Organisations identifies four key factors that influence the ability of an organisation to gain resilience through agility (Figure 8Error! Reference source not found.). These are:

- the extent to which the organisation values its employees
- the type of leadership, at senior and middle levels
- the extent of collaboration through internal and external networks
- the extent to which learning occurs in the organisation.

Agility is considered important in the field of resilience. It represents the capability of an organisation to respond to changing circumstances. Resilient organisations (among other things) can anticipate changing future conditions and have the right leadership and governance to adapt.



Figure 8: Resilient Organisations four factors influencing resilience

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