

# ACA Member Bulletin: Victorian Bushfires – update re assistance

*Australian Camps Association – Industry Updates and News*

Date: 20 February 2009

Please find the links to the information regarding assistance and keeping up to date with the bushfires. They didn't work in yesterday's camping news.

## **Assistance for Businesses Directly Affected by the Bushfires**

The Victorian and Commonwealth Governments have announced assistance for businesses and primary producers directly impacted by the bushfires. The assistance package comprises:

### **Immediate Assistance - \$5,000 Emergency Business Grant**

Emergency grants of \$5,000 are immediately available to small businesses and primary producers who have lost property or tools from the bushfires. The grants aim to assist businesses with immediate repair and restoration costs. Additional funding may be available for businesses significantly impacted, up to a total of \$25,000, based on a damage assessment.

### **Free business advice and counselling services**

Bushfire-affected businesses are able to access free, independent business advice to help them determine how best to respond to the impact of the bushfires on their business.

### **Low-interest loan scheme**

Small businesses and primary producers whose physical assets have been destroyed or damaged by bushfire may be eligible for a low-cost loan through the Rural Finance Corporation. Loans for 15 years of up to \$200,000 are available at a concessional rate of 3.2% p/a for the first five years.

### **Eligibility**

- All bushfire affected businesses and primary producers are eligible for free business advice and counselling services.
- Emergency Business Grants and low-interest loans to businesses and primary producers are subject to eligibility requirements. Please contact the Rural Finance Corporation (details below) for further information.

### **How to access the assistance**

Visit the Rural Finance Corporation online at [www.ruralfinance.com.au](http://www.ruralfinance.com.au) to apply for an Emergency Business Grant or a concessional loan or call 1800 255 925. Visit [www.business.vic.gov.au](http://www.business.vic.gov.au) for information on business counselling and general business advice or call 13 22 15.

## **Financial Assistance Available to Individuals**

For further information about available grants, insurance and dealing with financial matters. Visit <http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/emergency/current-events/bushfire/financial-assistance>

Grants include:

- An emergency grant of up to \$1,067 is available per household for immediate and urgent accommodation, food and personal needs
- A temporary living and re-establishment grant is available to people whose principal place of residence has been made uninhabitable by bushfire
- A Commonwealth grant has been made available to provide short-term financial assistance to those affected by these fires.
- A Compassion and Bereavement Payment is available to assist families of individuals who have died in the 2009 Victorian Bushfires

## Help the Bushfire Victims

There are a range of agencies working to help those affected. You can:

- To make donations to the Red Cross Bushfire Appeal Fund visit <https://www.redcross.org.au/Donations/onlineDonations.asp> or call 1800 811 700
- Call the Victorian Bushfire Public Accommodation Donation Line on 1800 006 468 if you wish to donate discrete accommodation such as vacant furnished homes, holiday accommodation and offers of caravans for up to 12 months or longer
- Call the VicRelief Foodbank on 9362 8300 for corporate donations of food

## How to Stay Informed – VIC Bushfires

- To register for updates through Business Victoria visit [business.vic.gov.au](http://business.vic.gov.au)
- Visit [www.vic.gov.au](http://www.vic.gov.au) for information and news about the bushfires
- Contact the Victorian Bushfire Information Line on 1800 240 667 for up to date information on total fire bans, fire restrictions and major fires
- Make your bushfire survival plan visit [www.fireready.vic.gov.au](http://www.fireready.vic.gov.au)
- Call the Red Cross Information Line on 1800 727 077 for relief centres and help locating relatives, friends and missing persons