

# Media Release

**The Hon Gabrielle Williams MP**  
Minister for Aboriginal Affairs  
Minister for Prevention of Family Violence  
Minister for Women



Friday, 9 April 2021

## HELPING WOMEN'S RECOVERY IN BUSHFIRE AFFECTED AREAS

The Andrews Labor Government is supporting women in communities hit hardest by the worst bushfires in Australia's living memory – with a \$700,000 boost.

Twelve months on from the disaster, Minister for Women and the Prevention of Family Violence Gabrielle Williams today announced further funding to empower women on the path to economic recovery and boost critical support for the prevention of violence against women in bushfire-affected local government areas.

Building on more than \$1.2 million already invested to protect women from violence in bushfire affected areas, today's additional funding recognises that women living in these areas have carried a huge burden, supporting not only their communities to rebuild but also their families to heal.

From this funding, \$500,000 will go towards preventing violence against women - including \$140,000 for Gippsland Women's Health and \$75,000 for Women's Health Goulburn North East to support local councils to deliver primary prevention initiatives using their expertise, local knowledge and existing relationships.

An additional \$285,000 will be shared between East Gippsland Shire, Mansfield Shire, Towong Shire, Alpine Shire, and Wangaratta Rural Shire to support activities that stop family violence and violence against women before it begins.

Building on work undertaken by Good Shepherd, \$200,000 will also go towards programs that boost the financial capability of women in disaster areas.

This funding will also support the Women's Information Referral Exchange to train financial counsellors and financial capability workers in bushfire-affected areas to tailor their services when working with women.

The areas where these programs will be delivered were all declared a State of Disaster during the 2020 bushfires.

### **Quotes attributable to Minister for Women and the Prevention of Family Violence Gabrielle Williams**

"The 2020 bushfires were devastating for entire communities but for women the impacts have been even worse, with evidence telling us that the incidence of family violence increases during and after disasters."

"We want to work with local councils and local health and financial service providers to improve services for women who faced the added challenge of the coronavirus pandemic while rebuilding their lives after the devastating impacts of the bushfires."