

STATE SITUATION REPORT

1800hrs, 05/03/2014

INCIDENT / EMERGENCY NAME:	<i>Latrobe Valley/Hazardous Material and Other Incidents</i>		
SITUATION REPORT NUMBER:	# 10	INCIDENT LEVEL:	2

SITUATION SUMMARY:

Situation Summary	<p>The Hazelwood open cut mine fire in the Latrobe Valley remains a key priority.</p> <p>On Friday 28 Feb 2014, a recommendation was issued for 'at risk' people who live or work in the South Morwell area to relocate away from near the open cut mine. Victoria's Chief Health Officer, Dr Rosemary Lester, identified 'at risk' individuals as being:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • pregnant women • residents aged 65 and over • pre-school children (under 5 – including babies and infants) • anyone with pre-existing heart or lung conditions. <p>Individuals 'at risk' are being encouraged to organise their own accommodation and transport if they have the means to do so. Help is available, however, for those who are unable to organise suitable accommodation or transport for themselves. Individuals in these circumstances are being advised to contact the Department of Human Services hotline to make an appointment to speak with a DHS officer in person at one of three locations in Morwell.</p> <p>Residents in other parts of Morwell are encouraged to periodically take respite from the smoke.</p> <p>In East Gippsland two significant bushfires are not yet under control (Goongerah-Deddick Trail and Timbarra – Gil Groggin).</p>
Known impacts	The smoke issues associated with the Hazelwood Mine fire continue to affect the Morwell community.

SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES:

Health	<p>On Tuesday 04 March 2014, 74 clients attended the Community Health Assessment Centre.</p> <p>As at COB Tuesday 04 March 2014, there have been 1553 clients attend since the opening on 21 February 2014.</p> <p>Larger GP practices have reported moderate-significant increases in patient presentations with COPD exacerbation, non-seasonal asthma, anxiety related to smoke/ash/gases, throat & eye irritation, headaches, nausea, vomiting, breathing difficulties, and blurred vision. GPs report they are working at full capacity, but so far have not needed to extend opening hours. Some practices report a decrease in patient demand, and attribute this to people not wishing to expose themselves to the smoke/ash. The CHO met with GPs, Health Service Board members and CEOs in Morwell yesterday and will meet additional GPs tonight.</p> <p>Overall presentations to Latrobe Regional Hospital are above usual numbers, but the hospital reports these presentations are not related to the Latrobe Valley Mine fire.</p> <p>The Nurse on Call (NoC) service has noted a small increase in demand and continues to be being actively promoted within the community.</p> <p>Advice on the use of air purifiers is "Insufficient evidence exists to promote air cleaners as an effective way of removing all hazards from indoor air pollution. Furthermore the use of these devices may conflict with current health advice and messaging". A community information sheet regarding the use of air purifiers is in the process of being developed.</p> <p>A Chief Health Officer (CHO) Advisory has been updated to incorporate all key messages and current health advice. This is available on the CHO website: www.health.vic.gov.au/chohealthofficer/advisories.</p> <p>All relevant public health advice is available at www.health.vic.gov.au/hazelwood.</p>
Human Services Command	<p>EM Workforce</p> <p>A number of DHS staff continue to be deployed to Gippsland to assist with regional emergency management operations in Morwell.</p> <p>Staffing numbers deployed for DH and DHS for Wednesday 5 March 2014 are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 3 DH staff at regional level in Gippsland and 20 DH staff at state level - 88 DHS staff at regional level in Gippsland and 14 DHS staff at state level. <p>Impacts on DHS funded services and DHS clients are being monitored and regular contact is being maintained as required.</p>

**HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
EMERGENCY
MANAGEMENT**

<p>Human Services Command (continued)</p>	<p>The DHS hotline (1800 006 468) continues to be busy taking calls from the public seeking respite or relocation assistance.</p> <p>The following table contains a list of today's respite and relocation figures as at 16.30 and cumulative figures for the event:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="387 422 1345 730"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>5/3/2014 as at 16.30 hours</th> <th>Total event activity number</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Respite Calls</td> <td>491</td> <td>4,431</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Relocation Calls</td> <td>102</td> <td>885</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Appointments Made</td> <td>366</td> <td>3,274</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Appointments Attended</td> <td>108</td> <td>1,734</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Respite Payments</td> <td>316</td> <td>1,692</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Relocation Payments</td> <td>92</td> <td>534</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Payments Rejected</td> <td>3</td> <td>11</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Accommodation arranged by DHS</td> <td>0</td> <td>4</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>EM Workforce Staffing numbers deployed for DH and DHS for Wednesday 5 March 2014 are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 3 DH staff at regional level in Gippsland and 20 DH staff at state level - 88 DHS staff at regional level in Gippsland and 14 DHS staff at state level. 		5/3/2014 as at 16.30 hours	Total event activity number	Respite Calls	491	4,431	Relocation Calls	102	885	Appointments Made	366	3,274	Appointments Attended	108	1,734	Respite Payments	316	1,692	Relocation Payments	92	534	Payments Rejected	3	11	Accommodation arranged by DHS	0	4
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<p>Relief (inc Red Cross)</p>	<p>The Community Respite Centre in Moe remains open from 9am – 6pm daily. Today twelve people accessed the centre (as at 16.30 hours). The centre offers current information on the situation, health and environmental fact sheets, psychosocial support, and food and fluids (tea, coffee biscuits).</p> <p>DHS and Latrobe City Council continue to operate a Community Information and Recovery Centre in Morwell to provide support and information to residents in a local, air-conditioned environment. Latrobe City Council, DHS, Red Cross, Ambulance Victoria and other key agencies are in attendance. As at 16.30 today, 89 people had attended and one health check undertaken.</p> <p>Upon the direction of VicPol, Red Cross has activated on-line registration for Register.Find.Reunite. People planning to relocate are being encouraged to register. A total of 3,190 people have registered.</p>																											
<p>Recovery</p>	<p>Recovery planning is now well underway in East Gippsland, the Grampians, Hume, Loddon-Mallee and North and West Metropolitan regions for the fires in January and February 2014.</p>																											
<p>Communications / Public Information</p>	<p>Communications and Public Information activities today have included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • updating of relief and recovery centre information on Emergency Relief and Recovery Victoria website, • publishing new content on initiatives for small business operators in Morwell • updating scripts for the Victorian Emergency Recovery Information Line • liaising with the Gippsland Emergency Operations Centre, the Department of State Development, Business and Innovation and the Department of Premier and Cabinet social media task force on communication issues • requested in-depth Google analytics customised report on recovery site participation • monitoring of social media and traditional media 																											
<p>Business Continuity</p>	<p>Nil significant for this report.</p>																											

ISSUES:

<p>Issue</p>	<p>The Morwell community is experiencing levels of stress in relation to the ongoing environmental conditions.</p>
<p>Action Taken</p>	<p>DHS has established respite and relocation assistance, and is proactively looking at a range of community supports.</p>

OPERATIONAL STATISTICS:

RELIEF/ RECOVERY/RESPITE CENTRES

Region and LGA	Location	Type of Centre	Hours/Attendees
Hume Mitchell Shire Council	Wallan Library, 12/81 High Street, Wellington Square, Wallan	Information and referral service	9.30am – 5pm (Mon – Fri)
Hume Mitchell Shire Council	Kilmore Library, 12 Sydney Street, Kilmore	Information and referral service	9.30am – 5pm (Mon – Fri)
Grampians Northern Grampians Shire Council	Grampians Community Health Centre (Shack) Patrick Street, Stawell	Recovery	9am – 5pm
Gippsland Latrobe City Council	Moe Town Hall, Albert St, Moe	Community Respite Centre	9am – 6pm
Gippsland Latrobe City Council	Community Information and Recovery Centre	Community Information and Recovery Centre	9am – 6pm

HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

	22 Hazelwood Rd, Morwell		
Gippsland Latrobe City Council	The Greek Hall 46 Elgin Street, Morwell	Respite and Relocation Assistance *	9am – 6pm
Gippsland Latrobe City Council	Commercial Road Primary School, Commercial Road, Morwell	Respite and Relocation Assistance	9am – 6pm
Gippsland Latrobe City Council	Senior Citizens Hall, Maryvale Crescent, Morwell	Respite and Relocation Assistance	9pm – 6pm
Gippsland Latrobe City Council	Ambulance Victoria Gippsland Regional Office, 2 Saskia Way, Morwell	Community Health Assessment Centre	8am – 8pm

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE (FOR THE FEBRUARY FIRE EVENT)

Region and LGA*	Number Emergency Grants	Total
Loddon Mallee – Macedon Ranges	186	\$199,500
Hume – Mitchell**	802	\$818,250
Hume – Moira (<i>previously reported as Numurkah</i>)	57	\$46,600
Gippsland – Wellington	6	\$5,750
Gippsland – East Gippsland	45	\$37,500
Gippsland – Baw Baw	1	\$500
Gippsland – Latrobe	4	\$2,250
Eastern Metro – Manningham	5	\$5,750
North West Metro – Hume City Council	21	\$24,000
Sum Total	1,127	\$1,140,100

Region and LGA*	Number Re-establishment Grants	Total
Hume – Mitchell**	19	\$50,750
Hume – Moira (<i>previously reported as Numurkah</i>)	1	\$2,530
Gippsland – Wellington	1	\$3,000
Gippsland – East Gippsland	1	\$3,000
North West Metro – City of Hume	1	\$3,000
Sum Total	23	\$62,280
GRAND TOTAL		\$1,202,380

* Note: figures represent the region and LGA in which the emergency relief or re-establishment payment was issued. This does not always correlate with the location of recipients' principal place of residence.

Personal Hardship Respite Payments (today's payments as of 16.30)

Region and LGA	Today's Payments*	Total Cumulative Payments	Cumulative Total
Gippsland – Latrobe	316	1,692	\$846,000
Sum Total			\$846,000

Personal Hardship Voluntary Relocation Payments

Region and LGA	Today's Payments*	Total Cumulative Payments	Cumulative Total
Gippsland – Latrobe	92	534	\$511,000
Sum Total			\$511,000
GRAND TOTAL			\$1,357,000

Community Meetings

Location	Date	Time
Morwell Neighbourhood House and Learning Centre is holding informal weekly community meetings with CFA, Latrobe City Council and EPA, to provide updates on progress of the fire and information about DHS respite and relocation assistance.	Weekly	N/A

Next Sit Rep: The next situation report will be issued on Thursday 6 March 2014 at 1800hrs

Endorsed by:

Alan Hall: State Recovery Coordinator

Alison McMillan: State Health Coordinator