



Media Release

12 February, 2020

Salvos ramp up bushfire recovery operations

The Salvation Army has shifted to the recovery phase of its bushfire assistance, thanks to the generous support and contributions of the Australian public.

Salvation Army Emergency Services are positioned at four official recovery hubs in New South Wales and three in Victoria while providing an outreach service on Kangaroo Island, SA.

The shift reflects the move from emergency response and immediate relief to medium-to-long term recovery, with the latter accounting for most of the funds raised by The Salvation Army's national disaster appeal, launched on November 9, 2019.

Since the first response in September, the Salvos have distributed \$11.9 million of the more than \$18 million that has been received and banked.

More than \$7,064,000 has gone towards immediate emergency and relief efforts for first responders and evacuees, while \$4.86 million in hardship payments has been distributed directly to people in need.

The Salvation Army's Lt. Colonel Neil Venables says, "We have been overwhelmed by the support and generosity of Australians from all walks of life and stand by our history of getting donated funds to those in need, as fast as possible."

"We'd like to acknowledge the significant support of Woolworths, our national disaster partner and their S.T.A.N.D program which provides Support Through Australian Natural Disasters, as well as the generosity of their team and customers.

"It all means the Salvos will be equipped to stand alongside Australians who are rebuilding their lives and communities after this wave of natural disasters."

"The focus of The Salvation Army's work now is to provide support to people who have lost everything in this disaster. Our experience tells us that up to 70 per cent of donated funds will need to be spent in the recovery stages – that is, anywhere from now up to two to three years," says Lt. Colonel Venables.

The Salvation Army is establishing a dedicated Bushfire Recovery Team, nationally coordinated and locally embedded. The BRT will lead the Salvos' engagement with federal, state, regional and community groups.

Bushfire Recovery Team services will include financial assistance and counselling; a dedicated telephone line where workers can assess and deliver material aid; outreach workers embedded in local communities across Queensland, New South Wales, Victoria and South Australia and; caseworkers based in communities to deliver holistic assistance, including financial, emotional and psychological responses.

Australia's disaster season is far from over as flooding rains create new challenges to be met by Salvation Army Emergency Services which operates in a 24/7 state of readiness.

The Salvation Army encourages anyone in need of assistance to reach out immediately. For details visit salvationarmy.org.au.

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*S.T.A.N.D. (Support Through Australian Natural Disasters) raises funds to help the community with disaster preparedness, response, recovery and resilience. Woolworths accepts donations at its checkouts and through the sale of the S.T.A.N.D. branded water.

For more information or media comment, please contact:

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