



# Disaster Resilience & Recovery Framework

## Disaster Recovery Peer Support Overview

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### Outline - Peer Support & Special Ministry Supply

The Disaster Resilience & Recovery Framework describes the support arrangements for Congregational Ministry Agents when faced with the aftermath of a disaster or crisis event. Support arrangements will be evaluated individually on a case-by-case basis and initiation will require approval from the Presbytery and General Secretary / Associate General Secretary – Ministry & Mission.

Below is a summary of the Peer Support arrangements. General information about Special Supply Ministry is included for context.

Workshops for Peer Supporters took place on 14 & 15 July 2026.

### About Peer Support

#### *What Peer Supporters Offer*

Peer Supporters walk alongside Congregational Ministry Agents by offering their presence, care, and practical support. They bring with them:

- their own lived experience and personal authenticity
- genuine care for Ministry Agents and their wellbeing
- practical assistance and encouragement during times of challenge
- access to education, information, and relevant resources
- liturgical material to support ministry and worship
- connections to people, networks, and services
- reasonable and appropriate follow-up over time

#### *Key Characteristics of Disaster Recovery Peer Supporters*

The Key Characteristics include the capacity and capability to:

1. provide pastoral care to Congregational Ministry Agents who are themselves providing care within their communities,



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2. show empathy by relating to similar work or life experiences, which allows Peer Supporters to provide alternative insights and share emotions thereby-
  - a. fostering a deeper connection with the Congregational Ministry Agents feelings from their viewpoint, and
  - b. “speaking the same language” that fosters a level of trust that what the Peer Supporter brings is valuable.
3. offer compassion, enabling Peer Supporters to move beyond empathy by actively taking steps to assist the Congregational Ministry Agents and potentially church leaders.
4. undertake equipping workshops ie specialised formalised training preparing Peer Supporters in their care for those who care for others in times of disaster or crisis events.
5. flexibly manage competing priorities to accommodate Congregational Ministry Agents evolving needs and support requirements.

### *About Peer Support Training*

The specialist training for Peer Supporters involves:

- understanding what may be happening for a Congregational Ministry Agent in a time of disaster or crisis events,
- being educated, and given the ability to educate, on the impacts and dynamics of disaster and emergency in a community (including phases of recovery) and the impact on the individual (including that of compassion fatigue and burnout in Congregational Ministry Agents),
- drawing from trauma-informed-care principles to better enable Peer Supporters in fostering genuine connections, establishing a safe space for open and honest conversations, and promoting a sense of calm amidst the chaos,
- preparing as a resource conduit by offering options and guidance including information, as relevant, about personal referrals, relevant government initiatives, connections with NGOs, and care for the church and local communities, and
- preparing as a sounding board for Congregational Ministry Agents for when they are ready to focus on equipping ministry in their communities for the future.

### About Special Ministry Supply

In some circumstances, arrangements may be made for Special Ministry Supply to allow a Congregational Ministry Agent to take leave away. The Peer Supporter would be best able to discuss possibilities with the Congregational Ministry Agent. Typically, this would be for a period of no longer than one month.

It is not intended that funding for normal Presbytery and/or Congregation expenses will be considered for Special Ministry Supply eg paying stipend for a ministerial supply in a Congregation unless the supply is related to the Congregational Ministry Agent being called to community focused outreach / assistance.

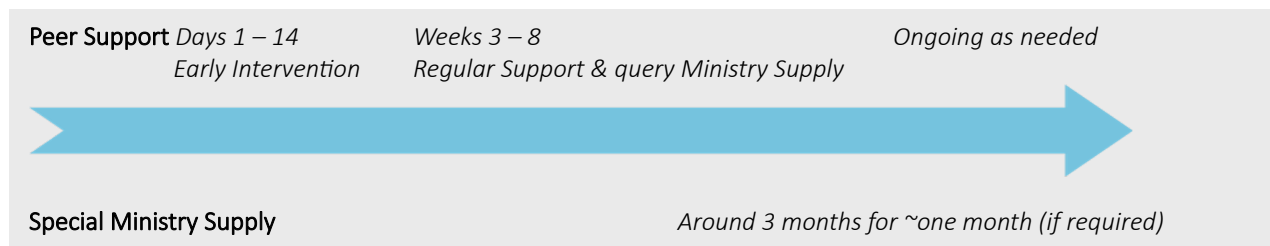
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### Tables

The following tables provide timeline and support arrangements guides for Peer Support and Special Ministry Supply.

*Table 1: Peer Support & Special Ministry Supply Initiation Timeline*



*Table 2: Peer Support & Special Ministry Supply Guide*

| Timeline                        | Support Arrangement            | Principles                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Day 1-14                        | Early Intervention             | Supported Ministry Agent Led ( <i>drawing from trauma-informed care principles by enabling the person being supported to shape how they receive care</i> ) - checking on welfare, providing pastoral care, working with the Ministry Agent to identify any immediate resource needs, identifying what is needed most, and connecting Ministry Agents with resources. Potential here to assist with triaging calls and offers coming in to assist to allow Ministry Agent to concentrate of assessing community needs and organising the best way forward.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| Weeks 3-8 (situation dependent) | Regular catch ups and support  | Peer Supporters offer a calm and trusted voice beside the supported Ministry Agent – prioritising conversations that are led and shaped by the supported Ministry Agent’s needs and priorities, seeking out what is required and working through any cultural issues that may inadvertently create an environment where Ministry Agents feel they need to keep going.<br><br>In conversation with the supported Ministry Agent, sensitively discern (at around four weeks) whether short-term relief may be helpful, including brief periods away from regular responsibilities, with Presbytery support for the Ministry Agent to have brief periods of rest, such as a few days or a weekend away - with worship, services or other commitments covered by the Presbytery (eg retired Minister or Lay Preacher). |
| ~8 weeks after end of event     | Special Ministry Supply option | If needed, gently explore Special Ministry Supply as an option – with a particular focus on the supported Ministry Agent taking leave. In practical terms, Special Ministry Supply may begin no sooner than ~3 months after the event concludes. Special Ministry Supply needs local ownership ie cooperation between supported Ministry Agent, Presbytery, Peer Supporter and local congregation.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| ~3 months to 12 months          | Special Ministry Supply option | The earliest anticipated timing for Special Ministry Supply is approximately three months after the event concludes. This typically may involve a short, time-limited period of around one month.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| Ongoing                         | Check-ins                      | Peer Supporter regularly checks-in on supported Ministry Agent                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |