

# COUPLE'S DECISION-MAKING PROCESSES INVOLVED IN THE FORMULATION OF A LONG TERM HOUSEHOLD BUSHFIRE PLAN

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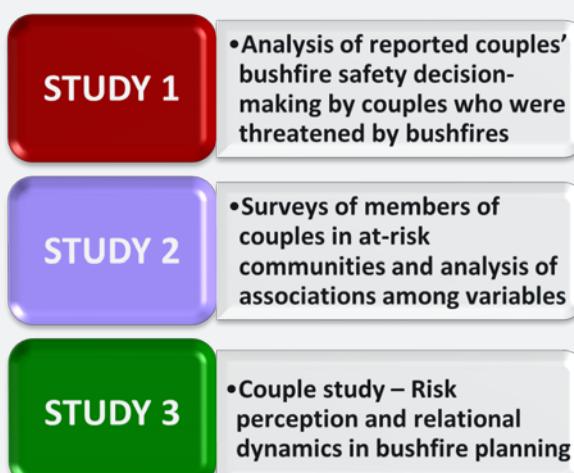
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Communicating Risk: Human Behavior Under Stress (2)

## AIM

To identify significant couple/marital judgment and decision-making processes which influence survival-related decision making in forming a bushfire plan. These processes involve long-term planning and preparation decisions, rather than decisions made under imminent bushfire threat.

## METHODOLOGY: the research in three studies



**STUDY 1 METHOD:** Content analysis of 40 transcripts of Lake Clifton interviews

Transcript example:

*Female:* "I already had all these box files that had all our passports, wills, documents, insurance, that was all packed". [...] "I packed a couple of bags with clothes and medication".

*Male:* "We downloaded all the computer stuff onto a Terabyte drive, all the photos and everything".

## RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Broad-spectrum question:

**What kind of decision-making processes are involved in couples' long-term bushfire planning and preparation?**

That is:

- ⌘ What psychological processes are involved in decision making by couples about long-term planning and preparation to survive bushfire threat?
- ⌘ What are the key relational dynamics which sustain couple's long-term planning and preparation decisions about bushfire safety?
- ⌘ What kinds of relational, cognitive, and affective processes are likely to compromise survival-related decision making processes in formulating a family bushfire plan?

## STUDY 2 METHOD: On-line (or postal) self-report questionnaire ...

... incorporating measures of each of the constructs to be investigated:

- ✓ Decision making styles
- ✓ Attachment styles
- ✓ Quality of relationship
- ✓ Gender role preferences

## STUDY 3 METHOD: Observation of joint decision-making tasks

- couples' ability to work in a collaborative way
- positive and/or negative affects to come out

### Task 1: Paper Tower

### Task 2: Bushfire planning and preparation

- The influence of one partner on the other
- Gender role preferences and couples' consensus
- How closely the couple joint decisions match each person's previously declared preferences

- Communication behaviour is strongly affected by an individual's decision making style

### Task 3: Partner's communication

## RESEARCH

Relevant factors to be examined:

- ⌘ Bushfire risk perception and engagement
- ⌘ Affective and relational processes
- ⌘ Decision-making styles
- ⌘ Couples' relationship: Attachment and Quality
- ⌘ Gender Role Preferences