

Saturday, 10 January 2026 at 12:29am

## STATEMENT FROM THE PREMIER

Tonight, following advice from the Minister for Emergency Services and the Emergency Management Commissioner, I declared a State of Disaster in 18 fire-affected local government areas and one alpine resort.

This declaration gives our authorities extra powers to confront an emergency of extraordinary scale and danger. Tonight, we have reached that level of danger.

This does not change specific advice currently in place for anyone in fire-affected areas.

But it sends a clear message to those who have been advised to leave: if you can, you must.

The declaration allows authorities to order evacuations, control movement through dangerous areas, and act as decisively as possible.

It ensures that every part of government – every department, every agency, every authority – is focused on one priority: protecting life.

It also means that if someone insists on staying in an area where their life is in danger, authorities have the power to force them to leave.

These fires are widespread, fast-moving and devastating.

Taking this step is about one thing: protecting Victorian lives.

And it sends one clear message: if you have been told to leave – go.

*The State of Disaster is declared for the following local government areas and alpine resorts:*

- Alpine Shire
- Ararat Rural City
- Colac Otway Shire
- Corangamite Shire
- East Gippsland Shire
- Golden Plains Shire
- Greater Bendigo City
- Horsham Rural City
- Lake Mountain Alpine Resort (Unincorporated)
- Mansfield Shire
- Mildura Rural City
- Mitchell Shire
- Moira Shire
- Mount Alexander Shire
- Murrindindi Shire
- Pyrenees Shire
- Strathbogie Shire
- Towong Shire
- Wellington Shire