

11 February 2009

## Victorian Bushfire Response

No doubt we are all appalled by the devastation caused by the Victorian Bushfires. The loss of life and destruction of homes and properties has been sobering in the extreme. Unfortunately it already appears that several of our long time members have lost their lives. Others have suffered a loss of equipment and property.

HIA has moved quickly to provide what immediate relief we can and no doubt our contribution will grow over the coming weeks. Many of our members have already contacted us with generous offers of help.

HIA has formed with the Insurance Council of Australia a taskforce to see the best way in which we can assist in these trying times.

Obviously, donations of money will be gratefully received and those members who wish to make a financial contribution are invited to do so directly to the Victorian Government's Bushfire Relief Fund via [www.redcross.org.au](http://www.redcross.org.au) or call the toll free number 1800 811 700.

There will obviously be an immediate need for temporary accommodation and any of our members who have transportable units that could serve that purpose are urged to contact us and we will pass those details on to the coordinating government body. Already our offices in some of the worst affected areas have advised that there is an urgent need for cool rooms, generators and hand pump petrol pumps. Past experience also suggests that there will be a need for more substantial accommodation within the not too distant future and here again, those of our members who are in the business of transportable housing may be able to assist. A significant issue which has arisen out of previous fires is that of fencing, particularly in rural communities as this is not covered in insurance policies.

At the request of the Victorian Government, HIA has established and will maintain a central database of members who are willing to provide time and/or materials to aid the recovery effort. If you are able to provide assistance and would like your company's details included on the register, please contact Sarah Moate on 03 9280 8275 or via email at [s.moate@hia.com.au](mailto:s.moate@hia.com.au).

Our sincere condolences go out to our members, colleagues, friends and families who have lost loved ones and our thoughts remain with all those people who have been affected by this tragedy.