



MayDay 2016

How will you celebrate MayDay in 2016?

Blue Shield Australia is a member of the international committee of the Blue Shield set up in 1996 to work to protect the world's cultural heritage threatened by disasters of all types. The International Committee of the Blue Shield (ICBS) and its affiliated national committees (such as Blue Shield Australia) work together as the cultural equivalent of the Red Cross internationally.

MayDay activity ideas

Identify sources of disaster related information online and on social media

Connecting with local organisations to build disaster support networks strengthens communities to help themselves and each other in preparing for and dealing with disasters. See what QDIS, Ballarat Collections Network and DisACT are doing.

Social media plays an important role during disasters by accelerating the dissemination of data – find updates on Twitter and Facebook.



Note: You don't need to register to access Twitter but you do to re-tweet any information.

A few of our favourites:

Twitter: [@BlueShieldAust](#) – [@HeritageRescue](#) – or find your State or Territory Police, CFA and SES and follow them in an emergency.

Get to know your local fire fighters, CFA, SES and police,

Disaster can strike quickly, without warning and with devastating results. Invite your local fire fighters, CFA, SES and police and make them aware of your organisation's needs regarding protection of your collection and get pointers from them on preparedness. It's also a good idea to make sure that there is a mobile phone registered to the address of the organisation, so that emergency text messages can be sent if fire is threatening your area.

Create or update your contact lists

One of the most important elements of disaster response is being able to contact critical people – emergency responders, staff, and suppliers. Ensure your staff members have an up-to-date list that includes as much contact information as possible: work, home and mobile phone numbers, and work and home email addresses. Create or update a master list for key people to keep at home. Create or update a list of staff members that is small enough to be kept in a pocket or a wallet. Create or update a list of key services and suppliers.

Contact your local Federal MPs and Senators

Urge them to join the Parliamentary Friends of History and Heritage to make Members of Parliament aware of the issues and challenges facing heritage protection and promotion in Australia. This group was initiated by the Hon Greg Hunt, Minister for Heritage, following a suggestion by the Federation of Australian Historical Societies, Inc.

Create or update your existing disaster preparedness plan

Create a plan! *Be Prepared: Guidelines for writing a disaster preparedness plan* is Australia's primary resource for disaster planning. Its practical guidelines have been produced to coordinate a national approach to caring for, and promoting access to Australia's heritage collections. It is specifically written for museums that have few trained or paid staff and operate without conservators.

Update your plan! If you do experience a disaster, it's important to review the plan afterwards, to see where it could be improved. If there is a change of personnel, relocation to different premises, modifications to the building and other environmental changes we recommend that you review and update your plan.

And most importantly, train your personnel. Practice makes perfect – effective training is the essence of any plan succeeding.