

**HEALTH AND
HUMAN SERVICES
EMERGENCY
MANAGEMENT**

STATE SITUATION REPORT

1800 hrs, 25/02/2014

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

SITUATION SUMMARY:	
Situation Summary	<p>The Latrobe Valley/Hazardous Material incident remains a key priority. The fire is complex and is expected to continue to burn for another two weeks. The fire is impacting on the community of Morwell with smoke and ash.</p> <p>There is a Hazardous Materials Advice message in place advising people, especially those with pre-existing medical conditions, to take steps to avoid prolonged exposure. The Environment Protection Authority issued a low level smoke alert for the Latrobe Valley for today as a result of the Hazelwood open cut mine fire smoke.</p> <p>A number of other bushfires are not yet under control in East Gippsland (Goongerah-Deddick Trail, Club Terrace Cluster, Timbarra – Gil Groggin). Fire activity has subsided however and there is currently no threat to properties.</p> <p>Recovery planning is now well underway in the Grampians, Hume, Loddon-Mallee and North and West Metropolitan regions for fires that occurred in January and February 2014.</p>
Known impacts	<p>The smoke issues associated with the Hazelwood Mine fire continue to affect the Morwell community.</p> <p>Forty-nine (49) houses have been confirmed destroyed since Sunday 9 February 2014 resulting from fire. Around 12,000 sheep and 400 cattle have been lost across the state.</p>

SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES:	
Health Command/Coordination	<p>Ambulance Victoria continues to support the Latrobe Valley community and the Emergency Service Organisations combating the fire emergencies in Gippsland. A management structure supports Paramedics involved in health monitoring and community engagement. Health monitoring of fire-fighters is also in place at Hazelwood and in Delegate, NSW, supporting the Goongerah fire activity. As at 1630 on 25 February there had been 326 presentations at the Morwell Community Health Assessment Centre. The Ambulance Emergency Operations Centre is coordinating the AV response, closely liaising with SEMC staff and systems.</p> <p>As at 1200hrs today, 19 clients have attended the Community Health Assessment Centre. On Monday 24 February, 114 clients attended with a total of 204 to date. The Department of Health is working with Ambulance Victoria to provide a comprehensive surveillance report on actual numbers of presentations, carbon monoxide testing results and outcomes.</p> <p>Today the Mine Health Monitoring Team has monitored 721 personnel from 0001-1500 today. Today Ambulance Victoria (AV) examined 4 personnel, 8 personnel had CO levels 5 to 8%, 2 personnel had CO levels 8% and above, 8 personnel have been stood down for 24 hours, 2 personnel have been stood down for 48 hours. AV transported NIL personnel to hospital. All presentations have been asymptomatic.</p> <p>The Nurse on Call (NoC) service is being actively promoted within the community, through health centres, General Practitioners and at the Community Health Assessment Centre. A small increase in demand has been noted. February 2014 data to today (25/2) shows that 41 calls to the NoC were made from people living in the LaTrobe Valley with respiratory related concerns, compared with 14 calls in February 2013.</p> <p>Since 18 February there have been a total of 628 presentations to Latrobe Regional Health emergency department. Of these 136 were Morwell Residents.</p>
Health Protection	<p>Community facts sheet have been developed and updated by the Department of Health. They include the response to community questions and concerns about the presence of carbon monoxide in the smoke and ash fall-out from the Hazelwood open cut mine fire. All fact sheets and health advice pertaining to this incident are available on the Department of Health's website: www.health.vic.gov.au/hazelwood.</p> <p>The Carbon Monoxide (CO) Response Protocol is being developed to guide the assessment and decision making for elevated CO in the environment. An independent peer review of the Protocol will be undertaken.</p> <p>The Department of Health continues to receive the results of the air quality monitoring undertaken by the EPA.</p> <p>The Chief Health Officer continues to undertake media interviews as requested discussing health messages and the smoke and ash level monitoring.</p> <p>A number of Department of Health staff from head office are being deployed on Wednesday 26 February to support the Regional Health Incident Management Team in Traralgon.</p>
Human Services Command	<p>Funded services and clients are being provided with information on the current situation from the Morwell office. There are no significant matters to report today.</p>
Relief (inc Red Cross)	<p>All relief centres have now transitioned to recovery centres and financial assistance payments are being assessed on a case by case basis. Recovery centres at Wallan and Kilmore are now closed however the community can still access information, support and advice from council staff at the same locations. Outreach processes are now commencing.</p>

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	<p>The Community Respite Centre in Moe remains open. Approximately 108 people have accessed the facility for relief and information (27 today). Services on offer include psychosocial support (from Red Cross and Victorian Council of Churches), fire information (from CFA and Victoria Police), health information (from Ambulance Victoria and EPA), child friendly spaces, food and fluids (tea, coffee and snacks). Arrangements are in place for the next seven days. Latrobe council are now providing a bus service to the respite centre from 1pm today until Friday, subject to demand. The bus service is available for people who do not have their own transport, cannot use public transport, or do not qualify for the taxi service because they do not have a disability or are not in receipt of Home and Community Care services.</p> <p>As at 1700hrs today the call centre managing appointments for Personal Hardship Respite Payments had received 338 calls and made a total of 284 appointments.</p>
Recovery	<p>The State Crisis and Resilience Council met today.</p> <p>DHS and partner agencies continue to support affected communities at recovery centres, community meetings, and through outreach programs in conjunction with local governments. Psycho-social issues are being identified and monitored.</p> <p>A community meeting was held at Manningham last night with 60 people in attendance. A community recovery committee will be established within approximately two weeks to deal with a number of recovery issues.</p> <p>The Gippsland Regional Recovery Committee meeting for the Northern Grampians and Black Ranges fire was held on Thursday last week. Taskforce groups for each of the recovery environments reported back to the committee on progress.</p> <p>A draft regional recovery plan has been developed and will be distributed to the committee membership for input in response to the East Gippsland fires. Meetings for the social and economic working groups have been scheduled for next week. East Gippsland Shire has recovery planning underway. The Shire Council has established a dedicated recovery phone line for the community and has outlined a range of assistance measures. Gippsland Emergency Relief Fund has disbursed over \$70,000 in assistance across Latrobe, Wellington and East Gippsland Shire so far. The official appeal for the 2014 bushfires will be launched on Friday.</p>
Communications / Public Information	<p>Key activities today have included updating Emergency Relief and Recovery Victoria website and the Victorian Emergency Recovery Information Line on respite assistance for Morwell residents.</p> <p>Other activities have included updating media and web lines on Personal Hardship Respite Payments, assisting with media enquiries, participation in a Emergency Management Joint Public Information Committee teleconference, monitoring media channels (with a particular focus on respite payments) and assistance with planning the DHS Secretary's visit to Morwell tomorrow.</p>
Business Continuity	Nil significant for this report.

ISSUES:

Issue	Nil significant for this report.
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OPERATIONAL STATISTICS:

RELIEF/ RECOVERY/RESPITE CENTRE

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	Respite	9am – 7pm
Gippsland LaTrobe City Council	Ambulance Victoria Gippsland Regional Office, 2 Saskia Way, Morwell	Community Health Assessment	8am – 8pm
			Cumulative total of attendees: 108

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE (FOR THE FEBRUARY FIRE EVENT)

Region and LGA*	Number Emergency Grants	Total
Loddon Mallee – Macedon Ranges	186	\$199,500
Hume - Wallan	491	\$507,500
Hume - Kilmore	265	\$261,750
Hume - Seymour	46	\$49,000
Hume - Numurkah	57	\$46,600

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Gippsland – Wellington	6	\$5,750
Gippsland – East Gippsland	37	\$29,500
Gippsland – Baw Baw	1	\$500
Gippsland – Latrobe	3	\$2,250
Eastern Metro - Manningham	5	\$5,750
North West Metro – Hume City Council	21	\$24,000
Sum Total	1,118	\$1,132,100

Region and LGA*	Number Re-establishment Grants	Total
Hume - Wallan	10	\$23,750
Hume - Kilmore	9	\$27,000
Hume – Numurkah	1	\$2,530
Gippsland – Wellington	1	\$3,000
North West Metro – City of Hume	1	\$3,000
Sum Total	22	\$59,280
GRAND TOTAL		\$1,191,380

*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

Region and LGA	Number Payments	Total
Gippsland - Latrobe	72	\$38,750
GRAND TOTAL		\$38,750

COMMUNITY MEETINGS

Location	Date	Time
Goongerah – Goongerah Hall, East Gippsland Shire	26 February 2014	12.30pm
DHS clients only – Maryvale Crescent Public Housing Morwell. Residents meeting Latrobe City	26 February 2014	1400 hours
Morwell – Maryvale Crescent Public Housing Morwell. Residents meeting (DHS clients only)	26 February 2014	2.00pm
Glenaladale – Community Recovery Information Session Glenaladale Hall East Gippsland Shire	Thursday 27 February	10.00 am
Bonang – Bonang Hall, East Gippsland Shire	2 March 2014	12.30pm

Next Sit Rep: The next situation report will be issued on Wednesday 26 February 2014 at 6.00pm

Endorsed by:

Carmel Flynn: Director Health and Human Services Emergency Management

Julian Meagher: State Health Coordinator