

STATE SITUATION REPORT

1800hrs, 14/03/2014

INCIDENT / EMERGENCY NAME:	Gippsland Fires – Hazelwood mine fire and East Gippsland fires		
SITUATION REPORT NUMBER:	# 19	INCIDENT LEVEL:	2

SITUATION SUMMARY:

Situation Summary	<p>This report is focussed on the Hazelwood open cut mine fire in the Latrobe Valley and the bushfires in East Gippsland.</p> <p>The Hazelwood open cut mine fire was declared CONTROLLED on Monday 10 March. Remaining hot spots are being monitored and extinguished. The smoke from the fire remains and the Environment Protection Authority (EPA) is continuing to monitor the air quality in the Morwell area.</p> <p>The Chief Health Officer has maintained the current health advice for people 'at risk' to consider relocating from the affected area. This advice will remain in place as EPA continues to monitor air quality data for improvements. The Chief Health Officer (CHO) has endorsed a protocol for lifting the temporary relocation advice.</p>
Known impacts	Smoke from the Hazelwood mine fire continues to impact on Morwell and other communities in the area.

SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES:

Health	<p>On Thursday 13 March 2014, 41 clients attended the Community Health Assessment Centre. As at COB Thursday 13 March 2014, there have been 2014 clients attend since the opening on 21 February 2014.</p> <p>The Chief Health Officer (CHO) will issue an advisory when the conditions are safe for sensitive groups to return. This will also be subject to ongoing monitoring and review while fire continues to persist.</p> <p>Department of Health Q & A's have been updated and a vodcast has been filmed with Ambulance Victoria on the correct fitting of face masks. All relevant health advice is available at: www.health.vic.gov.au/hazelwood.</p> <p>The Chief Health Officer attended a news event in Morwell today promoting clean up and face mask messages.</p> <p>Health services, GP's and Nurse on Call continue to manage any demand within existing resources.</p> <p>Two DH staff are deployed to the Gippsland region to work in the Regional Health IMT.</p> <p><u>Ambulance Victoria</u> Presentations at the Community Health Assessment Centre are slowing. Resource levels are currently being maintained.</p>																														
Human Services Command	<p><u>Emergency management workforce</u> DHS staff continue to be deployed to Gippsland to assist with regional emergency management operations in response to the incident in Morwell. DHS staffing numbers for Friday, 14 March 2014 were 73 in the Gippsland region and twelve at the State level.</p> <p><u>Clients and services</u> Impacts on DHS funded services and DHS clients are being monitored and regular contact is being maintained as required.</p> <p><u>High level summary report</u> The DHS hotline (1800 006 468) continues to take calls from the public seeking respite or relocation assistance.</p> <p><i>The following table contains a list of today's respite and relocation figures for the event:</i></p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>Past 24hr activity up until 16:30 today</th> <th>Total event activity</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Respite Calls</td> <td>408</td> <td>7,676</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Relocation Calls</td> <td>54</td> <td>1,566</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Appointments Made</td> <td>400</td> <td>5,898</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Appointments Attended</td> <td>305</td> <td>3,916</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Respite Payments</td> <td>276</td> <td>3,505</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Relocation payments (first)</td> <td>2</td> <td>665</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Second relocation payment</td> <td>23</td> <td>301</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Payments Rejected</td> <td>4</td> <td>30</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Accommodation arranged by DHS</td> <td>0</td> <td>4</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>DHS has a fraud management process in place to assist in the prevention of funds being obtained inappropriately. Cases, of possible inappropriate access to payments, have been referred to Victoria Police for investigation. No referrals were made today.</p>		Past 24hr activity up until 16:30 today	Total event activity	Respite Calls	408	7,676	Relocation Calls	54	1,566	Appointments Made	400	5,898	Appointments Attended	305	3,916	Respite Payments	276	3,505	Relocation payments (first)	2	665	Second relocation payment	23	301	Payments Rejected	4	30	Accommodation arranged by DHS	0	4
	Past 24hr activity up until 16:30 today	Total event activity																													
Respite Calls	408	7,676																													
Relocation Calls	54	1,566																													
Appointments Made	400	5,898																													
Appointments Attended	305	3,916																													
Respite Payments	276	3,505																													
Relocation payments (first)	2	665																													
Second relocation payment	23	301																													
Payments Rejected	4	30																													
Accommodation arranged by DHS	0	4																													

HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

Relief (including relief partner agencies)	<p><u>Respite and Relocation Assistance Centre</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> One Respite and Relocation Assistance Centre remains open; Greek Hall, 46 Elgin Street, Morwell. 305 appointments were attended today. <p><u>Moe Respite Centre</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 9 people attended today, 14 March 2014 (as at 15:30) Current staff resources include DHS, Council, Red Cross and Victorian Council of Churches <p><u>Latrobe City Information and Recovery Centre, 22 Hazelwood Rd, Morwell</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 25 people attended today, 14 March 2014 (as at 15:30) Current staffed by DHS and Council <p><u>Outreach</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Red Cross Register.Find.Reunite – 5,261 registrations of Morwell residents as at 17:00 14 March 2014. Red Cross staff are also present at the DHS respite and relocation centre to provide Register.Find.Reunite services
Recovery	Recovery planning for the Morwell incident and other fires in the Gippsland region is well underway. The State Recovery Coordination Team met today; no significant issues were identified.
Communications / Public Information	Key communication activities today include: preparing recovery communications and community engagement plan and attending to various media queries.
Business Continuity	Nil significant for this report.

ISSUES:

Issue	The Morwell community is experiencing levels of stress in relation to the ongoing environmental conditions.
Action Taken	DHS continues to provide respite and relocation payments and has implemented and continues to develop further community supports. Active planning is underway to transition to recovery. The recovery program has commenced.

OPERATIONAL STATISTICS:

RELIEF/ RECOVERY/RESPITE CENTRES

LGA	Location	Type of Centre	Hours/Attendees as at 15.30
Latrobe City	Moe Town Hall, Albert St, Moe	Community Respite Centre	9am – 6pm 9 people attended
Latrobe City	Community Information and Recovery Centre 22 Hazelwood Rd, Morwell	Community Information and Recovery Centre	9am – 6pm 25 people attended
Latrobe City	The Greek Hall 46 Elgin Street, Morwell	Respite and Relocation Assistance	305 appointments today
Latrobe City	Ambulance Victoria Gippsland Regional Office, 2 Saskia Way, Morwell	Community Health Assessment Centre	8am – 8pm

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE (FOR THE EAST GIPPSLAND FEBRUARY FIRE EVENT)

Region and LGA	Number Emergency Grants	Total
Gippsland – East Gippsland*	45	\$30,500

Region and LGA	Number Re-establishment Grants	Total
Gippsland – East Gippsland*	0	0
GRAND TOTAL		\$30,500

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FOR HAZELWOOD MINE FIRE – Latrobe City (as at 1630 hrs)

	Payments made today (as at 1630hrs)	Total Cumulative Payments	Cumulative Total
Personal Hardship Respite Payments	276	3,505	\$1,752,500

**HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT**



Personal Hardship Voluntary Relocation Payments (first payment)	2	665	\$637,250
Personal Hardship Voluntary Relocation Payments – second payment	23	301	\$295,750
TOTAL	301	4,471	\$2,685,500

COMMUNITY MEETINGS

Location & LGA	DHS in attendance (Y/N)	Date	Time
Nil			

Next Sit Rep: The next situation report will be issued on Monday, 17 March 2014 at 1800hrs

Endorsed by:

Carmel Flynn, Director Health and Human Services Emergency Management

Julian Meagher, State Health Coordinator