

Strategic Plan

2023-2027



AFAC acknowledges the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as Traditional Custodians of Australia and Māori, as the Tangata Whenua and Treaty of Waitangi partners in Aotearoa-New Zealand.



President's message



On behalf of the AFAC Board, I am pleased to introduce the AFAC Strategic Plan 2023 - 2027.

The creation of this Strategic Plan has afforded AFAC members an opportunity to be aligned like never before on aspects paramount to how we face the decade ahead.

In developing the Plan, interlocking challenges have informed our exploration on how to best serve AFAC members. Themes such as climate change, economic uncertainty and our shared need to develop a safe, capable and inclusive workforce to reflect changing demands and communities, are all central to our work ahead.

We've focused on further defining and evolving AFAC's primary role to deliver value to members by amplifying the collective capability and capacity of emergency management organisations. AFAC has always supported and propelled our collaboration

efforts and will continue to do so. In recent years, AFAC's capacity to deliver national capability services and workforce development has grown from strength to strength and we look forward to continuing this growth. And we are committed to generating new insight and continued high-quality knowledge sharing opportunities for members on a wide range of topics.

My gratitude to fellow Council and AFAC Board members, and to AFAC staff who have contributed to the development of this Plan. It is your continued commitment and passion that gives me confidence that we are on the right path, and that we will succeed in delivering this strategy.

Carlene York
Commissioner Carlene York APM
President, AFAC

CEO's message



I am pleased to present the AFAC Strategic Plan 2023-2027. This Plan defines our purpose, describes the strategic choices we have made and the outcomes we commit to delivering.

For thirty years, AFAC has played a key role in building a connected and capable emergency management system and sector across Australia and New Zealand. This remains our vision and our focus. We support our members every day to pursue and deliver their agreed and shared goals. We play a critical role in supporting AFAC National Council to achieve the fire and emergency services sector's Strategic Directions.

Our sector is responding to change on a number of fronts. Our communities are changing, their needs, their nature, and their expectations. Disasters are becoming more frequent, more severe, and ultimately more impactful.

Last but not least, emergency management agencies are changing, with an ageing workforce operating in a more complex environment and increasingly required to act as part of a national or international capability.

While AFAC has very much evolved over time, at our core we exist to amplify the work of emergency management in Australia and New Zealand. We stand as a sector in the face of change with a common goal of safer, more resilient communities.

Our greatest asset continues to be our people. The expertise and energy that AFAC's diverse staff selflessly bring to every initiative is inspiring. This Plan has been achieved with your collaboration and input, along with those of our Council members and of course our Board. I look forward to delivering it with you.



Rob Webb, CEO AFAC

Our Vision

Connected and capable emergency management.

Our Purpose

AFAC delivers value to our members by amplifying the collective capability and capacity of emergency management organisations. We enable connection, collaboration, and innovation. We work together to achieve better outcomes for our sector and advance the safety and resilience of communities.

Our Values

At AFAC, we want our core values to be lived experience. They guide all of our company's actions; they serve as our cultural cornerstones. They can never be compromised for convenience or gain.

Respect

We treat each other with fairness and kindness; and seek out diverse voices, experiences, genders, cultures and abilities to deliver our best work.

Teamwork

We work as a team at AFAC; support and care about each other; and work together to solve challenges and achieve AFAC's success.

Communication

We listen actively; share information transparently; and strive to be exemplars of great communication, internally and externally.

Results

We are clear on our purpose and priorities; add value for members in all that we do; aim for excellence; and celebrate our achievements.

Who we are

AFAC is an independent, member-based organisation dedicated to achieving connected and capable emergency management in Australia and New Zealand.

AFAC National Council comprises member organisations spanning fire, emergency service and land management organisations, who lead a paid and volunteer workforce of more than 288,000 people, supporting communities to be safer and more resilient.

AFAC also delivers services to, and on behalf of, emergency management organisations in Australia and New Zealand. AFAC also works in partnership with the Commonwealth Government and other domestic and international organisations supporting response, risk reduction and community resilience.



How we work

In all that we do at AFAC you'll see us focused on:

Value for members

Everything that we do is designed to bring value to our members. This value can be seen and felt through tangible and practical services and to more strategic actions that derive value over time.

We continuously mature our capability to measure value, and welcome opportunities to understand what matters most, and why.

Collaboration

Since our establishment by members in 1993, AFAC has sought to be a place for members to collaborate. To share ideas, experiences, build interagency relationships and develop shared doctrine and national consistency in emergency management

Collaboration is fundamental to how we work and is what today's members tell us they value most. As we continue to support and drive collaboration, our commitment to members is to offer high-impact, productive and contemporary collaboration models and services.

Innovation

AFAC members operate in dynamic, complex environments where their need to evolve and innovate is ever-present. We serve as a supporter, a catalyst and an enabler of needed-change, boosting the capability of our members to deliver shared projects and build best practice.

In addition to changes identified by members, core to our service is an eye on emerging innovation and development across different sectors nationally and internationally.

Key drivers

AFAC's work is guided by the AFAC National Council's Strategic Directions for fire and emergency services in Australia and New Zealand 2022-2026. A scan of our operating context and key drivers of change underpins Council's Strategic Directions, and so too, AFAC's focus[^].



Globally, our changing climate is influencing the frequency, scale and severity of disasters. Diverse communities across urban, regional and rural areas are directly and indirectly impacted.

The social, environmental and economic cost of disasters is significant, with the economic cost alone estimated to average \$38 billion each year in Australia^{^^}. The imperative for responsive, integrated emergency management capability, and investment in disaster risk reduction continues to rise.



To best prevent, prepare for, respond to and recover from emergencies, we draw upon a diverse ecosystem of communities, organisations and authorities. As the frequency and severity of events rises, our need to bring together previously discrete systems and to build better ways of working together also increases.

Our practices and networks must continue to evolve and respond to broader expertise, community-led initiatives, and emerging organisations and innovators in emergency management and disaster resilience.



The emergency management sector is not immune to changes in workforce norms and expectations. An ageing workforce, a compelling need to increase diversity, and changes in how people want to work and volunteer are some of our shared drivers across the sector.

In addition, the safety and wellbeing of people in our sector brings unique challenges and is a recognised AFAC National Council priority. We need tailored research, collaboration, and targeted strategies to deliver lasting workforce changes that benefit everyone.



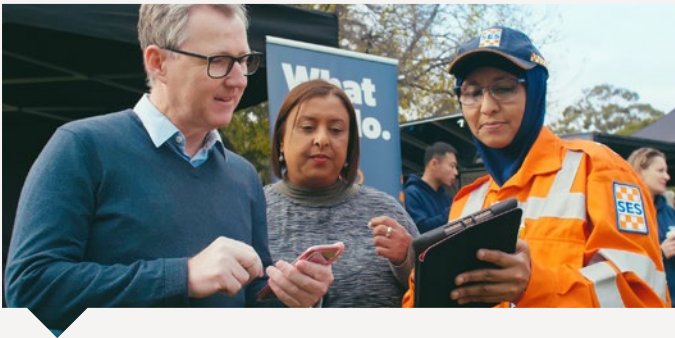
The potential and opportunity in emerging technologies and data-led insight is advancing at pace. For our members, this opportunity is being harnessed in myriad forms, from learning and development, to risk management, community resilience, preparedness and response strategies.

Critical precursors to better harnessing technologies and data include a shared need to scan and assess opportunities; understand the evidence, challenges and benefits of application; and, if warranted, build the case for investment.

[^]These drivers and others are further explored in Council's Strategic Directions

^{^^}Deloitte Access Economics 2021

AFAC National Council's Strategic Directions



DIRECTION 1

Supporting resilient communities through risk reduction



DIRECTION 2

Providing a trusted response



DIRECTION 3

Using credible and timely information and data



DIRECTION 4

Safe, capable and diverse workforce



DIRECTION 5

Informed by knowledge, innovation and research



DIRECTION 6

Effective and transparent governance

Our strategic priorities

Connecting with purpose

We provide outstanding services for the emergency management sector to connect, collaborate and innovate together. We serve as a trusted advocate to a wider ecosystem on matters of shared national interest.

- 1 Advance AFAC's model for collaboration and knowledge sharing services to maximise member value.
- 2 Serve as a valued and trusted sector advocate on agreed priority issues.
- 3 Deliver market leading events and conferences, generating opportunities for interaction, professional development and innovation.
- 4 Grow our reach through diverse strategic partnerships to deliver impactful national initiatives.

Developing national capability

We extend the collective capability of our members through the development of shared doctrine, practice, systems and standards. We support the sector to advance workforce competency and develop emerging leaders.

- 1 Advance national resilience and capability through improved development and acquisition of resources and national coordination of shared resources.
- 2 Develop and deliver national doctrine, systems and services that provide value to our members.
- 3 Support members to develop safe, capable and diverse workforces, and respond to emerging workforce needs.
- 4 Advance career development and professionalisation pathways for the sector, building and supporting current and future leaders.

Generating shared knowledge and insight

We provide tailored and trusted knowledge and insight to members, peers and diverse stakeholders across a broad emergency management ecosystem.

- 1 Increase horizon scanning for trends and emerging challenges, to provide timely advice on risk mitigation and new opportunities to explore.
- 2 Embed an evidence-based approach and integrate knowledge in all AFAC activities.
- 3 Grow our agility and capability to respond to sector needs and priorities with the provision of data-informed analysis and targeted evidence.
- 4 Support members to advance practice through translation and adoption of identified recommendations, lessons learned and new industry positions.

Providing a workplace to be proud of

We achieve value for members with a healthy culture and diverse, high performing team, supported by systems and processes to deliver reliable, outstanding results.

- 1 Commit to a safe, inclusive and diverse culture, seeking greater inclusion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, Māori, women, LGBTIQ+ and other under represented groups working for and with us.
- 2 Invest in our people, providing professional development opportunities for continuous learning and career pathing.
- 3 Build shared clarity of AFAC's value and success through a sustainable, transparent service model.
- 4 Advance systems and contemporary policies that build accountability and extend our capability.

Implementation and success

In addition to our strategic priorities, the following outcome statements guide our decision-making and approach to tracking success and performance over time. Implementation of the strategic plan will be delivered via detailed work programs with relevant performance indicators included.

Connecting with purpose

- ✓ Members feel a unique and valued connection with peers and partners.
- ✓ AFAC is a trusted advocate and voice on matters of national priority.

Developing national capability

- ✓ Members benefit from an enhanced capability to develop and deliver services.
- ✓ Members value programs and opportunities delivered by AFAC to develop their people and workforce.

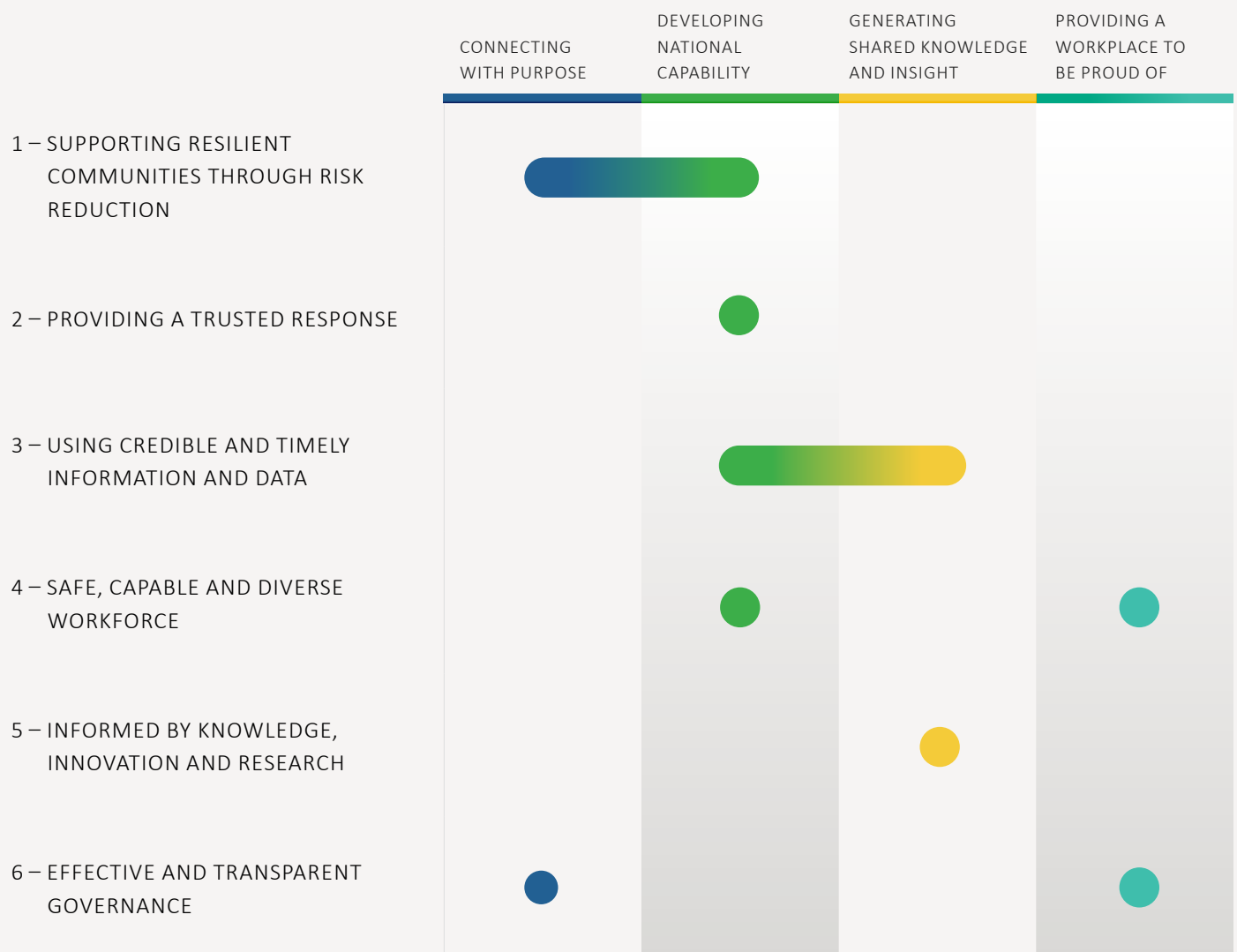
Generating shared knowledge and insight

- ✓ Members seek out and value AFAC's services to gather high-quality insight and to support the translation of research and knowledge into practice.
- ✓ AFAC contributes to a growing community of informed emergency management and disaster resilience practitioners.

Providing a workplace to be proud of

- ✓ AFAC is in a sound and sustainable financial position, with a forward-looking operating model, and measurable indicators on the experience of our people and our workplace culture.

Our strategic priorities are also mapped to AFAC National Council's Strategic Directions*



*Principal alignment shown. All pillars support multiple strategic directions.



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