Alternative Commonwealth Capabilities for Crisis Response, 2023

ANSWERS TO CRITICAL QUESTIONS

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Levite

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Discussion Paper Feedback

Content

"Response is not just about reacting to a crisis, but also about preparing for it, learning from it, and recovering'' from it"

INTRODUCTION:

Australia faces a more challenging future due to the increasing frequency, severity, complexity, and concurrency of natural disasters and other crises. These events pose significant risks to the lives, property, environment, and national interests of Australians. The current emergency management system relies heavily on the Australian Defence Force (ADF) to support state and territory-led response and recovery efforts, but this is not sustainable or desirable in the long term.

In response to the Commonwealth Government's plan to seek for feedbacks on how to develop alternative capabilities that can enhance and broaden Australia's response and recovery measures, while ensuring that the ADF can focus on its core functions relating to the defence of Australia and its national interests. I have presented below a robust response towards addressing the questions posed as I strongly hope that this submissions will inform policy development process and advice to Government on potential options.

1. Acknowledging the primary role of states and territories in emergency response, what longer-term capacities and capabilities does the Commonwealth need to develop to meet the challenges of the evolving strategic environment?

a. Advanced Technology Integration:
Investing in advanced technologies like AI, data analytics, and predictive modeling can improve disaster preparedness, response coordination, and resource allocation.

b. Updating Year 6-12 School Curriculum
Incorporating disaster preparedness education into the school curriculum for students in Year 6-12 in Australia can help foster a culture of resilience and readiness among the younger generation. Here are some key concepts and skills that could be taught at different grade levels:

Year 6-8:

1. Introduction to Natural Hazards: Students could be introduced to various natural hazards such as floods, bushfires, earthquakes, cyclones, and extreme weather events. They should understand the causes, risks, and impacts associated with each hazard.
2. Emergency Kit Preparation: Teach students the importance of creating an emergency kit with essential supplies like water, non-perishable food, first aid items, flashlights, and batteries. Explain how to maintain and update the kit.
3. Communication Strategies: Teach effective communication methods during emergencies, including the use of mobile phones, landlines, and alternative communication channels.
4. Family Emergency Plans: Encourage students to develop family emergency plans, including designated meeting places, contact information, and evacuation routes.
5. Basic First Aid: Introduce students to basic first aid skills like wound care, CPR, and assisting injured individuals. This could include both theoretical knowledge and practical demonstrations.

Year 9-10:

1. Risk Assessment: Teach students how to assess potential hazards in their surroundings, both at home and in their community. Discuss strategies to mitigate risks and enhance safety.
2. Community Resources: Introduce students to local emergency services, their roles, and how to access their assistance during a crisis. Highlight the importance of cooperating with authorities.
3. Digital Literacy in Emergencies: Teach students how to access and use reliable sources of information during emergencies, while avoiding misinformation and panic.
4. Advanced First Aid: Build on basic first aid skills and teach more advanced techniques like treating burns, fractures, and administering CPR.
5. Disaster Resilience: Discuss the concept of resilience and how individuals and communities can bounce back after disasters. Explore case studies of communities that have successfully recovered.

Year 11-12:

1. Emergency Management Systems: Provide an overview of Australia's emergency management systems, including the roles of federal, state, and local governments, as well as non-government organizations.
2. Crisis Communication: Delve deeper into effective communication strategies during emergencies, emphasizing the role of media, social media, and official channels.
3. Leadership in Crisis: Discuss leadership skills required during disasters, including decision-making, teamwork, and effective coordination of resources.
4. Psychological First Aid: Teach students how to provide psychological support to individuals affected by disasters, including recognizing signs of trauma and providing empathetic care.
5. Public Policy and Disaster Management: Explore how disaster management policies are formulated and their impact on communities. Discuss the role of advocacy in shaping effective disaster policies.

By incorporating these concepts and skills into the school curriculum, students will be better equipped to understand, respond to, and recover from various types of disasters. This education not only empowers them with life-saving knowledge but also contributes to building a more resilient society.

2. At a national level, what are likely to be the key pressure points or challenges for the Commonwealth responding to competing and concurrent crises?

a. Resource Allocation/Logistic Challenge

Resource Allocation Using Drones and Fast Technologies for Crisis Response:

1. Resource allocation during concurrent crises can be significantly enhanced through the use of innovative technologies like drones. Drones offer rapid deployment, real-time data collection, and the ability to access hard-to-reach areas, making them valuable assets in crisis response and resource allocation. Here's how drones and other fast technologies can address the challenges of resource allocation:
2. Rapid Assessment: Drones equipped with high-resolution cameras and sensors can be deployed to disaster-stricken areas for rapid aerial assessment. They can quickly gather data about the extent of damage, affected populations, and critical infrastructure, enabling authorities to prioritize resource allocation accurately.
3. Remote Resource Delivery: Drones can be employed to deliver essential supplies such as medical equipment, food, water, and communication devices to remote or inaccessible areas. This reduces the reliance on ground transportation, which might be hindered by damaged infrastructure.

4. Real-time Mapping: Drones can create real-time maps of disaster-affected areas, identifying areas of immediate concern and highlighting potential risks. This information aids in making informed decisions about where resources should be directed first.
5. Search and Rescue: Equipped with thermal cameras and sensors, drones can aid in search and rescue operations, detecting heat signatures of individuals trapped in collapsed buildings or hard-to-reach locations.
6. Communication Infrastructure: Drones can establish temporary communication networks by deploying communication relays in areas where traditional infrastructure has been disrupted. This ensures efficient coordination between response teams.

b. Volunteering and Workforce Fatigue
Redefining Volunteering and Introducing Compensation for Crisis Response:

As the demand for volunteers during concurrent crises increases and to alleviate volunteer fatigue, redefining volunteering and introducing compensation can be explored as this will also make more people to get involved. Redefining volunteering doesn't necessarily mean replacing the spirit of altruism but rather acknowledging the evolving nature of volunteering in crisis situations. Here's how it could be done:

1. Professional Volunteerism: Transition from traditional volunteer roles to a system of "professional volunteers" who receive training, compensation, and benefits. This acknowledges the critical role volunteers play and the demands of crisis response.
2. Flexible Commitments: Allow volunteers to choose flexible commitments based on their availability. Some might offer full-time availability, while others might contribute during weekends or after work hours.
3. Hybrid Model: Combine professional volunteers with traditional volunteers. This way, individuals who are motivated by altruism can contribute their time, while those seeking compensation can do so as well.
4. Specialized Roles: Introduce specialized roles that require certain skills, such as medical personnel, engineers, communication experts, and logistics coordinators. Compensation could be higher for these roles due to the specialized expertise required.
5. Tiered Compensation: Establish different compensation tiers based on the level of commitment and responsibilities. For instance, full-time professional volunteers might receive a higher compensation than those contributing part-time.

c. Communication Overload
One of the latest and affordable technologies that can address communication overload and maintain connectivity during crises when mobile and internet networks are affected is the use of LoRaWAN (Long Range Wide Area Network) technology. LoRaWAN is a low-power, wide-area networking protocol designed for long-range communication with minimal power consumption. It is particularly suitable for scenarios where traditional communication infrastructure is disrupted. Several advanced countries have been adopting LoRaWAN technology for v arious applications, including disaster response and resilience.

In Australia the adoption of LoRaWAN (Long Range Wide Area Network) technology presents a promising solution to address communication overload during crises when traditional mobile and internet networks are disrupted. While this technology holds potential, there are challenges specific to Australia that need to be considered for effective implementation and crisis management on a national scale.

ALTERNATIVE

Satellite-Based Communication: Utilize low Earth orbit (LEO) satellite constellations to establish reliable communication networks in areas where terrestrial infrastructure as an alternative to LoRaWAN. These satellites can provide global coverage and support data and voice communication.

Challenges in Australia:

1. Geographical Extremes: Australia's vast and diverse geography poses challenges for deploying and maintaining a LoRaWAN network across remote and harsh terrains, which may require additional infrastructure investment.
2. Regulatory Hurdles: The regulatory environment for unlicensed frequency bands used by LoRaWAN needs careful consideration to ensure compliance with local regulations and coordination with existing communication networks.
3. Power Supply: Some disaster-prone regions in Australia might have limited power availability, which could impact the operation of LoRaWAN gateways and devices in those areas.
4. Interference: In urban centers, potential interference from other wireless devices and networks could affect the reliability and coverage of the LoRaWAN network.

Improvement Strategies:

1. Network Resilience: Develop a network design that considers Australia's geographic challenges, focusing on gateway placement to ensure coverage in remote and disaster-prone areas.
2. Regulatory Advocacy: Collaborate with regulatory authorities to streamline approvals and spectrum allocation for LoRaWAN networks during emergencies, ensuring rapid deployment when needed.
3. Alternative Power Sources: Incorporate solar or battery backup solutions for LoRaWAN gateways in regions with unreliable power, ensuring network continuity during crises.
4. Hybrid Solutions: Consider a hybrid approach by combining LoRaWAN with other technologies like satellite communication to ensure coverage in areas where LoRaWAN may face limitations.
5. Public-Private Partnerships: Collaborate with private sector partners and technology providers to accelerate network deployment and share expertise in managing network challenges.
6. Community Engagement: Involve local communities and disaster management agencies in the planning and implementation of LoRaWAN networks, leveraging their insights and needs for effective crisis communication.

Case Scenario:

Challenge: A rural community in Australia is hit by a severe bushfire, disrupting traditional communication networks.

Solution: The community, in collaboration with local authorities and technology partners, deploys a LoRaWAN network. Gateways are placed strategically to cover the affected area.

Improvement: To enhance network resilience, solar-powered gateways are used, addressing power supply challenges. Community members are provided with LoRaWAN-enabled devices for communication.

Incorporating LoRaWAN technology into Australia's crisis management strategy requires a strategic approach that addresses the unique challenges posed by the country's geography and regulatory landscape. By overcoming these challenges through collaboration, innovation, and adaptable solutions, Australia can strengthen its national crisis management capabilities and improve communication during concurrent crises.

d. Infrastructure overload

Adaptive Infrastructure Design:

Australia faces the challenge of infrastructure overload during national crises, where the impact of one disaster exacerbates subsequent events. To remedy this issue and enhance crisis response and recovery, here are some innovative solutions that could be considered:

1. Modular and Resilient Infrastructure: Develop modular infrastructure that can be quickly assembled or disassembled based on the crisis at hand. For example, deploy modular bridges that can withstand floods and fires, ensuring essential transportation routes remain functional.
2. Dynamic Infrastructure Planning: Implement a dynamic infrastructure planning system that adapts to real-time data. Using IoT sensors and predictive analytics, this system would dynamically allocate resources and redirect infrastructure deployment to areas under immediate threat.
3. Dual-Use Infrastructure: Design infrastructure with dual-use capabilities. For instance, utility poles could serve as communication towers during crises, ensuring communication channels remain open even if traditional networks are affected.
4. Resilient Energy Distribution: Establish microgrids powered by renewable energy sources in disaster-prone regions. These resilient energy systems could ensure power availability for critical infrastructure during crises, minimizing disruptions.
5. Rapid Deployment Units: Develop pre-fabricated rapid deployment units that can be transported to disaster areas quickly. These units could include pre-built shelters, medical facilities, and communication hubs to alleviate immediate infrastructure strain.
6. Elevated and Flood-Resistant Infrastructure: Consider building elevated infrastructure, such as roads and buildings, in flood-prone areas. Elevated structures can reduce the risk of damage and disruption during flooding events.

By embracing these innovative solutions, Australia can build a more resilient and adaptive infrastructure landscape, better equipped to withstand the challenges posed by concurrent crises. Integrating technology, data-driven insights, and community participation will play a crucial role in enhancing crisis response, reducing infrastructure overload, and safeguarding communities.

3. How could the Commonwealth build community resilience and capability so they are better able to respond to and recover from national-level crises

Building community resilience and capability to respond to and recover from national-level crises is a complex endeavor that requires a multifaceted approach. The Australia Commonwealth can take several strategic actions to enhance community resilience and preparedness, as highlighted in the discussion paper:

a. Education and Awareness:

As earlier suggested Implement comprehensive educational programs in schools and communities to raise awareness about different types of crises, preparedness measures, and response strategies. This could include incorporating crisis management and disaster preparedness into the curriculum from an early age and also community training.

b. Digital Platforms:

One potential app that could be introduced to serve as a digital platform for crisis management, real-time information, alerts, and training in Australia is what I will call "ResilienceConnect." This app could combine

practical features with engaging elements to encourage widespread adoption and integration into daily lives. It could be included in Australian government platforms and apps. The community chat section of the app should be encouraged for social activities, patterned to rival Facebook and Twitter.

ResilienceConnect App Features:

1. Real-Time Alerts: The app would provide real-time alerts for various types of crises, such as natural disasters, health emergencies, and other critical incidents. Users could customize their notification preferences based on their location and interests.
2. Interactive Training Modules: The app would offer interactive training modules on essential skills for crisis response and preparedness. These modules could include first aid demonstrations, fire safety drills, and evacuation planning exercises.
3. Community Chat and Sharing: Users could join community-specific chat groups where they can share information, tips, and resources related to crisis management. This fosters a sense of solidarity and collaboration within neighborhoods.
4. Virtual Simulations: The app could feature virtual simulations of crisis scenarios, allowing users to practice their decision-making skills in a safe and engaging environment. This could be designed as a game-like feature.
5. Resource Hub: The app would host a resource hub with guidelines, checklists, and downloadable materials for creating personal emergency kits, developing family communication plans, and understanding different types of hazards.
6. Real-Time Information: Integrating weather and disaster data feeds would provide users with up-to-date information about ongoing events, enabling them to make informed decisions and take appropriate actions.

By merging practical features with gamification and incentives, the ResilienceConnect app could effectively engage everyday Australians in crisis management and preparedness activities. This approach could seamlessly integrate crisis management into their daily routines, fostering a culture of resilience and ensuring that the app becomes an essential tool in times of need.

c. **Crisis Exercises and Simulations:**
   Conduct regular crisis response exercises and simulations at the community level. These drills help identify gaps, improve coordination, and boost confidence in responding to emergencies.

d. **Community Resilience Grants:**
   Establish grants or funding mechanisms that communities can access to implement local resilience projects, such as building community shelters, improving communication networks, or creating disaster-resistant infrastructure.

e. **Research and Innovation:**
   Support research initiatives focused on understanding community vulnerabilities and effective ways to enhance resilience. Invest in innovative technologies and solutions that can aid communities during crises.

By adopting a comprehensive and collaborative approach that involves community members, educational institutions, government agencies, and private sector partners, the Australia Commonwealth can create a more resilient nation capable of responding to and recovering from national-level crises more effectively.

4. What changes in the current system are necessary to help Australia have the right capabilities and capacity to handle concurrent crises?

Several changes are necessary within the current system to bolster the nation's capabilities and capacity to effectively manage concurrent crises. To answer this question, I will use past case scenarios

a. Bushfires and Overwhelmed Resources

Previous Crisis: The 2019-2020 Australian bushfire season, commonly known as the "Black Summer," saw devastating bushfires across multiple states.

Shortcomings: The scale of the crisis overwhelmed firefighting resources, resulting in delayed response times, inadequate evacuation plans, and strained coordination between agencies.

Improvements:

Prepositioned Resources: Establish regional caches of firefighting equipment and personnel in high-risk areas, enabling quicker deployment during bushfires.

Technology-Enabled Communication: Use satellite imagery and drone surveillance to assess fire patterns and allocate resources more efficiently.

Community-Driven Evacuation Plans: Engage local communities in designing evacuation plans tailored to their specific needs and knowledge of local terrain.

b. Multi-Hazard Convergence

Previous Crisis: The year 2022 saw Australia grappling with concurrent crises: floods, cyclones, storms, cyberattacks, and ongoing COVID-19 impacts.

Shortcomings: The confluence of crises strained emergency services, communication systems, and resource allocation, leading to delayed responses and challenges in managing multiple fronts.

Improvements:

Integrated Crisis Communication Platform: Develop a unified digital platform for real-time information sharing among agencies and the public, enabling accurate updates during multi-hazard events.

Dynamic Resource Allocation: Utilize AI-driven algorithms to assess the severity of each crisis and allocate resources based on real-time data analysis.

Multi-Hazard Exercises: Conduct regular joint training exercises involving various agencies to simulate and prepare for concurrent crises.

c. Volunteer Fatigue and Sustainability

Previous Crisis: Declining volunteer numbers and fatigue among emergency responders during long-lasting crises, such as prolonged bushfire seasons.

Shortcomings: Volunteer organizations faced challenges in maintaining a consistent response due to burnout and the need for volunteers to juggle other commitments.

Improvements:

Compensation and Recognition: Introduce stipends or rewards for volunteers to compensate for their time and effort, encouraging more sustained involvement.

Flexible Commitment: Implement a flexible volunteer model where individuals can contribute based on their availability, reducing burnout risks.

Collaborative Networks: Develop partnerships with community groups, schools, and businesses to expand the pool of volunteers and share the responsibility.

By learning from these case scenarios and considering the improvements suggested, Australia can enhance its crisis management capabilities to better handle concurrent crises. The key lies in building resilience through technology integration, community involvement, resource optimization, and innovative solutions to address specific challenges faced during each crisis.

5. What models could the Commonwealth explore to replace or supplement support currently provided by the ADF during domestic crisis?

1. **Models to Replace or Supplement ADF Support:**
   - Paid Integrated Civilian Task Forces/Volunteers: Establish specialized task forces comprising experts from medical, engineering, logistics, and communication fields. These task forces could be mobilized during crises to provide targeted support.
   - National Crisis Reservists: Develop a pool of skilled individuals from various sectors who can be rapidly deployed during emergencies. This could include retired emergency responders, medical professionals, engineers, and IT specialists.

2. **The Right Mix of Commonwealth Capabilities:**
   - Technological Advancements: Utilize cutting-edge technologies like drones, AI, and satellite imaging to enhance situational awareness, response planning, and resource allocation.
   - Data-Driven Decision-Making: Implement advanced data analytics to predict crisis impacts, allowing for better resource allocation and more informed decision-making.

3. **Replicating Scalable Workforce Surge Capacity:**
   - National Emergency Volunteer Network: Establish a nationwide network of volunteers with specialized training to support emergency response, similar to the CERT (Community Emergency Response Team) model in the United States.

4. **Harnessing Volunteers and Civilian Groups:**
   - Community Resilience Champions: Empower local leaders and volunteers with training and resources to educate communities on disaster preparedness, response, and recovery.

5. **Supplementary Models to State and Territory Levels:**
   - Coordinated Crisis Management Centers: Develop regional centers that connect with state and territory agencies, enabling seamless information sharing, resource allocation, and collaboration during crises.

6. **Role of Industry/Private Sector and Attracting Investment:**
   - Private Sector Partnerships: Encourage businesses to invest in emergency management through tax incentives, allowing them to contribute specialized resources and expertise.
   - Public-Private Innovation Hub: Establish a platform where private sector innovation can be harnessed to create new technologies and solutions for crisis response.

7. **Gaps in State and Territory Emergency Management:**
   - Interagency/Community Collaboration Enhancement: Develop platforms that facilitate real-time information sharing among state and territory agencies, enabling more coordinated responses.
   - In examining international examples, countries like Japan have established comprehensive disaster management agencies, utilizing technological advancements and partnerships with private companies to enhance crisis response. Additionally, the United States' CERT program demonstrates the effectiveness of community-based volunteer networks in disaster management.

Engaging local communities in disaster resilience is crucial. Public service delivery through digital education platforms, security systems, collaborative tools, and other sectors like finance and transport can leverage community involvement. Empowering communities with knowledge, skills, and technology will be a cornerstone of Australia's future crisis management strategy.

6. Are there sectors that could replicate the capabilities provided by the ADF?

There is a need for capabilities beyond the Australian Defence Force (ADF) to manage concurrent crises effectively. Other sectors can play crucial roles in crisis management. Here are examples of sectors that could replicate ADF capabilities, drawing inspiration from other countries and proposing innovative options:

1. Medical and Healthcare Sector: Replicating Capabilities: In the United States, the National Disaster Medical System (NDMS) involves healthcare professionals who are organized to respond to medical needs during disasters. Innovative Use: Create mobile medical units equipped to handle emergencies, offering immediate medical assistance and triage during crises. Form partnerships with medical institutions to provide specialized medical support.

2. Telecommunications and Tech Sector: Replicating Capabilities: In Sweden, the Emergency Social Media Management initiative leverages technology companies and social media platforms to disseminate official information during crises. Innovative Use: Develop a crisis communication platform utilizing AI, chatbots, and social media integration to provide real-time updates, answer queries, and share vital information with the public.

3. Energy and Utilities Sector: Replicating Capabilities: In Japan, utility companies collaborate with emergency services to ensure continuity of essential services during disasters. Innovative Use: Establish rapid response teams within energy companies to repair critical infrastructure swiftly. Explore the use of renewable energy sources to create microgrids for communities during crises.

4. Transportation and Logistics Sector: Replicating Capabilities: In the Netherlands, transportation companies collaborate with authorities to provide evacuation support and transportation during floods. Innovative

Use: Create a network of transportation companies willing to provide emergency transportation, such as evacuating vulnerable populations or delivering essential supplies to affected areas.

5. Educational and Research Institutions: Replicating Capabilities: In Canada, universities participate in disaster research and provide expertise to guide response efforts. Innovative Use: Establish a network of universities and research institutions to contribute specialized knowledge, data analysis, and predictive modeling to inform crisis response strategies.

6. Agricultural and Rural Sector: Replicating Capabilities: In New Zealand, rural communities are integrated into disaster response and are often the first to provide aid. Innovative Use: Mobilize agricultural communities to provide resources like food, shelter, and livestock management during crises. Develop agricultural practices that enhance community resilience.

7. Volunteer and Community Organizations: Replicating Capabilities: In Germany, volunteer fire departments are a vital part of disaster response efforts. Innovative Use: Strengthen and expand volunteer organizations to encompass various crisis response roles beyond firefighting, such as medical support, search and rescue, and communication outreach.

8. Private Sector Alliances: Innovative Use: Foster alliances between companies in various sectors to form a comprehensive crisis management consortium. Companies could share resources, expertise, and coordination during multi-hazard events. The key is to tap into sectors with relevant expertise, resources, and willingness to contribute to national crisis management efforts. Innovative use of these sectors can create a holistic and adaptive approach to handling concurrent crises, enhancing Australia's overall resilience.

9. Cultural and Indigenous Communities: Innovative Use: Collaborate with Indigenous communities to integrate traditional knowledge and practices into crisis management strategies. Indigenous elders and cultural leaders can provide insights into local conditions and effective responses.

10. Environmental Conservation Organizations: Innovative Use: Engage environmental groups to support disaster response by leveraging their expertise in habitat restoration, ecosystem management, and natural resource preservation.

11. Professional Associations and Guilds: Innovative Use: Partner with professional associations representing various industries, such as engineering, architecture, and construction, to provide specialized skills and resources for crisis response and recovery efforts.

12. Retail and Supply Chain Sector: Innovative Use: Collaborate with retail chains and supply chain companies to assist in distributing relief supplies, establishing distribution centers, and facilitating efficient supply chain operations during crises.

13. Sports and Entertainment Industry: Innovative Use: Utilize stadiums, event venues, and entertainment companies to host temporary shelters, provide volunteers, and engage the public in awareness campaigns during crises.

14. Financial and Insurance Sector: Innovative Use: Establish crisis response funds, backed by financial institutions, to provide immediate financial support to affected communities and expedite recovery efforts.

15. Cross-Sector Partnerships: Innovative Use: Forge cross-sector partnerships that involve a diverse range of industries collaborating on crisis management. This approach can leverage unique strengths from each sector and create comprehensive solutions.

By exploring sectors beyond the traditional defense sector, Australia can tap into a diverse pool of resources, expertise, and innovative solutions to effectively manage concurrent crises. The key is to identify sectors with relevant capabilities, foster collaboration, and integrate their contributions into a cohesive crisis management framework. This approach reflects a whole-of-society approach, where each sector plays a pivotal role in ensuring the resilience and preparedness of the nation.

What are the critical functions the Commonwealth Government should continue to perform in disaster relief and recovery, in support of local, state and territory governments?

To further enhance Australia's disaster relief and recovery capabilities during concurrent crises, the Commonwealth Government could consider implementing or further perform the following critical functions;

1. Crisis-Responsive Tech Innovation Hub: Establish a dedicated hub that brings together tech innovators, startups, and researchers to develop cutting-edge solutions for crisis management. This hub could focus on creating AI-driven tools, predictive modeling algorithms, and advanced communication platforms tailored for managing concurrent crises.
2. National Resilience Volunteer Corps: Create a specialized volunteer corps focused solely on building community resilience. Volunteers would work year-round to educate communities, prepare disaster plans, and conduct regular drills, reducing the impact of crises and easing the burden on response efforts.
3. National Crisis Resilience Certification: Develop a certification program that recognizes communities, organizations, and individuals for their efforts in building crisis resilience. This program could incentivize and promote best practices in disaster preparedness and response.
4. Virtual Reality Crisis Simulation Center: Establish a state-of-the-art virtual reality center where emergency responders, government officials, and volunteers can undergo realistic crisis simulations. This immersive training can help them experience and develop strategies for managing multiple crises simultaneously.
5. National Strategic Resource Reserve: Create a reserve of essential resources strategically distributed across the country. This reserve could include emergency medical supplies, communication equipment, temporary shelters, and other critical resources needed during concurrent crises.
6. Crisis-Ready Business Network: Collaborate with businesses to form a network of crisis-ready organizations. These businesses would commit to providing resources, expertise, and personnel during crises, enhancing the overall response capacity.
7. National Crisis Liaison Officers: Appoint dedicated crisis liaison officers who act as intermediaries between federal, state, and local governments during concurrent crises. These officers would ensure seamless communication, alignment of priorities, and swift decision-making.
8. Citizen-Driven Crisis Intelligence Gathering: Engage citizens through a mobile app that allows them to report real-time crisis information, such as road closures, power outages, and localized hazards. This crowdsourced data can enhance situational awareness and inform response efforts.

9. National Resilience Grants for Communities: Introduce grants to support community-led initiatives that enhance crisis resilience. Communities could propose and implement projects such as retrofitting buildings for disaster resistance, establishing community gardens for food security, or developing community-wide emergency plans.
10. National Crisis-Themed Education Curriculum: Collaborate with educational institutions to introduce a curriculum that educates students about crisis management, disaster resilience, and the importance of community engagement during emergencies.

These critical functions can supplement Australia's ongoing efforts, fostering innovation, community involvement, and preparedness across various sectors to effectively manage the challenges of concurrent crises.

7. What legislative, regulatory or policy changes could be undertaken to make it financially viable for other sectors to contribute to a Commonwealth crisis response capability?

To make it financially viable for other sectors to contribute to a Commonwealth crisis response capability, several legislative, regulatory, and policy changes could be considered, drawing inspiration from the concepts outlined in the paper:

1. Crisis Response Tax Incentives: Introduce tax incentives for businesses, organizations, and individuals that contribute resources, expertise, or funding to the Commonwealth's crisis response efforts. This could include tax deductions or credits for donations, volunteer hours, or the provision of essential goods and services during crises.

2. Public-Private Partnership Framework: Establish a structured framework for public-private partnerships (PPPs) in crisis response. Develop clear guidelines and contractual arrangements that define the roles, responsibilities, and benefits of private sector partners during concurrent crises.

3. Liability Protections for Volunteers and Donors: Implement legislation that provides liability protections for individuals, businesses, and organizations involved in crisis response activities, including volunteers and donors. This would encourage more active participation without the fear of legal repercussions.

4. Dedicated Crisis Response Grants: Create a grant program that allocates funds to private sector entities, community organizations, and research institutions engaged in developing innovative crisis management solutions. Grants could support research, technology development, and capacity building.

5. Flexible Resource Sharing Agreements: Develop flexible agreements that allow private sector entities to lend or share resources, personnel, and expertise during crises. These agreements should have streamlined procedures and safeguards to ensure accountability and proper resource management.

6. Corporate Social Responsibility Mandates: Enforce or encourage corporate social responsibility mandates that require businesses to allocate a portion of their budget towards crisis preparedness, response, and recovery efforts. This could be linked to business licensing or certification.

7. Accreditation for Crisis-Ready Organizations: Establish an accreditation system that recognizes organizations for their commitment to crisis preparedness and response. Accredited organizations could receive benefits such as streamlined procurement opportunities and eligibility for government contracts.

8. National Crisis Resilience Fund: Create a dedicated fund that pools financial contributions from various sectors, including businesses, nonprofits, and individuals. The fund would be used to support crisis response initiatives, community resilience projects, and innovation in crisis management.

9. Regulatory Incentives for Innovation: Introduce regulatory exemptions or fast-track approvals for innovative crisis management technologies and solutions developed by private sector entities. This would encourage investment in new technologies that enhance crisis response capabilities.

10. National Crisis-Ready Certification: Develop a certification program that recognizes businesses and organizations as "crisis-ready" based on their commitment to contributing resources, expertise, and capacities during emergencies.

These legislative, regulatory, and policy changes can create a more conducive environment for private sector engagement in crisis response. By aligning financial incentives, liability protections, and recognition mechanisms, other sectors will be motivated to actively contribute to the Commonwealth's capability to manage concurrent crises.

CONCLUSION

This feedback has explored the problem of a more challenging future due to the increasing frequency, severity, complexity, and concurrency of natural disasters and other crises that may overwhelm the current capacities and capabilities of the emergency management system. It has also presented my feedback, which recommends reducing the reliance on the ADF for domestic aid and developing national resilience and response measures for adverse climate change at the local level without the need of ADF support, except in the most extreme emergencies.

My feedback has also presented an opportunity for reform to develop new models and capacities for Commonwealth capabilities that can scale to meet the size of the challenge, integrate with state and territory and local government response and recovery efforts, leverage the collective capabilities and capacities of industry and the not-for-profit sector, and ensure that the ADF can focus on its core functions relating to the defence of Australia and its national interests.