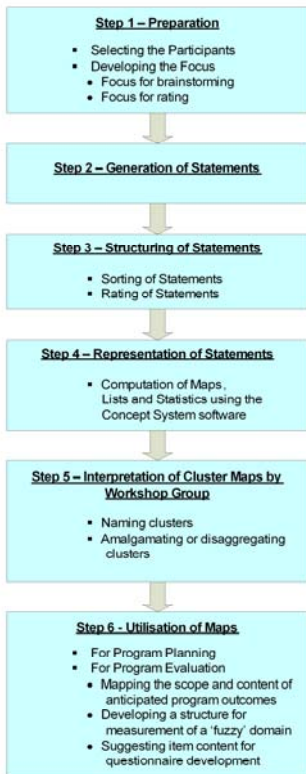


# CONCEPT MAPPING OF COMMUNITY SAFETY OUTCOMES

## METHOD

The researchers involved in project C7 used a technique known as 'concept mapping' to identify outcomes for bushfire safety policies and programs that stakeholders consider important. The particular method of concept mapping used was developed by William M.K. Trochim of Cornell University. Trochim's concept mapping process is outlined below.



- Step 1: Participants were: (a) groups of fire agency personnel, and (b) groups of community members from fire prone localities. The focus statement was "Thinking as broadly as possible, generate statements that describe specific changes or improvements you think need to be achieved to make households and neighbourhoods safer from bushfires".
- Step 2: Participants were asked to brainstorm ideas in response to the focus statement.
- Step 3: Participants sorted all statements in a way that made sense to them as well as rating (on a scale of 1 to 5) each statement for its importance and the difficulty of implementing it.
- Step 4: Computer assisted analysis of the sorted statements (multi-dimensional scaling and cluster analysis) produced a representation of how each statement related to all others (the Concept Map). Clusters of statements that had similar ideas were formed.
- Step 5: Participants are asked to individually name each cluster of statements. This is followed by a group discussion where consensus is reached on cluster names.
- Step 6: The concept maps will be used to assist the development of a 'policy theory' for community safety activities and programs and in the development of a 'post-then-pre' questionnaire to measure program outcomes.

(Adapted from Trochim W. M. K. *An Introduction to Concept Mapping for Planning and Evaluation*, [http://www.conceptsystems.com/papers/intro\\_article.cfm](http://www.conceptsystems.com/papers/intro_article.cfm). Accessed 12/5/05)

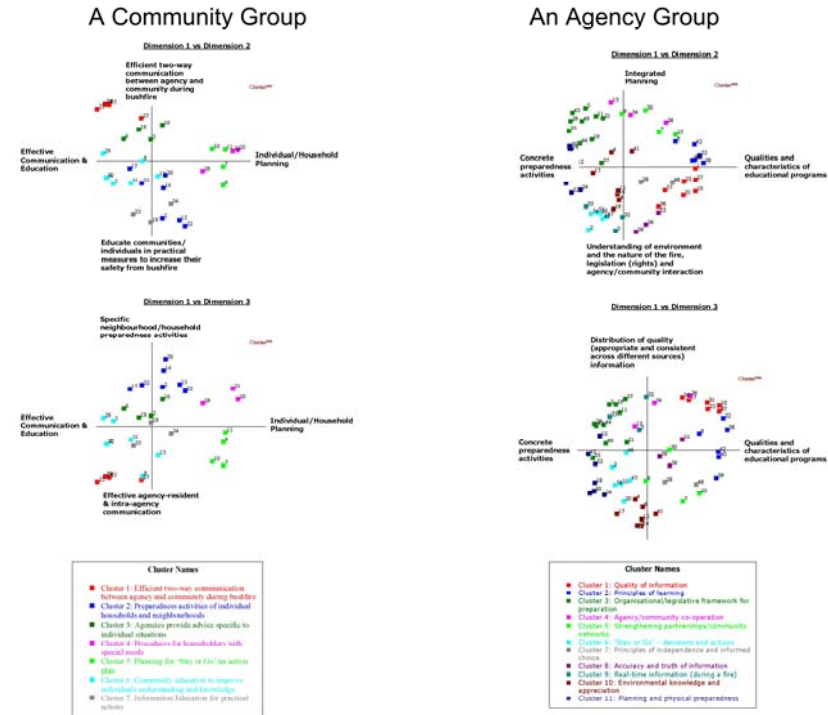
Trochim's 'standard' concept mapping technique was, in general, adhered to. But modifications were made to streamline the process and deliver a more accurate representation of the views of participants. Modifications included:

- A reduction in the time taken to complete a concept mapping workshop, from several sessions to four hours;
- The use of additional statistical software, enabling results to be presented in three dimensions, providing a more accurate reflection of how ideas contained in generated statements are related.

# CONCEPT MAPPING OF COMMUNITY SAFETY OUTCOMES

## RESULTS

7 Workshops have been held to date: 3 Community Groups; 4 Fire Agency Groups  
Below are the Concept Maps from 2 workshops



## A COMPOSITE SOLUTION

A broad range of themes related to community safety outcomes were identified in the workshops so far conducted. To identify and clarify these themes the researchers, as a group, sorted the pool of cluster names from individual workshops according to the similarity of the ideas represented in each. This enabled a combined solution of all the workshops so far completed to be formed. Here is a list of the themes identified by the researchers.

- Agency/Community Interaction
- Household and Neighbourhood Planning and Preparation
- Deciding and Planning for 'Stay or Go'
- Use of incentives to achieve preparedness
- Understanding/application of regulations for bushfire safety
- Policy framework for agency and organisational roles
- Principles underpinning program development and adult learning
- Individuals/community have a realistic understanding of risk
- Appropriate information/education activities
- Community ownership and responsibility for bushfire safety
- Agency/inter-agency responsibilities and co-ordination
- Effective Communication of information during bushfire
- Community networks and partnerships
- Community and agency responsibilities to address specific needs