



**THE HON ANTHONY ALBANESE
PRIME MINISTER OF AUSTRALIA**



**THE HON JACINTA ALLAN
PREMIER OF VICTORIA**

JOINT MEDIA RELEASE

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SUPPORT FOR FIRE-AFFECTED COMMUNITIES

The Allan and Albanese Labor Governments are standing with Victorians who have been affected by the devastating fires that have torn through so much of the state.

Prime Minister Anthony Albanese and Premier Jacinta Allan visited emergency services on the ground in Central Victoria today to announce an initial \$19.5 million support package for bushfire affected Victorians - jointly funded under the Commonwealth-State Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA).

We know that there's been huge losses of livestock, crops and other agricultural businesses across Victoria. The Albanese and Allan Governments will establish a \$10 million emergency support program to help distribute fodder to those farmers who need it.

When disaster hits, one of the most important things people need is a roof over their head. The Governments will provide \$1.5 million to coordinate emergency accommodation options for people who have nowhere else to go and have had to seek shelter in hotels, serviced apartments and other temporary places.

To address and reduce the trauma that so many have been through with these fires, \$1 million will fund experts in disaster recovery mental health support to provide group counselling sessions so communities can better support one another and navigate their recovery together.

We will also set up the Recovery Support Program – one single point of help so people who've lost so much don't have to deal with government red tape. \$5 million in funding will ensure case support workers will be available for affected Victorians to help them navigate matters like housing, legal and financial support and practical help like accessing payments and grants.

A further \$2 million will establish a recovery hotline, providing access to general information and help to navigate recovery services like the emergency accommodation.

The package builds on the Personal Hardship Assistance Program payments which have been activated for those who've had to evacuate their homes and need immediate things like food and medicine. Assistance under the program includes a one-off payment of \$680 per adult and \$340 per child, up to a maximum of \$2,380 per eligible family.

More support will come as further impact assessments are done when it is safe to do so. For more information on relief and recovery visit the VicEmergency website.

Quote attributable to Prime Minister Anthony Albanese

"The Federal Government is working hand in hand with the Victorian Government to provide immediate support for communities impacted by the devastating bushfires."

Quotes attributable to Premier Jacinta Allan

"People heeded the warnings and acted to protect themselves and their loved ones – at great cost. We're standing with them on what will be a long path of recovery."

"From emergency accommodation to mental health help or fodder for livestock – we're ensuring no one is left behind in this recovery effort."

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