Economic Growth after Extreme Weather Events

Margaret Abbey
Murrindindi Shire Council
Shire of Murrindindi

- Small Population – 13,600 residents
  - 9,500 rate assessments
- Large Area – 4,000 square kilometres
- Diverse Population
- Peri – Urban location
- Predominantly agricultural and tourism economic base
February 2009 Bushfires

- 95 lives lost
- 1,397 homes destroyed
- 75 shop fronts / businesses destroyed
- 40% of the municipality burnt
- $60 million of capital assets (public and private) destroyed
Area burnt 1,539 sq kms – 40% of shire area
Key Issues

• Support for business in timely relative to personal support
• Difficult to assess what has actually happened
• Disaster recovery agencies expenditure went outside the area
Key Issues continued

- Understand constraints upon eligibility for business assistance
- Donations limited local purchases
Key Issues continued

- Indirect impacts upon businesses need to be recognised
- High demand for goods and services inflates the cost
- Local employment options not utilised
- Contracts let outside the area
Key Issues continued

- Need for infrastructure to support the return of businesses
- Diversity of communities
MARYSVILLE SKI HIRE SHOP

OPEN 7 DAYS

* TOBOGGANS
* SKI EQUIPMENT
* PROTECTIVE CLOTHING
* SNOW BOOTS
* HATS & GLOVES
* ACCESSORIES
* SNOWPLAY PACKAGES
Lessons Learned

• Funding and programs need to reflect the diversity of business needs
• Community leaders need direct support
• Money is not the only solution to the problem – not all gifts are worth receiving
• Develop a Strategic Plan
Lessons Learned

• Create or Revitalise an Economic Leadership Group
• Engagement with decision makers is Essential
• Need to report, review and realign