



As at 23 January 2020

## Assistance for Farmers affected by the Bushfires

To support primary producers directly impacted by the bushfire crisis deal with their immediate needs, the Commonwealth government is providing grants of up to **\$75,000**.

### Emergency support for Primary Producers

The grants can be used for everything from fodder and water, sheds, fencing and agricultural equipment, where those needs are not covered by their existing insurance policies. The \$75,000 grant includes the \$15,000 grant available to primary producers under Category C arrangements.

To be eligible, you must:

- ▶ earn more than 50% of your income from primary production
- ▶ spend part of your labour on primary production
- ▶ have been carrying on your business at the time of the fires
- ▶ not be a corporation.

If you don't earn more than 50% of your income from primary production, you may still be eligible if:

- ▶ you can show you will earn 50% of your income from primary production within 3 years, or
- ▶ you can show you would ordinarily earn more than 50% of your income from primary production but this has been affected by drought, and
- ▶ in both cases, you earn less than \$100,000 in "off-farm" income.

The funding is administered by each State Government, and the Australian Government is working with affect States to ensure these funds get to producers who need them as soon as possible.

Farmers, fishers, private foresters and beekeepers will all be eligible to apply.

For more information on the Emergency Bushfire Response - Primary Industries Grants Program, contact:

NSW 1800 678 593 or visit [www.raa.nsw.gov.au](http://www.raa.nsw.gov.au)

QLD 1800 623 946 or visit [www.grida.qld.gov.au](http://www.grida.qld.gov.au)

SA 1800 931 314 or visit [www.pir.sa.gov.au](http://www.pir.sa.gov.au)

VIC 1800 260 425 or visit [www.ruralfinance.com.au](http://www.ruralfinance.com.au)



## Key assistance

**Up to \$75,000 in assistance to affected primary Producers, including up to \$15,000 available under Category C**

**One off Disaster Recovery Payment (\$1,000 per eligible adult, and \$800 per eligible child)**

**Australian Government working with the States to provide the emergency agriculture response**

**Significant expansion of mental health services**

## Disaster Recovery Payment

People are entitled to a one-off payment during a bushfire if:

- ▶ you get injured
- ▶ you lose an immediate family member
- ▶ your home is significantly damaged or destroyed
- ▶ a major asset or assets you own located at your principal place of residence has or have been destroyed or suffered major damage from the fire.

Each eligible adult will receive \$1,000 and each eligible dependent will receive \$400. The Australian Government has also announced an additional \$400 (\$800 in total) for each eligible child to help families with education expenses.

To claim the Disaster Recovery Payment call 180 22 22 66 or visit a Services Australia centre.

## Supporting the States with an emergency agriculture response

The Australian Government is working with states to help provide the emergency agriculture response. This includes providing expert responses to assist with field assessments of livestock, and the Australian Defence Force conducting water/fodder deliveries, livestock treatment and burial, and route and fence clearing.

If a primary producer has been affected by fires and have concerns about livestock they should contact the relevant state Government hotline.

**NSW Agriculture Hotline:** 1800 814 647

**Victorian:** 136 186

**South Australia:** 1800 255 556

## Farm Management Deposits

Primary producers affected by natural disasters can withdraw their Farm Management Deposits within the first 12 months of deposit without losing any claimed taxation benefits



(deductions) if they have received primary producer Category C recovery assistance under the Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements. To find out if this applies to you, call 1800 900 090.

## Rural Financial Counselling Service

The Rural Financial Counselling Service provides free financial counselling to farmers, foresters, fishers and related small businesses who are facing financial hardship.

The Australian Government is providing an additional 60 counsellors to provide support to eligible bushfire affected primary producers.

Those seeking assistance can contact their nearest Rural Financial Counselling Service office by calling 1800 686 175.

## Mental Health Support

Contact your GP to find mental health support in your local area that meets your needs.

If you need to speak to someone immediately, you can contact Lifeline Australia for telephone or online support services (13 11 14 | [www.lifeline.org.au](http://www.lifeline.org.au)). Children can be directed to the Kids Helpline (1800 55 1800 | [www.kidshelpline.com.au](http://www.kidshelpline.com.au)).

New assistance measures have been introduced including free distress and trauma counselling sessions (available for individuals and families and emergency services personnel affected by bushfires). You can be connected to this free counselling through:

- ▶ Services Australia's Mobile Service Centres and Mobile Servicing Teams
- ▶ Recovery centres and evacuation centres
- ▶ Mental health services commissioned by Primary Health Networks (PHNs)
- ▶ Existing mental health counselling hotlines, including Lifeline and Kids Helpline

Bushfire affected individuals and families, and emergency response personnel will also be eligible to receive Medicare rebates for up to 10 psychological therapy sessions through GPs, psychologists and other mental health professionals. To find out more about the services please speak to your GP, or visit [www.health.gov.au](http://www.health.gov.au).

## Emergency relief through charities

You can call the Salvation Army Disasters Assistance team on 1300 662 217 or the St Vincent de Paul bushfire assistance team on 13 18 12.

The Australian Government is providing \$40 million to these two charities to help deliver emergency relief to bushfire affected communities, such as food parcels, clothing, vouchers and cash payments.

BlazeAid ([www.blazeaid.com.au](http://www.blazeaid.com.au)) is a volunteer-based organisation that works with families and individuals in rural Australia after natural disasters such as fires and flood.



## Key contacts

<b>National</b>	
Disaster Recovery Payment and Allowance	18 22 66
Advance Payment and Additional Child Care Assistance	18 22 66
Rural Financial Counselling Service	1800 686 175
Farm Management Deposits	1800 900 090
Debt recovery	1800 076 072
ATO Emergency Support Infoline	1800 806 218
Cashless Debt Card	1800 252 604
Support for Carers	1800 052 222 A/H 1800 059 059
National Debt Helpline	1800 007 007
Salvation Army Disasters Assistance	1300 662 217
St Vincent de Paul bushfire assistance team	13 18 12
Lifeline	13 11 14
Kids Helpline	1800 55 1800
<b>NSW</b>	
NSW Disaster Welfare Services Line	1800 018 444
Small Business Assistance	1800 678 593
NSW Concessional Loans	1800 678 593
NSW Bushfire Clean-Up Assistance	1800 88 55 39
NSW Rural Assistance Authority (Primary Industries Grants Program)	1800 678 593
NSW Livestock Assistance	1800 814 647
NSW Agriculture Hotline	1800 814 647
<b>VIC</b>	
Vic Emergency Hotline	1800 226 226
Bushfire Clean-Up Program	1800 560 760
Vic Agriculture	136 186
Victorian Bushfires Case Support Program	1800 560 760
Vic Concessional Loans	1800 260 425
Rural Finance (Primary Industries Grants Program)	1800 260 425
<b>SA</b>	
SA recovery Hotline	1800 302 787
Small Business Bushfire Recovery Grant (SA)	(08) 8429 3242
SA Agriculture	1800 255 556
Primary Industries and Regions SA (Primary Industries Grants Program)	1800 931 314
<b>WA</b>	
Emergency <u>WA</u>	13 3337
<b>ACT</b>	
ACT Emergency Services Agency	132 281
<b>QLD</b>	132 500
QLD disaster and Alerts	
QLD Rural and Industry Development Authority (Primary Industries Grants Program)	1800 623 946
<b>TAS</b>	(03) 6232 7551
TAS Alert	