
PUTTY * KINDARUN * YENGO

Hub Houses Emergency Plan

September 2021

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Hub Houses Emergency Plan

Introduction

The area known as Putty is situated between Windsor and Singleton. Although the area is only a two hour drive from the Sydney CBD, it is over an hour's drive to the nearest shopping centre. For most people the drive is longer as they live on small remote blocks of land up to 30km into the valley.

The only access to some of the residents' properties is by Crown Reserve Roads which are not maintained by Singleton Council. The unsealed state of these access roads adds to travel time especially during periods of rain where roads have been damaged.

People at Putty have to be self-sufficient and resilient as it is a remote community where roads and communications can be cut for days due to bushfires and floods.

A Putty Hub House communication tree (see Appendix B) has been used in the area for over 20 years. Recently it has been updated in line with new Council road naming and numbering. Each Hub House services an area on the same road or in close proximity to itself. This enables the coordinator to

- make first contact with the Hub Houses located closest to the emergency
- allow people with no communications to drive to their Hub House for information as most Hub Houses have satellite with wifi mobiles
- find a replacement nearby if neither leader or deputy can fulfil their role

The Hub House Team of Leaders and Deputies consists of over 40 people willing to help and keep their neighbours informed during an emergency event. For some this is the only volunteer community work they do, while for others it is one of the many voluntary services they provide for the community.

Where possible, Leaders and Deputies have been paired to take advantage of age, experience, youth and technology skills which will allow for seamless interaction in the future.

Some Hub Houses, which have worked together for many years, know each others' skills and have formed firm friendships. When the RFS resources are stretched, the residents in these Hub House areas are of great assistance to the local fire brigade. They can be relied upon to clear roads and save assets, calling on the RFS only when needed.

Contacts:

Coordinator	Margaret Ferguson	0427 282 246
Deputy Coordinator	Kathy McKenzie	0408 650 851

1.0 AIM

The aim of this plan is to

- Establish a protocol and procedures to inform residents of impending fire, flood and other emergency events by enacting the Hub House plan when established action triggers are met.

2.0 GOVERNMENT AGENCIES INVOLVEMENT

The Rural Fire Service (RFS) and State Emergency Services (SES) are government funded, but during an emergency much of the work is done by volunteers who may not know the Putty area.

2.1 Rural Fire Service (RFS)

When a fire is reported in the Putty area, Hunter Valley Fire Control (Bulga FCC) contacts Putty Rural Fire Brigade or visa versa.

- Hunter Valley Fire Control (Bulga FCC) issues a Fire Alert if properties are expected to be impacted by fire. This is posted on the RFS website and may be emailed to the Hub House Coordinator.
- Putty Rural Fire Brigade notifies the Coordinator.

A Section 44 is declared when a bushfire is beyond the capabilities of the responsible fire agency. This allows for other resources to be deployed.

- An Incident Controller and deputy are appointed at this time.
- An Incident Management Team (IMT) is formed and usually consists of personnel from multiple agencies.
- A Public Liaison Officer may be appointed to liaise with communities or a particular community.
- A Field Liaison Officer may be appointed to organise a team of volunteers to visit houses.

Resources that may be deployed include bulldozers and helicopters. A number of bulldozers and drivers are located in Putty but may not be working in Putty at the time.

Helicopter Landing Site

Official helicopter landing sites have not been designated in Putty. The RFS has advised that pilots will select their landing sites.

2.2 NSW State Emergency Services (NSW SES)

Singleton SES will share the Duty Officer's number with the Hub House Coordinator and their Deputy who will liaise with them during a flood or strong wind event.

The Coordinator or Deputy will advise Singleton SES when

- floodwater is rising and the bridges are likely to go under
- residents cannot leave the area and need urgent medical or food supplies

All requests for help will be called into the NSW SES 132 500 such as

- trees have fallen across crown reserve roads and help is needed to remove them
- resupply essential goods such as medications, diesel, baby needs etc. See 6.0 Resupply Plan

2.3 Singleton Council

Singleton Council is responsible for Council road closures. Flooding occurs at

- Putty Bridge
- Condon Clear causeway
- Gibbs Bridge
- Roswill Bridge

Transport NSW is responsible for Putty Road.

3.0 PUTTY HUB HOUSE TEAM

The Putty Hub House Team of 33 people consists of a Coordinator and Deputy Coordinator, 5 Area Leaders, 16 Hub House Leaders (including the 5 Area Leaders) and 15 Deputy Leaders. See Appendix B.

Three Hub House Leaders are also on the Horse Evacuation Team.

Ideally, members of the Putty Hub House Team are:

- Permanent residents or landholders who visit their properties frequently
- Knowledgeable about their area
- Supported by their area's community
- Able to identify community members most at risk
- Good communicators
- Tech savvy and have a satellite phone or satellite internet connection with generators or solar power or have access to one nearby.
- Located within a short drive from their members
- Trusted to maintain confidentiality where necessary

During emergencies this Plan will be coordinated by the Putty Hub House Team. They will

- Act as the main contact point for emergency services
- Report to emergency services emerging issues
- Communicate important messages to the community by activating a communications tree (See Appendix B).

3.1 Roles and Responsibilities

The following are the roles and responsibilities of the Team

Coordinator

The Coordinator has overall responsibility for coordinating activities of the Hub House Emergency Plan as listed below. In their absence the Deputy Coordinator will be delegated these responsibilities.

- Manage the flow of information from emergency services to the community, contacting the whole or part of the community at the Coordinator's discretion
- Inform the relevant emergency service of emerging issues
- Nominate Putty Liaison when emergency escalates
- Ensure all Hub House Area Leaders are available or have a Deputy in place
- Identify available resources for distribution if required.
- Record all information received and relayed in Action Log – Appendix A

Putty Liaison

Coordinator appoints a Putty Liaison from the Hub House Team when;

1. RFS issues a Watch and Act or Emergency Warning for Putty
2. Bureau of Meteorology issues a Flood Warning

Responsibilities:

- Liaise with facebook/website administrators, and ensure information forwarded from Emergency Services to the community is posted on
 - Putty Valley Chronicles facebook.com/groups/187211862469717
 - Putty Valley Online putty.nsw.au
 - PCA facebook.com/PuttyCommunityAssociation
- Brief Kim at café
- Monitor Facebook pages for local information and check if correct
- Monitor Singleton Disaster Dashboard
- Monitor RFS website
- Monitor Fires Near Me and/or ArcGIS and Bureau of Meteorology
- Notify Hunter Valley Fire Control (Bulga FCC) and relative agencies of emerging issues at Putty and resource requirements
- Record all information received and relayed in Action Log – Appendix A

Five Area Leaders

See Hub House Flow Chart Appendix B.

(Having 5 Area Leaders limits the calls the Coordinator makes.)

Responsibilities:

- Relay information to Hub House Leaders in their area
- Ensure all Hub House Leaders are available or a Deputy is in place
- Relay information to their own Hub House members as below
- Record all information received and relayed in Action Log – Appendix A

16 Leaders (includes 5 Area Leaders) & 15 Deputies

Deputies are notified to fill in for Leaders if not available or to share some of the phone calling. If a Deputy is not available another from the nearest hub house will be asked to fill in.

All positions are flexible as some people may later choose to leave the area during a fire or be busy protecting their assets in an event..

Responsibilities:

- Provide regular updates to the Hub House Coordinator so that the database of phone numbers, new owners etc. can be maintained
- Relay information to their Hub House members
- Relay information back to the Coordinator – resource requirements, outstanding actions or completion thereof, emerging issues of serious concern or likely to affect other hub houses
- Notify Area Leader and Coordinator if not available and if another deputy has been appointed or not
- Record all information received and relayed in Action Log – Appendix A

4.0 HUB HOUSE ACTIVATION, TRIGGER POINTS AND ESCALATION

This Plan is activated when

- A Fire Alert is issued by the Singleton RFS, OR upon receipt of information from Putty Rural Fire Brigade OR at least two reliable local residents.
- A local Flood Watch or Warning is issued by the Bureau of Meteorology (BoM), OR upon receipt of information provided by Singleton SES, OR actual water levels of Putty Creek at the causeway and three bridges on Putty Valley Road and the bridge at Roswill Park.

4.1 Fire Trigger Points

If the Hub Houses have not been activated for 12 months a practice run is conducted at the beginning of the fire season.

Throughout a bushfire the Coordinator or Deputy will liaise with Hunter Valley Fire Control (Bulga FCC) and Putty Rural Fire Brigade and ask – “What is the community message for this fire?”

4.1.1 Fire Advice



Issued by RFS for the Wollemi or Yengo National Park or nearby areas

“A fire has started. There is no immediate danger. Stay up to date in case the situation changes.”

Hub House Coordinator or Deputy

1. Contacts Deputy – establish availability and positions if fire escalates
2. Forward Fire Advice to email lists
3. Contacts Hub House Leaders, starting with the ones closest to the fire – checks if they are available or if Deputies need to step in. Request Hub House leaders notify residents and weekenders.
4. Contacts Hub House 17 – Landholders with many properties or those who want to restrict the sharing of their contact details
5. Post alert on Facebook pages and website

Hub House Leaders or Deputy

1. Notify Deputies
2. Notify Hub House list
3. Advise residents to stock up on groceries in case roads are cut
4. Ask and record in Action Log
 - a. if they have a fire plan and if they plan to stay or go. If going, record contact details
 - b. if they have prepared their property or if they need help.
 - c. the best way to contact them if power, landlines and mobile tower goes down. This may mean they have to come to their Hub House Leader’s place or a neighbour’s place for updates.
 - d. if they may need to evacuate horses. If so, give them the phone numbers of coordinators.

4.1.2 Fire Watch and Act



Issued by RFS for Putty Community

“There is a heightened level of threat. Conditions are changing and you need to start taking action now to protect you and your family.”

Hub House Coordinator receives information from

1. Putty Rural Fire Brigade
2. Two reliable local residents
3. Singleton Disaster Dashboard
4. Bureau of Meteorology strong wind warning
5. Live traffic, SES or Council about road closures
6. Smoke seen in the area

Hub House Coordinator

If this is the first alert issued, do activation as above plus

1. Forward Fire Watch and Act to email list
2. Contact Hub House leaders closest to the fire first and advise latest information
3. Contacts Hub House 17 – Landholders with many properties or those who want to restrict the sharing of their contact details
4. Appoint a Putty Liaison from the Hub House Team

Hub House Leaders

If this is the first alert issued, do activation as above plus

1. Advise Hub House list latest information, contacting those closest to the fire first
2. Ask who in their family is in the area and if anyone needs assistance
3. Advise coordinator above information

Putty Liaison

1. Post notifications from RFS on Facebook pages and website
2. Monitor Facebook pages for local information and check if correct
3. Monitor Fires Near Me and/or ArcGIS and Bureau of Meteorology
4. Brief Grey Gum Café
5. Notify Hunter Valley Fire Control (Bulga FCC) and relative agencies of emerging issues at Putty and resource requirements
6. Record all information received and relayed in Action Log – Appendix A

4.1.3 Fire Emergency Warning



Issued by the RFS for the Putty Community

“An Emergency Warning is the highest level of Bush Fire Alert. You may be in danger and need to take action immediately. Any delay now puts your life at risk.”

Hub House Coordinator receives information that a fire is **very close** to properties in Putty from

1. Putty Rural Fire Brigade
2. Two reliable known local residents

OR if

3. A strong wind warning from the Bureau of Meteorology may bring the fire to Putty quickly

Hub House Coordinator

1. Forward Fire Emergency Warning to email list
2. Contact Hub House leaders closest to the fire first and advise latest information
3. Contacts Hub House 17 – Landholders with many properties or those who want to restrict the sharing of their contact details

Hub House Leaders

1. Advise Hub House list latest information, contacting those closest to the fire first
2. Ask and record in Action Log who is at their property and are they OK – if they are not in Putty suggest they stay away
3. Advise coordinator above information

Putty Liaison

1. Post notifications from RFS on Facebook pages and website
2. Monitor Facebook pages for local information and check if correct
3. Monitor Fires Near Me and/or ArcGIS, Disaster Dashboards and Bureau of Meteorology
4. Brief Grey Gum Café
5. Notify Hunter Valley Fire Control (Bulga FCC) and relative agencies of emerging issues at Putty and resource requirements
6. Record all information received and relayed in Action Log – Appendix A

4.2 Flood Trigger Points

4.2.1 Flood Watch

Bureau of Meteorology issues a Flood Watch to provide early advice of a developing weather condition that may lead to flooding. A Flood Watch is usually issued days before expected flooding.

Hub House Coordinator or Deputy

1. Monitor the Bureau of Meteorology for forecasts for Singleton and the Hawkesbury River
2. Forward Flood Watch to email list
3. Notify Hub House Leaders beyond the bridges of Putty
4. Post Flood Watch on social media

Hub House Leaders

1. Contact Hub House list to relay latest information
2. Remind them to move their stock to higher ground or if not in Putty ask if they need help. Stock may not need to be evacuated as there is plenty of high ground but gates may need to be opened
3. Ask and record in Action Log
 - a. if they have enough groceries and medicines in case the bridges flood
 - b. if they need to leave the area

4.2.2 Flood Warning

- Flood Warnings are issued by the Bureau of Meteorology
- Floods in Putty are usually caused by steady rain over a few days followed by heavy rain
- Flooding will occur in the northern part of Putty Valley first
- Stock do not need to be evacuated as there is plenty of high ground available
- Putty Valley Road, Box Gap Road and Roswill Drive may be impacted by flood waters and the following sections may be dangerous to cross
 - Top Place Bridge
 - Gibbs Bridge
 - Condon Clear Causeway
 - Putty Bridge
 - Roswill Bridge

Hub House Coordinator/Deputy

1. Forward Flood Warning to email list
2. Contact landholders and residents near bridges and causeway for information and record
3. Contact Hub House leaders, advise latest information
4. Post information on Facebook pages and website
5. Monitor Facebook pages for local information and check if correct by contacting people closest to flooding
6. Monitor Bureau of Meteorology and road closures
7. Notify Emergency Operations Centre or Singleton SES and relative agencies of emerging issues at Putty and resource requirements
8. Brief Grey Gum Café

Hub House Leaders

1. Advise Hub House list latest information
2. Ask and record in Action Log
 - a. who is at their property, are they OK
 - b. do they have enough supplies for a week or more, including medications
 - c. water levels at bridges and causeways near their properties
3. Advise Coordinator above information

5.0 HORSE EVACUATION TEAM

The Horse Evacuation Team have been relocating horses from Putty during bushfires for many years. Their contact details are available from the Hub House Coordinator and are listed in the Emergency Directory.

Responsibilities:

- Advise horse owners of procedures and terms for horse evacuations
- Identify Safe Relocation Properties and gain permission from owners for the evacuation of horses during a bushfire
- Compile a list of people with horses and floats

5.1 Evacuation Trigger Points

The Horse Evacuation Team members are notified through the Hub House system the location and status of fires. They will decide which horses need to be evacuated and where.

- Record all information received and relayed in Action Log – Appendix A

When horse owners contact them about evacuation or when the Hub House Team decide to evacuate horses in an area the owners will be advised the following:

- Evacuation is temporary until the fire situation is considered safe for the owner to pick up the horses and return them to their own property
- Safe Relocation Property owners must be advised before moving the horses onto their land
- It is the horse owner's responsibility to re-check for fence safety and availability of water for the animals. Previous inspections of the properties listed showed fencing and water were adequate
- Absentee livestock owners can appoint a nominee to manage their livestock in the event of a fire
- Livestock owner or nominee is responsible for any feeding requirements
- All rugs, head collars and fly veils should be removed

5.2 Safe Relocation Properties

The following properties have been identified by the Horse Evacuation Team as safe for horses when they inspected them.

32 Kookaburra Way
465 Roswill Drive
190 Burnt Arm Road
420 Putty Valley Road
432 Putty Valley Road
Singleton Showground
Hawkesbury Showground

Landholder contact details are held by the Horse Evacuation Team

6.0 RESUPPLY PLAN

During an emergency, if a Putty resident cannot leave their property and they need essential goods, such as basic food, medications, fuel, baby needs etc, and if they are unable to arrange for family or friends to purchase and deliver, they can call the Hub House Coordinator to arrange delivery to Putty. The Hub House coordinator will contact the NSW SES to enact the resupply plan.

Residents must order and pay for essential supplies online by prearrangement with stores in Singleton, then have them delivered to NSW SES Singleton Unit for delivery at times prearranged with the Singleton Unit.

Depending on the emergency situation and the final destination of the goods, supplies will be delivered to Putty Creek Bridge, the Putty Hall or the Grey Gum Cafe.

In the case of goods obtained privately, delivery arrangements will be at the discretion of the emergency services in the area at the time.

In times of flood when Putty Bridge is impassable, supplies will be ferried across the creek in a locally owned boat or the SES may erect a flying fox. Supplies will be collected by vehicle and/or dinghy on the Putty side and distributed, as pre-arranged.

In extreme situations and if other methods are deemed unsafe by SES or RFS, supplies may be flown in by helicopter.

7.0 GET READY

7.1 Emergency Booklet

The Putty, Kindarun, Yengo Emergency Directory was published in August 2021, prior to the fire season. Two hundred A5 booklets were printed with a bright yellow cover so it is easily found. It also contains information on preparing for the fire season and a QR code links it to the information on the [community website](#) which can be updated.

After distribution of the booklet to letter boxes, the Hub Houses were activated to check that landholders and residents had received it. This enabled the Leaders and Deputies to have a chat with people in their Hub Houses, explain how the system works, and gather information to update the database.

As the community response to the booklet has been very positive, the Hub House Team plan to republish bi-annually - August 2023.

7.2 Get Ready Event

- Putty Community-led Resilience Team may organise an event “Get Ready for Bushfire Season”
- The event may be advertised in Putty People newsletter and on Facebook
- The Hub House Coordinator may include information on the event in an email to their database, also updating landholders and residents on the latest Hub House developments

8.0 AFTER EVENT

The Putty Hub House Team will:

- Check and report to Council on damage to access roads for emergency vehicles
- Notify RFS and SES of damage to access roads in case access is required
- Have a Team debriefing meeting at the Putty Hall or on Zoom after the event
- Compile a final report
- Review the plan

8.1 Reviewing this plan

The Putty Hub House Team will:

- Ensure that the plan is reviewed and updated following emergency events or annually by all team members.
- Provide an update to the community of changes to the Plan via the Putty People monthly newsletter, Facebook and at the AGM of the Putty Rural Fire Brigade
- Ensure that the appropriate authorities and individuals are emailed a copy of the new plan

9.0 RECOVERY

The Putty Resilience Project will lead community recovery

- RFS, SES, Red Cross or Singleton Council may initiate activation of the Hub House email list - for example for wellbeing checks or property impact mapping
- RFS, SES, Red Cross or Singleton Council may initiate activation of the Hub House communications tree
- Putty Resilience and Hub House Coordinator or Deputy share relevant event information documents to facilitate and streamline recovery
- RFS usually do wellbeing checks for properties they know have been affected
- Putty Resilience may help host a NSW Recovery Hub
- Putty Resilience may advocate for recovery resources locally and distribute recovery information from agencies and services such as access to emergency relief payments
- Putty Resilience may hold community after event review/debrief information sharing locally and or with emergency agencies
- Putty Resilience may handle requests for help and offers of assistance and spontaneous volunteers
- Putty Resilience may arrange recovery events such as community BBQs and working bees

10.0 PRIVACY POLICY

Information provided to the Hub House Team has been given by landholders and residents on the understanding that it will only be used during emergencies or for Hub House updates.

Only the Coordinator and their Deputy have access to the full Hub House database. Team Leaders and Deputies have access to their Hub House list of names, addresses and phone numbers.

The Coordinator or Deputy contacts residents or landholders

- who request their details are not shared with others
- who own properties in several Hub Houses
- when both a Leader and deputy do not want to contact them

Between Emergency Events the Hub House email list will be used sparingly to avoid being blocked and therefore important messages not being delivered.

The Hub House communications tree will only be activated to pass on emergency or very important information for the Putty community. The Hub House leaders and deputies signed on to contact people in an emergency. They are not a telephone banking service to promote events or other activities.

Appendix B - Hub House Flow Charts



For further information see the chart on the following page

Hub houses have been established along access roads. Therefore if Hub House Leaders become unavailable for any reason they can notify people from the area on either side to take over their responsibilities.

Power blackouts frequently occur during emergencies in Putty. Both the mobile tower and the landline telephone exchange will only work for two days on battery power.

Where possible, Hub House Leaders have a satellite internet connection with generators or solar power and Telstra WiFi Calling and WiFi SMS enabled on their mobile phone. This enables them to make and receive calls and SMS throughout a blackout. Hub House Leaders with this facilities are noted with an * so people who have lost communications can drive to the closest Hub House for the latest news.

*Satellite internet with wifi calling, powered by generator or off-grid solar

**Satellite phone

Putty Hub Houses

Area Leaders	HH No.	HH Leaders	HH Deputies	Area	No. Calls
South Carolyn	1	Leigh	H	Box Gap Road	12-18
	2	*Carolyn	Steph	Roswill Drive and Burnt Arm Rd	11-16
West Warren	3	*Warren	*Mags *Belinda **Andy	Lilavale Track, Tullagong Park Trail, Melaleuca Trail, Swampy Arm Trail	12-15
Central June	4	Therese	Rachael	Harrys Place, 150-155 Putty Valley Rd, Reserve Rd, Turnbull Creek Rd	6-10
	5	Dixie	Jodie	257-460 Putty Valley Rd	13
	6	*Kimberly	*Dora	Condon Clear Trail, 530-807 Putty Valley Rd	11
	7	June	*Liz	873-977 Putty Valley Rd	7
	8	*Catrina	*Justin	1020-1079 Putty Valley Rd	6-8
	9	*Martha	Debbie	Kookaburra Way, 1090-1461 Putty Valley Rd	11-15
North Kathy	10	*Kathy	Lynn *Anna	Bog Creek Rd, Bunya Place, Johnson Arm Rd, 1765-1951 Putty Valley Rd	11-14
	11	**Peter	*Julie	1775-2071 Putty Valley Road	5
	12	*Jeneene	*Peter	Bakers Rd	6-10
East Fr Anthony	13	Christine	Chris	Bakers Rd, Kindarun Valley Rd	6-9
	14	Laurelle		6798-7601 Putty Road	7-11
	15	*Fr Anthony	Kim	8221-8870 Putty Road Unnamed road off Yengo Drive	14-27
Private Coordinator	16	**Lesley	Nicky	Bunjim Drive and Yengo Drive	10-15
	17	*Coordinator	*Deputy	Landholders with many properties or those who do not want to give contact details out to neighbours	1