

Welcome to Recovery News. This newsletter will provide those affected by the January bushfires with practical information and advice.



We always knew they were heroes, but now they've been recognised far and wide.

The heartiest of congratulations to our local boys from the Dunalley Volunteer Fire Brigade and Dodges Ferry Volunteer Fire Brigade who were announced joint winners of the Heroism Medal in the Pride of Australia awards presented recently.

For ten days straight, these guys fought exhaustion in saving homes from the January bushfires. Their efforts were acknowledged at the annual *Mercury-Sunday Tasmanian* awards presented in Hobart on Monday September 23. They are:

Dunalley Volunteer Fire Brigade:

Danny Lacey, Rob Zabukovec, Aaron Millar, Luke Millar, Bradley Westcott, Andrew Daly, Paul Bird (who unfortunately missed the presentation ceremony) and Kevin Daly

Dodges Ferry Volunteer Fire Brigade:

Adam Hall, Gavan Rainbird, Oliver Torenus and Andrew Skelly.

They were commended for their sound judgment, dedication, training and experience in getting people out of harm's way.

Our appreciation also goes to Roger Garth and Grace Nieuwenhuizen - the volunteer Dunalley ambulance crew - who were finalists in the Heroism category. They left their own properties unprotected to treat, rescue and reassure people under the most horrendous conditions.

The winners will now vie for the national Pride of Australia awards in Sydney in November.

Go boys! We're so proud of you.

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Distribution of Red Cross Bushfire Appeal funds

- **Stage 1 Payments** - \$810,000
Involved \$3,000 for every adult and \$1,000 for every child who lost their primary place of residence. The maximum available to any one household was \$10,000.
- **Stage 2 Payments** - \$1,219,998
For people whose primary residence had been totally destroyed. \$10,000 was provided to owners and \$5,000 to tenants.
- **Stage 3 Payments** - \$422,843
Provided a grant up to \$5,000 for owners whose primary residence or external structures on site had been damaged.
- **Stage 4 Payments** - \$2.44 million available to relieve financial hardship because of the January 2013 bushfires.
 - » 298 applicants (294 interviews completed with 4 cancellations)
 - » \$1.13 million approved and paid for Immediate Financial Hardship
 - » \$263,037 allocated for Temporary Accommodation

In addition to this:

- \$1.76 million has been allocated to support community-based recovery projects – these are managed by the Affected Area Recovery Committees
- \$400,000 has been allocated to support the roll-out of *beyondblue's* Child and Bushfire Disaster Response program
- \$300,000 has been allocated to a revegetation project managed by the Dunalley Tasman Neighbourhood House
- \$1.5 million has been reserved for a minimum of 12 months to address the longer-term needs of individuals and communities affected by the bushfires.

as at 12.30pm 25 September 2013

Lock it up and make it harder for crooks

The tools, materials and newly-delivered appliances that are kept on your building site might be easy pickings for crooks.

Please take the time to secure your belongings.

Constable John McGuinness, from Nubeena Police Station, said it is rare to hear of a theft in the Dunalley area, but in recent times there have been two incidents within a week. John doesn't want to alarm anyone, but he does want you to be aware.

"The thefts to date have been upsetting but relatively minor," he said. "We've had some fencing wire and garden tools taken from a block in town and there was also a shed that was broken into with a chain saw, tool box and welder stolen. We believe the latter offenders were interrupted, so some of the stolen goods have been recovered.

"But these thefts are a reminder to local homeowners that we need to pay attention to the security of our belongings. This is particularly true now that houses are being rebuilt and there are materials and tools around – and new appliances, such as dishwashers, heaters, ovens and so on, can go missing if they're not locked up."

There are some simple steps you can follow to improve the security of your possessions:

- Store materials (such as electrical wire) and tools (including power tools, shovels, picks, lawnmowers, chainsaws and so on) in a lockable shed or container
- Keep newly-delivered home appliances in a secure location until your home is at lock-up stage, or the items can be installed.

Yes, it's very sad that not everyone is honest. At least we can make it harder for criminals to take our stuff. We can also look out for our neighbours.

"We need to make sure that our property is secure," John said, "and we can also be alert to anyone hanging around who looks suspicious – especially if it's at night.

"If you see anyone doing something that doesn't seem quite right, take down the registration details of the vehicles. If possible, a description of the offenders would also be helpful to us, but the rego details are the main thing we need to pursue a line of enquiry."

If you have any information or concerns, contact Dunalley, Nubeena or Sorell Police Stations on **131 444** or Crime Stoppers on **1800 333 000**.

Phone Tree branches into cyberspace

Now is a great time to add your mobile number to the local Phone Tree because it's had a high-tech graft.

After months of sending endless rounds of group messages on her mobile, Dunalley's Lyn Steele is now operating the Phone Tree via a Telstra internet site. **This will not change the way you receive her messages on your mobile phone**, but it will make the process easier for Lyn and more reliable for the community.

"The old system was time consuming and not always reliable," Lyn said. "For starters, mobiles only allow you to text 10 people at a time.

"But now, on the website that's been set up, I can reach as many as I want with the push of one button. The website also allows for the messages to be a little more detailed."

The Phone Tree took root in the early days of the recovery; every time Lyn heard of an event that needed to be publicised she sent out a series of group messages (such as details of a sleep therapy session at the Dunalley Information and Service Hub, or perhaps a reminder about the latest round of Community Grants). The people who received Lyn's message then forwarded it on to four more locals each, who in turn forwarded the message further – that's where the idea of a 'tree' originated. And the message always ended with the phrase "Please Forward".

John Harkin, Manager, Community Recovery, for the Bushfire Recovery Unit, said the Phone Tree has been a fabulous community initiative.

"The idea came from the community and it has operated very successfully," John said. "These latest changes are just a slight improvement to make the operation of the Phone Tree more convenient and flexible.

"But the Phone Tree is still very much in community hands. Lyn is the person who will send the messages, although we do now have a back-up if Lyn goes on holiday or is unavailable."

Is your mobile number one of the 250-plus already connected by the Phone Tree? You'll know if you are because you would have been receiving Lyn's messages. If not, and you would like to be included, please leave your mobile phone number at the Dunalley Information and Service Hub (in the Old Post Office). And don't forget – 'Please Forward' this message.



Lyn Steele's Phone Tree already reaches more than 250 mobile phones, but the 'sky is the limit' now that this local social network has had a high-tech graft.

Social workers: Helping individuals, families and the community

Most of us know that social workers offer personal support and counselling, but sometimes we forget that they also offer a range of other services, including assistance with completing forms and dealing with government and non-government agencies.

Social workers are a great source of information and support, as well as referral and advocacy. They can visit your home, or contact you by phone. Most importantly, the service is confidential and free of charge.

There's a social worker available near you.

Tasman Health and Community Service

1614 Nubeena Road, Nubeena
8.30am to 4.30pm, Monday to Friday
6250 9000 or **0438 192 328**

Murdunna Information and Service Hub

Arthur Highway, Murdunna (Murdunna playground)
6250 9000 or **0438 192 328** 11.00am to 2.00pm every second Wednesday or other times by appointment.

Dunalley Information and Service Hub

160 Arthur Highway, Dunalley **6253 5575**
9.00am to 4.00pm, Monday to Friday

Fingers crossed for Marian

Port Arthur resident Marian Lerner has been nominated for a 2013 Community Achievement Award in recognition of her volunteer work after the Tasmanian and Victorian bushfires.

Marian, a long-term member and past President of the Tasman Rotary Club, is in the running for the Heather and Christopher Chong Outstanding Achiever Award.

"I feel incredibly honoured by this nomination," said Marian, who was put forward by her fellow Rotarians. "But I know that the recovery is far from finished. There are still many in the community who require our help and volunteers will be needed for quite some time."

Watching Marian throw herself into the response to, and recovery after the Forcett fire, some may not have realised that she'd lost both of her parents in the final week of 2012. The funeral was the day the fires began.

"The next day I had an ache in my heart and a huge hole in my normal day," she said. "I knew I had to do something with my time, so I put myself to work. It was my way of coping and I knew that I was in a place to be able to help."

During the fires Marian got involved with the emergency evacuation process on the Tasman Peninsula, helping support the many locals and visitors who'd been displaced. In the following weeks and months she also:

- Became a driving force behind Rotary's fortnightly Murdunna Food and Chat gatherings
- Managed and cared for five teams of volunteer crews from Victoria, three couples from interstate and a pair of young men from the Northern Territory (50 people to date, and more due next month) who travelled to Tasmania to volunteer on fire-affected properties
- Distributed goods from a shipping container that were donated by Victorian Rotarians and the Traralgon South community.

But the Tasmanian fires were not the first time that Marian has supported those in need. In 2009, following Victoria's Black Saturday, Marian assisted the Tasmanian Rotary groups that travelled to Victoria to help in rebuilding; organised free holidays in Tassie for Victorian families affected by the fires; and arranged a project called **Art from the Heart** in which she collected 250 paintings from Tasmanian artists (through an appeal to Rotary clubs) and then personally drove them to Victoria for distribution.

"We helped the Victorians after their bushfires, and now they're giving back ten-fold," Marian said.

"All of this came about because my daughter and I were helped by kind people from New South Wales; they arranged a week's holiday for us six months after our Port Arthur tragedy. It started our healing.

"So after the Victorian bushfires I wanted to arrange holidays in Tasmania for some of the people in the Traralgon and surrounding areas because I knew that they would be hurting. In total, 125 Victorians came over here for a short break – and it was these very same people who were the first to phone us after our January fires. I believe that when you give and show compassion, it will come back to you, and can be shared around for the good of the community."

The 2013 Community Achievement Awards will be announced at a Gala Dinner on November 22. These awards recognise individuals, organisations and groups who are making a difference in our local communities and State. We've all got our fingers crossed for Marian.



Marian Lerner's volunteer efforts following the Tasmanian and Victorian bushfires have been recognised with a nomination for the 2013 Community Achievement Awards.

Your STAARC Remodelled

The Sorell Tasman Affected Area Recovery Committee (STAARC) is evolving to reflect the changing needs of a community-led recovery.

The STAARC was established immediately after the January fires to represent the community, government and the various organisations involved in recovery initiatives. It's designed to ensure that all decisions and actions are based on the community's needs and that locals' viewpoints are at the forefront of all considerations.

Membership has evolved as the involvement of various organisations has waned due to declining need for those services.

As the communities' capacity to take more leadership has increased, membership of STAARC has been reviewed, resulting in a larger committee and higher level of community involvement.

The approach of the Bushfire Recovery Unit (BRU) during this transition phase is to continue to provide support, resourcing and tools to the STAARC to enable community leadership of the committee and the recovery process to grow over time, as BRU resourcing is gradually reduced.

Please feel free to contact any of the community members to ensure your needs continue to be understood and met.

Membership of the STAARC includes:

- **Carole Owen**, BRU state operation manager
- **Caroline Bignell**, community representative
- **Carolyn Daly**, community representative and BRU
- **Elizabeth Knox**, community representative
- **Fiona Jennings**, DHHS regional social and personal support recovery coordinator
- **Geoff Martin**, community representative
- **Graham Millar**, community representative
- **Jan Barwick**, Tasman Mayor (Chair)
- **Joanne Curran**, community representative
- **Jodi De Cesare**, BRU communications director
- **John Harkin**, BRU community recovery manager
- **Kerry Vincent**, Sorell Mayor (Chair)
- **Kevin Daly**, community representative
- **Mathew Healey**, BRU director
- **Robert Higgins**, Tasman and Sorell Council general manager
- **Roseanne Heyward**, community representative
- **Tony Ryan**, Department of Economic Development, Tourism and the Arts.

Watch this space!

If you find the information in *Recovery News* helpful then you're going to love the community noticeboards that have been installed at the Dunalley Information and Service Hub (DISH).

A purpose-built display board now stands in the parking area of the DISH. This noticeboard will feature progress and events around town, as well as showcase future proposals and plans for the ongoing recovery.

Carolyn Daly, Communications and Community Liaison Consultant from the Bushfire Recovery Unit, said the display boards are another way of unifying and informing the community.

"The noticeboard will feature stories and material on what's being planned around the district and detail how you can have your say on proposals," she said.

"It will be a signpost of where the town is heading; a recovery board that will help to rebuild, renew and move the community forward."

The information and news on the display board will be positive, interesting (such as photo collages of local events) and accurate (including updates on current projects and/or Community Grants, as well as plans for rebuilding projects, such as the Community Hall or local playgrounds).

"We have chalkboards around the district as a way of letting the community know what's on," Carolyn said.

"But the idea behind the display board is that it's more a source of news and information – the type of info and stories you'd normally find in *Recovery News*, but up on a noticeboard for whenever you're passing by.

"This will be especially helpful for those working or living out of town; those who can't make it into the DISH during business hours."

So please, next time you're passing, pull into the car park at the DISH and check out the new community noticeboard (the DISH is located at the site of the old Dunalley Post Office).

The display will be updated regularly with accurate, entertaining and positive news.



Community Projects Update

Community consultation closed today on the latest round of proposed community projects put forward for funding under the Red Cross Bushfire Appeal.

A wide range of feedback was received, and now the Sorell Tasman Affected Area Recovery Committee (STAARC) will consider the responses before making recommendations to the independent Tasmanian Bushfire Appeal Distribution Committee on which projects best reflect the community's wishes.

Feedback was sought on 20 submissions under round two of the Tasmanian Red Cross Bushfire Appeal Community Assistance Grant, which aims to boost community cohesion, resilience and recovery.

The suggested projects range from community events, and various books reflecting on individuals' experiences, to water storage for firefighting, community facilities upgrades, and a number of paths and walkways.

The consultation process ensures that this part of the recovery process is community-led; to let everyone have a chance for their opinion to be heard when decisions are made on how donated funds are spent on revitalising their community.

If you have an idea for a community project, STAARC is still accepting expressions of interest and will continue to do so over coming months as round 3 projects are developed.

Further details can be found on our website: www.bushfirerecovery.tas.gov.au or by calling Carolyn Daly on **0418 535 173** or Sakura Oddie on **0438 204 604**.

STAARC Co-chair Kerry Vincent says the process is meant to be flexible so the community isn't rushed.

"There's so much going on at the moment, and many people are in the process of rebuilding or starting to think about rebuilding," he said. "By being understanding about the fact that people are at different stages in their recovery, we can move ahead on the smaller projects while leaving our options open for new ideas that may crop up in the coming months."

Once the Distribution Committee approves funding, arrangements are expected to be finalised with successful project proponents in November.

Consultation on bigger projects that have been put forward is continuing for some time yet.

Rebuilding 'The Bridge'

The next edition of *Recovery News* is expected to be the last, as the community-led recovery gains strength and the locally-produced newsletter *The Bridge* is resurrected.

Recovery News has provided information and advice on the wide range of services and support available to the bushfire-affected communities in the Sorell and Tasman regions over the past eight months, as well as highlighting local resilience and milestones along the way.

We've shared funny stories, tales of loss and revitalising, and celebrated the strength of character of those in our community.

But the good news is that this will continue, in a different form. After a hiatus, *The Bridge* is being resurrected by a small group of dedicated, talented and hard-working locals.

Everyone at the Bushfire Recovery Unit (BRU) wishes *The Bridge* every success into the future, and will support the local volunteers in any way we can. All information from the BRU or Taskforce that's interesting to the community will be forwarded to *The Bridge* for consideration in their publication.

And, of course, information will still be available on our website. You can also pop into the DISH for updates and information (and check out the new community noticeboards), find out what's going on via the new and improved Phone Tree, or call us on **1800 567 567**.

Don't forget, you can also register your email details with us via the website to receive regular updates on what's happening.

Park redevelopment is child's play

When it came to designing a new play and rest area in Imlay Street, Sorell Council decided to bring in the experts – the students from Dunalley Primary.

Jess Radford, Manager of Community Services at Sorell Council, said they received a letter last year from Sarahjoy Webster, who was then aged 10. In the letter Sarahjoy asked if more equipment could be installed in the Imlay Street Park.

“There is a lot of space next to the swings for play and exercise equipment, like what I've seen at other parks while on a camping trip around Tasmania,” Sarahjoy said. “I would really enjoy it if we had some more equipment. All my friends agree.”

This letter was the inspiration for a student-led project to redevelop the area along the Imlay Street waterfront. Jess Radford met with Sarahjoy and her Grade 5/6 classmates earlier this year.

“We talked about who uses the park, what the students do and don't like in the current playground, and what new things they'd like to see,” Jess said.

“We created one long ‘wish list’, taking into consideration the needs of different members of the community, such as infants, children, youths, older people and tourists, and so on.

“One of the key things was to make the most of the beautiful outlook from the park with passive areas to sit and enjoy. The other great idea was to have a slide coming down the hill into the playground.”



A letter from Dunalley schoolgirl Sarahjoy Webster to Sorell Council has inspired a complete redevelopment of the Imlay Street Park.

Several meetings later, including one with a playground designer, and the students narrowed down their wish list into priorities. They also voted for a seaside/ocean theme for the area, which suits Dunalley as a seaside village, and helped plan a vision for Imlay Street that features a multi-user playground with equipment for all age groups, including the disabled; a barbecue and seating area for parents, which overlooks the playground; and plans to integrate the park with the proposed Canal Walkway, and link it with the Community Hall and Primary School developments.

Best of all, the new design includes two slides down the hill (and the students are already planning slide races in the park). Sorell Mayor Kerry Vincent said Jess' work with the Dunalley students is a brilliant example of Council and community co-operation.

“I've been at a couple of the meetings that Jess has had with the students, along with Council staff from Parks and Reserves,” Kerry said. “I can tell you that these kids are smart. Their energy and their professionalism would put a room of adults to shame.”

Once the playground design is approved by Sorell Council, work is planned to start later this year.



The Rebuild – Onwards and Upwards

There's certainly a lot of movement around lately as new homes are going up.

We thought we'd share a couple of progress photos with you in this edition of *Recovery News*.

These "before" shots were taken about three months ago, of Peter and Jenny Daly's house and Xanath and Trevor Newbold's new home.

The progress, combined with some warmer weather, is certainly heartening.



Carol Doddridge



Judy Young



Peter and Jenny Daly



Xanath and Trevor Newbold



Keeping communities safe: family violence after natural disasters

This is the final in a series about potential increases in family violence after natural disasters, its impacts and where to seek help.

Experience and research nationally and internationally indicate that relationship violence, child abuse and divorce can increase after natural disasters. This is tough to face, but it is something that should not be ignored. It is an important issue needing attention just as we respond to grief, homelessness and lost infrastructure.

Why does family violence increase after natural disasters?

Disasters can lead to grief, loss, trauma, homelessness and unemployment. Tensions can increase when couples spend more time together, including in unfamiliar accommodation. Men can feel a loss of control which challenges their view of their role in a relationship. A lack of routine can also lead to a sense of being cut adrift.

Workers involved in the Victorian Black Saturday fires recovery spoke of both men and women self-medicating with alcohol to escape the pain of loss. Some women discussed how their male partners channelled grief and distress into anger.

What about the children?

Children who experience family violence may suffer serious emotional, psychological, relational and health effects. Children who are exposed to violence in the home are more likely to have difficulty learning; exhibit violent, risky or delinquent behaviour; or suffer from depression or severe anxiety. Young children are particularly vulnerable.

Reacting to trauma: what should I do?

It is important to be aware of the impact of trauma on yourself and those around you; feelings of loss, anger and despair can be profound. Seek help for yourself and your family.

Remember:

- Give yourself time
- Ask for support
- Communicate
- Find local support groups
- Find trained professionals
- Be healthy
- Establish routines
- Delay major life decisions

What are respectful relationships?

The relationship that we have with our partner is an important and valuable part of our lives; mutually respectful relationships provide stability that contributes to our emotional and physical wellbeing.

Respectful relationships are based on trust, honesty, fairness and equality. In a respectful relationship you can be honest with yourself and with your partner. You bring out the best in each other; trust each other's decisions and know that your partner accepts that the best person you can be is the person that you are!

In a respectful relationship:

- You don't have to do everything together; it's healthy to have different interests and opinions
- You are prepared to compromise; sharing decision-making is fair and equal
- You can be honest with each other while respecting your partner's opinions and feelings
- You can trust one another. Going out with your own friends is okay
- You have your own support team, working together and helping each other toward your individual and shared goals
- You accept that there are good times in a relationship and times when you need to be tolerant and accepting of your partner's differences
- You are able to communicate your thoughts and feelings and talk about how you feel

Getting help

There are no excuses for partner/family violence of any type. Seeking assistance is vital where relationships are strained and violence has emerged. Pick up the phone and get help.

Family Violence Counselling and Support Service:

1800 608 122

Tasmania Police in an emergency: **000**

Mensline: (24 hour support) **1300 789 978**

www.mensline.org.au

Sexual Assault Support Service: (24 hour support)

6231 1817 www.sass.org.au

Kids Help Line: (24 hour support) **1800 55 1800**

www.kidshelp.com.au

Written by Jane Fleming, State Manager of the Family Violence Counselling and Support Service, DHHS

In writing this article the author acknowledges the work of Women's Health Goulburn, UNICEF Behind Closed Doors, White Ribbon Day website and the work of Dr Michael Flood.

Grants and financial assistance

Disaster Income Recovery Subsidy

If you experienced a loss of income as a result of the January bushfires, you may be eligible for the Disaster Income Recovery Subsidy (DIRS).

The DIRS is available to help eligible employees, small business owners and farmers in the Sorell and Tasman Local Government areas whose income has suffered as a direct result of the Tasmanian fires. This payment is equivalent to the maximum applicable rate of Newstart Allowance or Youth Allowance, and is for a maximum period of 13 weeks from the date of the impact of the fires (or from when your loss of income commenced). **You have until 7 October 2013 to lodge a claim for this payment.**

Social workers are available to further explain this payment, and to help you find out if you're eligible; they can be contacted on 180 22 66. For more information and claim forms, visit an office of the Department of Health and Human Services (such as Centrelink or Medicare), or go to the Department's website at www.humanservices.gov.au/disaster

Red Cross Tasmanian Bushfire 2013 Appeal

Money donated to the Red Cross Tasmanian Bushfire 2013 Appeal will be used to assist individuals, families and communities directly affected by the January bushfires. The Australian Red Cross is not deducting any funds from public donations for administration costs or other Red Cross services so that every cent goes to those who need it. The funds raised are being distributed through the independent Tasmanian Bushfire Appeal Distribution Committee (TBADC).

Stage 1 Bushfire Recovery Grants

Every resident of a household destroyed or damaged to the point where it is unliveable is eligible - \$3,000 per adult and \$1,000 per child, to a maximum of \$10,000 per household. To be eligible, your property must be your primary place of residence (i.e. you lived there for more than half the year).

Stage 2 Bushfire Recovery Grants

Homeowners, tenants and community projects were eligible for second stage grants.

The grants included the:

- Destroyed Homes Grant – \$10,000 per household to assist homeowners with re-housing and replacing household contents where their primary residence was destroyed in the bushfires.
- Tenant Contents Grant (including boarders) – \$5,000 per household to assist tenants replace contents where their primary residence was destroyed in the bushfires.
- Community Assistance Grant – a minimum of \$1.8 million for community projects which contribute to community cohesion, resilience and recovery.

Affected Area Recovery Committees (AARCs) work with the Tasman/Sorell and Central Highlands communities on the applications for community assistance grants. The AARCs are made up of local council and community representatives and provide recommendations to the TBADC on which projects most benefit the communities.

Stage 3 Bushfire Recovery Grants

Grants of up to \$5,000 were available to help homeowners repair bushfire damage to their primary residence (or surrounding external structures) under the third stage.

\$400,000 was allocated to support the roll-out of beyondblue's Child and Bushfire Disaster Response program.

A further \$300,000 was allocated for a Revegetation and Garden Restoration Program in the Tasman and Sorell areas, led by the Dunalley Tasman Neighbourhood House.

To register interest in, or donate to, the Revegetation and Garden Restoration Program, please contact the Dunalley Tasman Neighbourhood House on 6253 5579 or email reveg@dunalleytasman.org

Grants and financial assistance

Stage 4 Bushfire Recovery Grants

\$2.44 million is available to residents experiencing financial hardship because of the January 2013 bushfires. The funds are being delivered in two phases – Immediate Financial Hardship Assistance and Ongoing Financial Hardship Assistance.

Immediate Financial Hardship Assistance was available for lower income earners who needed help paying bills (up to \$5,000 available), or were having trouble paying for the removal of damaged vegetation from their property (up to \$2,500 available). \$2,500 was also available to help with extra costs because the fires had forced residents to temporarily move from the area.

Income thresholds to be eligible for immediate assistance were: \$875 gross per week for single residents and \$1,515 for a couple (or shared housing) – with an extra \$34 per week allowed for each child in your home under the age of 16.

If you earn more than this limit you were still able to apply for Ongoing Financial Hardship Assistance.

Ongoing Financial Hardship Assistance is for those who are experiencing (or are likely to experience) money pressures as a direct result of the bushfires, for example you can't afford essential repairs to your damaged home; you can't replace lost equipment that you need for your job; or you've lost your job or can no longer work.

A further \$1.5m has been reserved to ensure there are funds available to meet the long-term needs of individuals and communities.

Tax obligations on grants and financial assistance

The information below, provided by the Australian Taxation Office (ATO), outlines the tax obligations on grants and financial assistance that may have been received by fire-affected residents. All recipients should seek professional advice on their tax obligation. This information is only informal advice and is not legally binding on the ATO. This table is to be used as a guide only and not in lieu of professional advice.

| Grant | Tax Treatment |
|---|---|
| Red Cross Tasmanian Bushfire 2013 Appeal Payments | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Not taxable |
| Emergency Assistance Grants | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Not taxable |
| Housing Assistance Grants | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Not taxable |
| Clean-up Assistance grants for small business, primary producers and not-for-profit enterprises | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The grant is assessable income where it is received in relation to carrying on a business |
| Australian Government Disaster Recovery Payment | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Exempt income, recipients do not pay tax on this amount.• It is taken into account in working out a recipient's deduction for any tax losses of earlier years. |
| Disaster Income Recovery Subsidy | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Exempt income, recipients do not pay tax on this amount.• It is taken into account in working out a recipient's deduction for any tax losses of earlier years. |
| Other Grants | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Recipients should seek professional advice on their tax obligations |

If your business or individual records were destroyed, there are a number of ways you can reconstruct them. The ATO can re-issue or supply copies of tax documents such as income tax returns, activity statements and notices of assessment. In reconstructing records to enable you to lodge your tax return:

- your employer or payer should have copies of your PAYG payment summaries
- your bank should be able to provide you with any bank records that have been destroyed
- your registered agent may also have copies of your records.

If you are an individual, the prefill option in etax may also help. It shows details of certain income reported to the ATO - for example, salary, wages, government benefits, superannuation, interest and dividends. You will still need to check that all your income is included and work out your deductions for the year.

More information can be found at www.ato.gov.au/Individuals/Dealing-with-disasters/Reconstructing-your-tax-records/

Want to Get Healthy?

Information will be arriving in your letterbox in coming weeks about the **Get Healthy Information & Coaching Service®**, a government funded service offering personalised advice and support about healthy eating, physical activity and being a healthy weight.

A great thing about Get Healthy is it keeps your wallet healthy too because it's free, and you don't even need to leave home to use it.

As we all know, we need to try to focus on both our physical and mental health. But sometimes it's not so easy, and there is so much conflicting information! The Get Healthy Service provides advice based on evidence, with no gimmicks or special diets.

The telephone-based health coaching service is offered to all Tasmanian adults and is tailored to each person's needs. The coaches know that changing long-term habits takes time and effort, and that different things work for different people.

With Get Healthy, you get your own professional health coach, six months of support to make long-term changes, up to 10 free coaching calls (at times that suit you), and a free health booklet and coaching journal.

Calendar of events

Tasmania Fire Service Community Forum 13 October

Eaglehawk Neck Community Hall from 10.00am

For more information contact Peter Middleton on **6230 8642**

Mental Health Week Building wellbeing, resilience & connection 11 October

218 Macquarie Street, Hobart
12noon to 2.30pm

Enquiries contact: Sarah Carson on **6221 6450**

Cuppa, Craft & Chat

Fortnightly on Wednesdays
11.00am to 2.00pm at the
Murdunna Information Centre

Everyone welcome - tea and coffee provided BYO lunch

16 October
30 October

Meals and Conversations for the Whole Community

Rotary Club BBQ Murdunna
Playground from 5.00pm
every fortnight.

12 October
26 October

The service is, of course, confidential, and free interpreter services are available. If you don't have a landline, the coaches will happily call you back on your mobile, for free.

What have you got to lose?



FREE Tasmanian Health Service

get healthy
Information & Coaching Service
The Get Healthy Information & Coaching Service® is a NSW Health Live Life Well initiative.

1 300 806 258
Monday - Friday 8am - 8pm

> Healthy eating > Being physically active > Achieving and maintaining a healthy weight

The Get Healthy Information and Coaching Service® is a free, confidential telephone Service funded by the Tasmanian Government. It helps people make lifestyle changes in relation to:

- > Healthy eating
- > Being physically active
- > Achieving and maintaining a healthy weight

Qualified Get Healthy coaches will provide information and ongoing health coaching and support to help you achieve your health goals. Just call **1300 806 258** Monday to Friday 8am - 8pm or visit www.gethealthy.tas.gov.au.

Tasmania
Explore the possibilities

The Get Healthy Information & Coaching Service® is a joint Australian, State and Territory Government initiative under the National Partnership Agreement on Preventive Health.

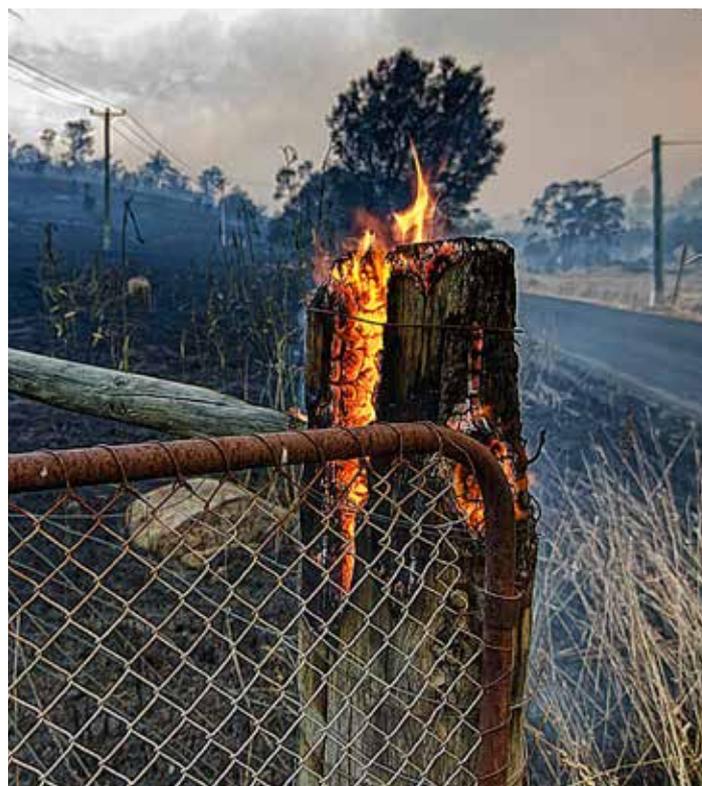


Photo by Charles Tewes

PHONE
1800 567 567

EMAIL
recovery@dpac.tas.gov.au

ONLINE
bushfirerecovery.tas.gov.au

DUNALLEY INFORMATION AND SERVICE HUB
160 Arthur Highway, Dunalley
(the old Post Office)

MURDUNNA INFORMATION AND SERVICE HUB
Arthur Highway, Murdunna
(Murdunna Playground)

**TASMANIAN
BUSHFIRE
RECOVERY**