



Field Guide 4

AFTER THE STORM

A newsroom review for climate hazard
reporting

For editors, reporters and newsroom leaders

Introduction

How to use this tool

This review is designed to be run as a **half-day team workshop** (approximately 3–4 hours).

The ideal scenario is prevention. We recommend scheduling this as an **annual review** before hazard season begins - using a significant climate event from the past year as the anchor case. Newsrooms that cover territories with recurring seasonal hazards (wildfire seasons, flood-prone periods) will find it most valuable to build this into their editorial calendar: for example, each spring before the summer fire season, or ahead of a flood-prone winter period. Reflecting before the next emergency arrives is what turns experience into genuine preparedness.

The tool can also be run **reactively**, within four to six weeks of a specific climate emergency, while experience is still fresh but the immediate pressure has eased.

Who should be in the room

Aim for a group of **4 to 10 people**: reporters and editors who covered the event, alongside any staff involved in community engagement, social media, or editorial planning. Smaller newsrooms may include the full team. The goal is honest reflection across roles, not a comprehensive debrief of every individual decision made.

Who facilitates

Ideally someone not directly involved in the coverage — a managing editor or a trusted colleague from another beat. For newsrooms looking for external support, **EJC can facilitate this process** as part of the Climate Frontline programme. For civil society organisations using this tool, we recommend identifying a facilitator from outside your immediate team — a peer organisation or network coordinator works well. The facilitator's role in all cases is to keep the conversation moving, ensure all voices are heard, and prevent the session from becoming a post-mortem focused on individual decisions rather than systemic learning.

How to run it

Work through the six sections in order. For each section, allow participants a few minutes to fill in their individual ratings and notes before opening the group discussion – this ensures quieter voices are heard before group dynamics take over. Close each section with the reflection prompts before moving on.

Set aside the final 30 minutes for the Summary & Action Planning section. The three priority actions agreed at the end should be **written down, assigned to named people, and revisited before the next hazard season.**

You're ready. Let's go!

BASIC INFORMATION

Newsroom: _____

Climate Emergency/Event: _____

Location(s): _____

Date(s) of the event: _____

Review date: _____

Participants: _____

PURPOSE

This review helps newsroom teams reflect on how they prepared for, reported on, and responded to a climate-related emergency such as a flood, storm, heatwave, wildfire, drought, or other extreme weather event.

The review is intended as a learning tool—not an audit. It helps identify strengths, challenges, and practical actions that can improve future preparedness, public-service journalism, staff wellbeing, and community engagement.

Simple Rating Scale

1 = Poor | 2 = Fair | 3 = Good | 4 = Excellent

1. PREPAREDNESS & READINESS

QUESTION	RATING (1-4)	COMMENTS
We received and understood warnings and forecasts before the event		
We had a clear reporting plan or approach		
Staff understood their roles and responsibilities		
Communication systems worked effectively		
Equipment, transport and reporting resources were available when needed		

Reflection

What worked well

What challenged us?

What would we do differently next time?

2. CONTACTS, NETWORKS & COMMUNITY RELATIONSHIPS

QUESTION	RATING (1-4)	COMMENTS
We could quickly reach local authorities		
Emergency responders were accessible when needed		
We had trusted contacts in affected communities		
Experts and specialists were available when needed		
Community voices were included in our reporting		

Reflection

Which relationships helped us most?

Which important contacts were missing?

What partnerships should we strengthen before the next emergency?

3. PUBLIC-SERVICE JOURNALISM

Reflection

Before the event

- ☐ We published preparedness or early warning information.
- ☐ We explained risks and likely impacts.
- ☐ We highlighted vulnerable groups and communities.

During the event

QUESTION	RATING (1-4)	COMMENTS
Reporting was timely and accurate		
Information was useful and actionable for audiences		
Community needs shaped our coverage.		
Vulnerable groups and affected communities were represented.		

After the event

- ☐ We covered recovery and rebuilding.
- ☐ We followed up on community impacts.
- ☐ We provided climate or environmental context where relevant.

Reflection

What was the most useful story, programme or report we produced?

What partnerships should we strengthen before the next emergency?

4. INFORMATION INTEGRITY: MISINFORMATION, RUMOURS & HARMFUL CONTENT

QUESTION	RATING (1-4)	COMMENTS
We monitored rumours and false information during the emergency		
We verified information before publishing		
We corrected inaccurate information quickly		
We avoided amplifying harmful or misleading content		
We explained uncertainty when facts were still emerging		

Reflection

What was the biggest rumour, misinformation issue or information challenge?

What worked well in our verification process?

What should we improve next time?

5. WELLBEING REFLECTION

Journalists & Staff

Did anyone experience significant stress, trauma, exhaustion or burnout?

Were there opportunities for rest and recovery?

Did managers and colleagues check in on one another?

What support would have been helpful?

Affected Communities

Did our reporting respect the dignity of affected people?

☐ Yes ☐ Partly ☐ No

Did we avoid retraumatizing individuals and communities?

☐ Yes ☐ Partly ☐ No

Did we include stories of resilience, recovery and solutions?

☐ Yes ☐ Partly ☐ No

Were community concerns listened to and represented fairly?

☐ Yes ☐ Partly ☐ No

Reflection

What wellbeing lessons should we carry forward?

6. COMMUNITY TRUST & IMPACT

QUESTION	RATING (1-4)	COMMENTS
Our reporting helped people make informed decisions		
We reached communities most affected by the event		
Audiences trusted the information we provided		
Affected communities saw themselves reflected in our coverage		

Community Feedback

What feedback did we receive from audiences and communities?

What did communities value most?

What did they tell us was missing?

Summary & Action Planning

Three Things We Did Well

1.

2.

3.

Three Things We Need to Improve

1.

2.

3.

Three Priority Actions Before the Next Climate Emergency

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Headline Scores

AREA	SCORE (1-4)
Preparedness & Readiness	
Contacts & Networks	
Public-Service Journalism	
Information Integrity	
Staff Wellbeing	
Community Trust & Impact	

Total Score: _____ / 24

20-24 = Strong Preparedness

15-19 = Adequate but Needs Improvement

10-14 = Significant Gaps Identified

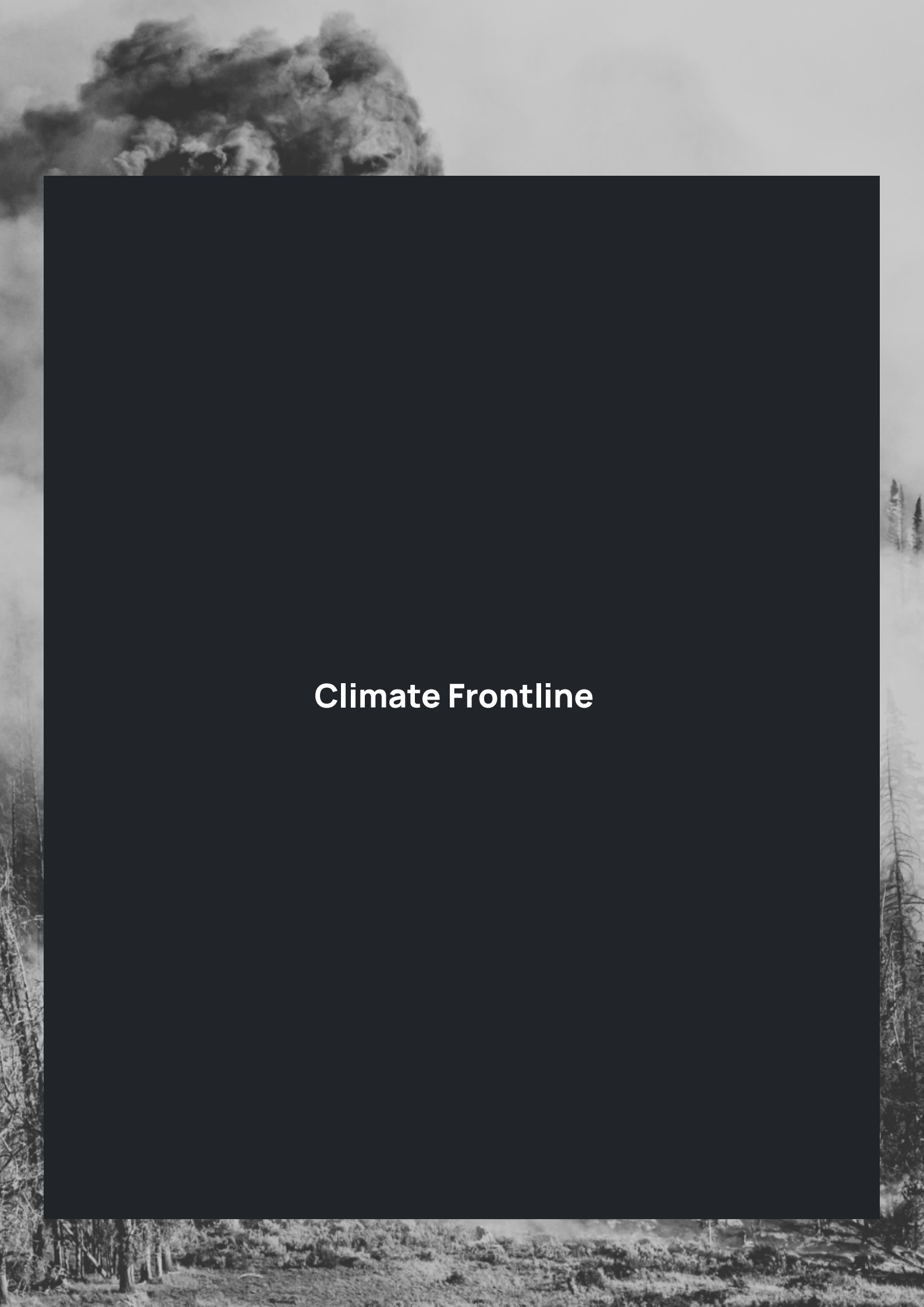
Below 10 = Priority Capacity Strengthening Needed

Final Reflection

If the same event happened again tomorrow, what is the one thing we would change first?

Review Completed By: _____

Date: _____



Climate Frontline