

Media Release

Ms Mary-Anne Thomas MP
Minister for Regional Development
Minister for Agriculture



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BACKING BUSINESSES ACROSS REGIONAL VICTORIA

The Andrews Labor Government is continuing to support businesses and industry groups to recover from the impacts of the 2019-20 bushfires.

Minister for Regional Development Mary-Anne Thomas today announced funding to support local business networking and recovery efforts through the new \$500,000 *Regional Industry Groups & Chambers of Commerce* program.

This new program includes grants of up to \$10,000 which will enable regional industry groups and chambers of commerce to host networking events and collaborate on ideas that help local economies recover from natural disasters.

There are 18 local government areas included in the program with industry groups and chambers of commerce in the Hume, Gippsland, Loddon Mallee, Barwon South West and Grampian regions eligible for direct funding.

The program supports non-for-profit, business membership-based groups to bring to life events that bolster local businesses and industries.

Successful recipients may host events such as guest speakers, workshops, seminars, conferences and industry award opportunities.

The Government has invested more than \$525 million to bushfire recovery initiatives delivering ongoing support to individuals, families, businesses and regions impacted by the 2019/20 fires.

The program complements funding provided to regional chambers of commerce through grants from the Labor Government's \$5 million *Business Chambers and Trader Groups* program, which helps businesses collaborate through local initiatives and supports their recovery from the pandemic.

Round two of the *Business Chambers and Trader Groups* program is now underway to support more business recovery initiatives across the state.

For more information visit: rdv.vic.gov.au/rigcc

Quotes attributable to Minister for Regional Development Mary-Anne Thomas

"We know that our regional communities have been doing it tough with bushfires, drought and the pandemic. We are standing by them and this funding will support industry groups with their recovery efforts."

"This program is putting local business collaboration front and centre to help deliver stronger local economies and create more opportunities and jobs for our regions."

Quote attributable to Minister for Emergency Services Jaclyn Symes

"We're making sure our regional businesses and traders have the support they need as they continue to rebuild and recover."

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