

**HEALTH AND
HUMAN SERVICES
EMERGENCY
MANAGEMENT**
STATE SITUATION REPORT
1800 hrs, 21/02/2014

INCIDENT / EMERGENCY NAME:	<i>Fires February 2014</i>		
SITUATION REPORT NUMBER:	# 14	INCIDENT LEVEL:	2

SITUATION SUMMARY:	
Situation Summary	<p>There are currently two significant incidents of note:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Morwell – Hazelwood Mine fire/Hazardous Material incident. The fire continues to burn, is complex and is likely to continue to burn for some weeks. The fire is impacting on the community of Morwell with smoke and ash. 2. East Gippsland bushfires: Three bushfires (Goongerah-Deddick Trail, Club Terrace Cluster, Timbarra – Gil Groggin) continue to burn and will continue to do so into the coming days and weeks.
Known impacts	<p>The smoke issues associated with the Hazelwood Mine fire continue to be problematic for the Morwell community.</p> <p>Forty-nine (49) houses have been confirmed destroyed since Sunday 9 February 2014 resulting from fire. It is believed hundreds of cattle and thousands of sheep, along with pasture, feed and fencing have also been lost.</p>

SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES:	
Health Command/Coordination	<p>Ambulance Victoria's strategic Emergency Management priority is the situation surrounding the Gippsland Fires. The Ambulance Emergency Operations Centre is supporting an implemented Regional and Incident management structure for the Morwell and Goongerah fires. Paramedic resources are deployed for specialist tasks supporting fire-fighters and the LaTrobe Valley community in the Moe Respite Centre, Morwell Community Health Assessment Centre and Community Engagement Paramedics in Morwell. They are also mobile around the LaTrobe Valley.</p> <p>Over the last 24 hours, several fire-fighters have presented with elevated carbon monoxide levels and have been managed as per the agreed plan. The community support Paramedics have engaged with many community members to date, and numbers are expected to increase as awareness grows. No community members have required transport for carbon dioxide poisoning – type symptoms. Resources will be maintained over the weekend.</p> <p>The Community Health Assessment Centre opened at 0800hrs today at the Ambulance Victoria Regional office at 2 Saskia Way, Morwell. As at 1600hrs there were 41 presentations to the centre including one non-medical transport. It will be operational from 0800-2000hrs daily. Paramedics and nurses are providing health information and advice as well as an assessment service for people concerned about their health. Those requiring medical attention are being referred to doctors or other health professionals if appropriate. Data on presentations to the centre will be collated by the Department of Health.</p> <p>The Department of Health is continuing to communicate with the health sector reminding them that due to the ongoing Hazelwood Coal Mine in the Latrobe Valley, they continue to review their Emergency Management plans and keep up to date with the situation.</p>
Health Protection	<p>A Chief Health Officer Advisory - Health issues from the Morwell Mine fire has been issued for today 21 February.</p> <p>The Department of Health is communicating health messages via local media in the Latrobe Valley with a full page advertisement in the LaTrobe Valley Express and information via a letterbox drop.</p> <p>Fact sheets on cleaning up a smoke and ash affected home and rainwater tanks specifically for the coal mine fire in the Latrobe Valley are available on the Chief Health Officer's website. A Vodcast recorded by the Chief Health Officer is also available on the website: http://www.health.vic.gov.au/chiefhealthofficer/2014-02-latrobe-valley-smoke.htm</p> <p>The Department of Health State Incident Action Plan has been approved by the Chief Health Officer. This plan is specific to the health impacts of the Latrobe Valley Coal Mine Fires.</p>
Human Services Command	<p>The Community Respite Centre opened again in Moe today. Approximately 15 people have accessed the facility for relief and information. Services on offer included 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).</p> <p>All relief centres have now transitioned to recovery centres and financial assistance payments are being assessed on a case by case basis. In Hume region the demand for services at Recovery Centres is declining. These centres are expected to close from Tuesday next week however the community will still be able to access information, support and advice from council staff at the same locations.</p>
Relief (inc Red Cross)	<p>A relief partner teleconference was held today to discuss the current situation, current capacity and supports being provided in Morwell. Relief agencies are continuing to provide relief support services as required.</p> <p>A number of relief agencies have been in attendance at the Moe community respite centre and are available to</p>

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	<p>assist with relief needs as required.</p> <p>A Call Centre is in operation in Moe to manage the making of appointments for Personal Hardship Respite Payments. As at 1630hrs 20 calls had been received, seven appointments made and five households have been provided with payments of \$500 each.</p> <p>A Regional Relief Plan has been disseminated to key stakeholders.</p>
Recovery	<p>The State Crisis and Resilience '2014 Bushfires - State Recovery Coordination Team' met today to discuss state-wide recovery issues, communications, funding and to receive updates from regional and other government stakeholders. A state-wide psychosocial recovery sub-committee was formed to focus on emerging psychosocial issues and to identify emerging priorities, current supports, agency capacity and ongoing coordination of psychosocial support.</p> <p>A DHS Recovery Manager has been appointed in Hume region for a period of six months and a Regional Recovery Plan is under development. Regional and local government recovery committees have also met.</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>DHS staff continue to attend community meetings and monitor social media so that priority issues raised by communities are noted and responded to.</p>
Communications / Public Information	<p>Key activities today have included updating web content and preparation of key communication messages regarding community services available. Preparation of key lines for Hume Emergency Operations Centre and other call centres have also been provided to assist with the management of unhappy community members regarding relief payments. Other activities have included participation in recovery meetings and teleconferences and monitoring of social and traditional media.</p>
Business Continuity	<p>Nil to report</p>

ISSUES:

Issue	<p>There have been some individuals at Kilmore Recovery Centre who have expressed anger over the lack of financial assistance.</p>
Actions taken	<p>Security has been organised to ensure staff safety.</p>

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	Recovery	9am – 5pm (Mon – Fri) 9am – 1pm (Sat – Sun)
Hume Mitchell Shire Council	Kilmore Library, 12 Sydney Street, Kilmore	Recovery	9am – 5pm (Mon – Fri) 9am – 1pm (Sat – Sun)
Grampians Northern Grampians Shire Council	Grampians Community Health Centre Patrick Street, Stawell	Recovery	
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

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE (FOR THE FEBRUARY FIRE EVENT)

Region and LGA	Number Emergency Grants	Total
Loddon Mallee – Macedon Ranges	181	\$193,500
Hume - Wallan	491	\$507,500
Hume - Kilmore	265	\$261,750
Hume - Seymour	46	\$49,000
Hume - Numurkah	57	\$46,600
Gippsland – Wellington	6	\$5,750
Gippsland – East Gippsland	34	\$26,000
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	1,110	\$1,122,600

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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		\$1,181,880

Personal Hardship Respite Payments

Region and LGA	Number Payments	Total
Gippsland - Latrobe	5	\$2,500
GRAND TOTAL		\$2,500

COMMUNITY MEETINGS

Location	Date	Time
Manningham – The Pines Activity Centre, Doncaster East	24 February 2014	5:00pm
Hindmarsh Shire – Rainbow Community Hall	24 February 2014	5:00pm

Next Sit Rep: The next situation report will be issued on Monday 24 February 2014

Endorsed by:

Carmel Flynn: State Recovery Coordinator / Human Services Commander

Vanessa Coli: State Health Coordinator