

Community Newsletter

Ovens Fire Complex

Friday 10th January, 2020

Fire Information

The Abbeyard – Yarrarabula South fire joined with the Mt Buffalo – The Horn and now is 64,004 ha in size. The cold change with the anticipated wind, increased the fire activity with lightning followed by 2-4 ml of rain across the fire ground.

Whorouly/Carboor/Whitfield area of the fire was successfully contained including the Mt Emu breakaway. This will be patrolled.

Mt Buffalo

Intensive aerial firebombing yesterday suppressed the fire progressing north on Mt Buffalo. Fire Retardant was laid by aerial drops around the Mt Chalet in preparation of ember attack.

Buckland Valley Area

Fire expanded significantly and spotted eastward. Aerial bombing held the fire east of the containment line preventing fire impact on Harrierville and other towns in the Ovens Valley.

With the weather more favourable there is intention to consolidate control lines with fire crews on the ground today.

Interesting facts

Yesterday OVENS Incident Control Centre (ICC):

- 700+ vehicles came in and were despatched from the Staging Area.
- 500 packed meals were delivered to the fire ground
- 150+ meals were prepared by the Camp Kitchen for lunch and again for dinner
- 220+ people are working in and around the Ovens Incident Control Centre.
- The Centre includes the Incident Controller, Operations, Planning, Logistics, Resources, Public Information, Aircraft personnel, cooks, cleaners, scribes etc. They are from all emergency services agencies.
- 40 Australian Defence Forces personnel
- 25 American Fire Fighters from Los Angeles, California
- 60 SES volunteers managing the staging area, deliveries and door knocking when need.

Relief Centres/Information

- Relief Centres - **Community members**
Wangaratta – Wangaratta Performing Arts Centre
Cnr Ovens and Ford Street
Wangaratta Relief Centre: 0429 627 952
Latchford Barracks
81 Bonegilla Road, Bonegilla
- Relief Centres - **Pets/Trailers**
Wodonga – Wodonga Showgrounds,
Wilson Street, Wodonga
Wangaratta – Wangaratta Showgrounds,
Evans Street, Wangaratta
- Relief Centres - **Stock** –
Wodonga – Wodonga Showgrounds,
Wilson Street, Wodonga
Wangaratta – Wangaratta Saleyards,
99 Shanley St, Wangaratta

If you choose to leave the area please register with either a Relief Centre, Myrtleford Library or via website Red Cross Web site.
Register.Find.Reunite
Scroll to event name – Ovens Complex Fire

Key concerns

A **BIG THANK YOU** for listening to our warnings and leaving the area even though the fire has not yet impacted our communities.

Currently we have 50 Victoria Police members in Kiewa, Ovens and King Valleys day and night. Roles include manning Traffic Management Control points, public reassurance such as patrolling towns for business, resident and people protection particularly where evacuation notices have been issued. Door knocking the community asking of resident evacuation intentions, taking care of our vulnerable community including those who are power dependant.

Protect your health

Smoke from the fires is causing significant impact for local communities.

- **Smoke can affect your health.**

If you are unable to leave the impact area, stay inside your home, close windows and doors, and reduce your activity. If you must go outside use a P2 mask.

Nurse-on-Call on 1300 60 60 24 (this is a phone service that allows you to discuss any health related issue with a registered nurse, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week for the cost of a local call from anywhere in Victoria).

Water Management

North East Water is urging residents within the fire affected communities to conserve water supplies. Please do not leave sprinklers unattended especially if you are evacuating. North East Water staff and other authorised officers have been directed to enter unattended properties to turn off garden sprinklers. People are urged to conserve tap water as much as possible, so that their towns don't run out of water before a fire front arrives. Residents are asked to respect North East Water staff and understand that this action could be life-saving at a time when community needs the water. All water treatment plants are operating, and water is safe to drink. For further information www.newater.com.au

Road closures

A number of roads have been closed. As a precaution please, carry personal ID at all times with a secondary document such as rate notice, power bill, or registration certificate for your vehicle. **Some** roads may be open to residents only and the above information will be required to be sighted by the Traffic Management Point personnel **BEFORE** you're allowed through.

Information on updated road closures is available via 13 11 70 or the VicTraffic website traffic.vicroads.vic.gov.au

Mental health

It is normal to have strong emotional or physical reactions following a distressing event. There is always help available through:

Your doctor
Local mental health professionals

[Lifeline - 131 114](tel:131114)

[Beyond Blue - 1300 224 636](tel:1300224636)

[MensLine - 1300 789 978](tel:1300789978)

[Kid's Help Line - 1800 55 1800](tel:1800551800)

[Parent Line - 13 22 89](tel:132289)

Family Violence

There is an increased risk of family violence after an emergency. Help is available. Visit www.vic.gov.au/familyviolence or call 1800 737 732 (1800RESPECT).

Useful information

More information is provided on your local council's website and social media channels <https://knowyourcouncil.vic.gov.au/>.

Contact VicEmergency Hotline (1800 226 226) to speak to someone about recovering. They can connect you with people who can help.

Stay informed

- www.emergency.vic.gov.au.
- VicEmergency Hotline - freecall 1800 226 226.
- VicEmergency app.
- Facebook or Twitter (#vicHAZARD).
- Local radio <insert frequency if known>

To access this information in other languages call the Translating and Interpreting Service on 131 450 (freecall) and ask them to call VicEmergency Hotline.

If you are deaf, hard of hearing, or have a speech/communication impairment contact National Relay Service on 1800 555 677 and ask them to call the VicEmergency Hotline.