



CFMEU FFPD Disaster Recovery Fund – Victorian Bushfire Appeal



February 2009



CFMEU Forestry and Furnishing Products Division

CFMEU AIMS TO RAISE \$1 MILLION - SUPPORT THE \$20 PER MEMBER LEVY TO HELP REACH THIS TARGET

Key points:

- * Members have called on the Union to coordinate fund raising for fire victims
- * CFMEU commits to \$1 million
- * Funds are for Union members, their families, friends, co-workers and communities
- * Members will receive reports on how funds have been spent

The CFMEU FFPD is calling for support to raise funds to assist our members, their families and communities who have suffered as a result of Australia's worst bushfire disaster on the weekend of February 7th and 8th, 2009.

Following approaches from members, the CFMEU is determined to raise \$1 million to go directly to those in need. Organisers from our Division will be holding workplace meetings across all States over the coming weeks to seek support

from workplaces for a \$20 levy per member.

The impact of this disaster is enormous. To recover, our Victorian workmates will need all of our collective Union strength and support.

The funds raised will be held in a separate and dedicated bank account.

Members will receive reports on how this money is being spent.

Members of our Union are feeling the terrible impacts of this fire in a range of ways.

So far one of our members

has been confirmed to have died, others are missing and many more have lost their homes.

The funds will all be made available direct to Union members their families, friends, co-workers and communities who have suffered injury or loss. In particular, for those who might otherwise fall through the gap.

Workplace meetings will be calling on employers to match the contributions raised by workers.

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Pictured on the right is CFMEU member Paul (Keg) Height from Carter Holt Harvey Lakeside Sawmill in Mount Gambier, part of the CFS contingent fighting the fire in Victoria.

Photo:
Peter Ward
Herald Sun

Together we are Stronger

Worst bushfire emergency in our history



CFA fire fighter from the Gapsted crew moves into position fighting a scrub fire on property off Blacks Flat Road near Beechworth.

Photo: David Caird
Herald Sun

Victoria has suffered the worst bushfire emergency in Australia’s recorded history.

Over 180 people are now confirmed dead across the state, but with over 80 people still missing it is expected this toll will rise in excess of 200.

Over 900 houses have been destroyed, along with countless

other facilities such as schools, community centres, sporting clubs, farm sheds and vital infrastructure, including hundreds of head of livestock.

These fires have surpassed the devastation caused by the Ash Wednesday bushfires of 1983, fanned by the gale force winds and temperatures exceeding 46

degrees experienced on Saturday 6th February.

Fires still continue to burn across the state with many living with the continuing prospect of disaster.

More than 4000 fire-fighters from every state and territory continue to fight the blaze.



Aerial view of the burnt cars outside Kinglake after the bushfires tore through the area.

Photo: Mark Smith
Herald Sun

Warning over bushfire appeal scams

The Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) is warning of potential scams as people prepare to donate to the various bushfire appeals.

It says people's generosity was exploited by scammers during the 2003 Canberra bushfires and the Boxing Day tsunami. The ACCC says people should use

their common-sense and refrain from sending money or giving details to anyone who is not known and trusted.

Impact upon CFMEU FFPD members

Timber towns have been hit extraordinarily hard by these fires.

The CFMEU-FFPD is already aware of the fatality of one union member.

Many members have lost their homes, stock, sheds and fences in the bushfire situation.

Many more members have had family and friends affected by these fires.

Every Victorian CFMEU FFPD member has been touched in some way by these horrific events.

The timber communities of the Central Highlands and Gippsland are amongst the hardest hit.

The timber town of Marysville in central Victoria has been levelled. In Narbethong, Toolangi, Murrindindi, Yarram and Drouin, sawmills have been either destroyed or partially damaged, along with considerable resource loss.

This will put many members out of work for the immediate future, and places a question mark over job security for CFMEU FFPD members in the area.

More resource and other mills continue to be threatened including the ITC mill at Alexandra which has sustained two days of ember attack.

The timber town of Myrtleford and the CHH mill in

the state's north east where one CFMEU FFPD member has already lost his house, also continues to be threatened by bushfires.

Victorian timber workers face challenging times ahead as they, their families, workmates and communities rebuild their lives.

Given the unprecedented nature of this disaster, we're sure that union members will respond overwhelmingly to the proposed \$20 per member levy.



A fire fighting helicopter approaches an out of control bushfire in the Bunyip State Park near Labertouche, 125 km west of Melbourne

Photo: ABC News On Line (AFP)



HELP THANK OUR FIREFIGHTERS

The fires ripped through towns and suburbs and farms and forests, destroying lives and livelihoods. Ashen remains, the sorrowful legacy of the devastation it caused. Never before in Australian history have we been confronted with such destruction at the hands of fire. While we mourn the terrible effects of this catastrophe, it's important to remember those who risked their lives to help others.

HOW YOU CAN SAY THANK YOU

The United Firefighters Union

have launched a website which members can visit at:

www.thankyoufuries.com

If you have been moved by the tremendous efforts of our fire fighters, support staff and other emergency workers, or would just like to say thank you, here is your chance.

Visit the website and post a message or photo.

All messages will be forwarded on and your thoughts will be well received.

Victorian Premier John Brumby is urging people to wear a yellow ribbon to show their support for the victims of the bushfires and firefighters by

wearing a yellow ribbon.

He described the yellow ribbon campaign as "a fantastic way for people to show their support for our volunteer firefighters, career firefighters and all who put their lives on the line protecting the state," he said.

"It is also a great way for people to express their support, strength and comfort for those who have lost their lives.

The yellow ribbon signifies support for the CFA, DSE and interstate firefighters and solidarity with the hundreds who have died and thousands who have lost homes and possessions.



SUPPORT OUR FIRIES

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THE CFMEU DISASTER RECOVERY FUND 2009 Victorian Bushfire Appeal



MOTION TO SUPPORT A \$20 LEVY

We send our sympathy to those who have lost friends or family and pledge our support for those who have been injured and/or suffered loss or damage to houses and other property, local community facilities and workplaces.

We vote to support the CFMEU Disaster Recovery Fund – 2009 Victorian Bushfire Appeal, by contributing, via increased union dues: either \$20 or \$5 per week for the next 4 weeks.

In recognition of the huge need for assistance we call on our employer to match our contribution.

Name of workplace:

Workplace location:

Date:

THE CFMEU DISASTER RECOVERY FUND

Together we are stronger.

NATIONALLY THE UNION AIMS TO RAISE \$1,000,000

Support a once off \$20 levy to help Victorians recover from the bushfires

In response to the devastating effect of the bush fires on an unprecedented number of Victorians including CFMEU members, their family, friends and community, the officers of the CFMEU recommend that we immediately establish a CFMEU Disaster Recovery Fund (the Fund) to provide assistance.

The Fund will be based on the principles that:

- across the whole of the CFMEU a strong collective effort will be made to raise funds.
- in our Division the Fund will be started via a once off voluntary levy at each workplace and employers

will be requested to match worker contributions dollar for dollar

- if the majority at a workplace vote in favour of contributing to the fund then the levy will be raised through an increase to union dues at that workplace of:
 - a. either a once off \$20 or
 - b. a \$5 increase for 4 weeks
- workplaces may vote for a higher contribution
- the Fund may also receive contributions from individuals and other organisations
- money collected will be banked into a separate CFMEU Disaster Recovery Fund account and all the money will be made available to union members, their family,

friends, co-workers and community who have suffered injury or loss due to the 2009 Victorian bushfires, in particular to assist those who may otherwise fall through the gap

- the collection and distribution of the Funds will be transparent and reporting will be consistent with the requirements of the union rules.

An advisory group, including Union, community and industry representatives will be set up to deal with applications for assistance and ensure that the money gets out directly and quickly to those who need it.

**THE CFMEU DISASTER
RECOVERY FUND**
Together we are stronger