



12-month _____

Disaster Appeal Report

Response
Recovery
Rebuild



A message from the frontline



Foreword

As we look back on what has been an incredibly challenging year for many in our communities, it's difficult to believe that twelve months have passed since last summer's Black Summer bushfires held Australia in their grip.

The sheer scale of this disaster has been described by many as 'unprecedented', and so was the response by The Salvation Army's Emergency Services (SAES) and recovery teams. As the blaze moved across affected states, SAES teams would relocate in order to cater to first responders, while recovery teams set up in towns where the fires had passed through.

Topher Holland, General Manager of The Salvation Army's Strategic and Disaster Management unit, oversaw the widespread response that covered more than 290 locations at evacuation centres and firegrounds during the disaster. Volunteers and Salvos personnel served hundreds of thousands of meals and light refreshments over that time, while also making themselves available to walk alongside people and provide emotional, psychological and spiritual support.

"Our initial response was to assist people who had been through an incredibly traumatic event – an ongoing event," says Topher.

"The saying that we always use is that 'we meet people at their point of need'. That need changes as time goes on. So, initially it's food, shelter, clothing, and then it's 'right, what do I do from here – is my house burnt down? What's actually happening here? And what is the support I need to move forward in?' So, there's always ongoing care."

With years of experience working in disaster management, including internationally, Drew Ruthven, The Salvation Army's General Manager for Bushfire Recovery, understands that for many people, it takes time to be ready to rebuild – not just their homes but also their lives.

Recovery is a long-term process as people come to terms with financial, emotional and psychological loss. There was a variety of need for those impacted that Black Summer – people who completely lost their house, people who lost everything in their house, people who took a huge hit to their livelihood when they lost farming equipment or livestock, and people who were just incredibly fearful of what was going on.

"With many people impacted by multiple disasters, that variety of need was immense," says Drew.

"Local Salvation Army corps (faith communities) and services, as well as dedicated rural chaplains, had already been providing support to drought-stricken communities – only to see the same community ravaged by fire and then flood. The financial assistance provided has been a lifeline, but so has the human connection of an encouraging phone call or visit offering emotional, psychological and spiritual support."

For a significant number of people impacted by the fires, restrictions brought about by the global COVID-19 pandemic added an additional layer of complexity to the recovery process. Those already doing it tough found themselves separated and locked behind closed doors, while many remained in the homes of strangers, tents or caravans. People rebuilding their homes experienced holdups with insurance claims, drafting plans, permit applications, contracting builders or clearing rubble from their land. Those living in rental properties destroyed by fires found it challenging to secure new accommodation in communities suffering multiple property losses.

"We adapted our response and continue to walk alongside communities, with teams assessing applications for support through a dedicated telephone line. Our outreach workers also went 'mobile', using donated vehicles such as Winnebagos to travel to communities, particularly regional and rural areas hardest hit by the fires," Drew adds.

The New South Wales government has since recognised members of The Salvation Army and SAES volunteers across the state for the significant contribution they provided during the bushfire crisis.

"It is really important to me – and I encourage my team – that we want people to understand this, 'there's no pit so deep that love can't reach you and hope can't help you,'" says Topher.

"We want people to understand that's what we try and do – in this time of despair, incredible challenges or difficulty – The Salvation Army wants to come alongside you – give you love and hope."

Hope is also what has fostered this amazing ability of communities to remain resilient throughout adversity, and individuals to display determination when rebuilding their lives. Through the generous support and contributions of the Australian public, our corporate partners and supporters overseas, we will continue to live, love and fight alongside the thousands of Australians who remain impacted by last summer's fires as part of our mission to leave no one in need.

How we've helped

The Salvation Army has been at the forefront of the devastating Black Summer fires and continues to journey alongside people, more than a year since launching the Bushfire Disaster Appeal on 9 November 2019.

Funds donated to the 2019-2020 Bushfire Disaster Appeal will only be spent on the response and recovery from this disaster.

The appeal will not incur administration or fundraising fees. The cost of governance, auditing and reporting will be capped at no more than 2% of funds raised and is likely to be far less. At least 98% of funds raised is spent on delivering relief and support services on the ground for those affected by these fires. This also includes any interest earned during that period.



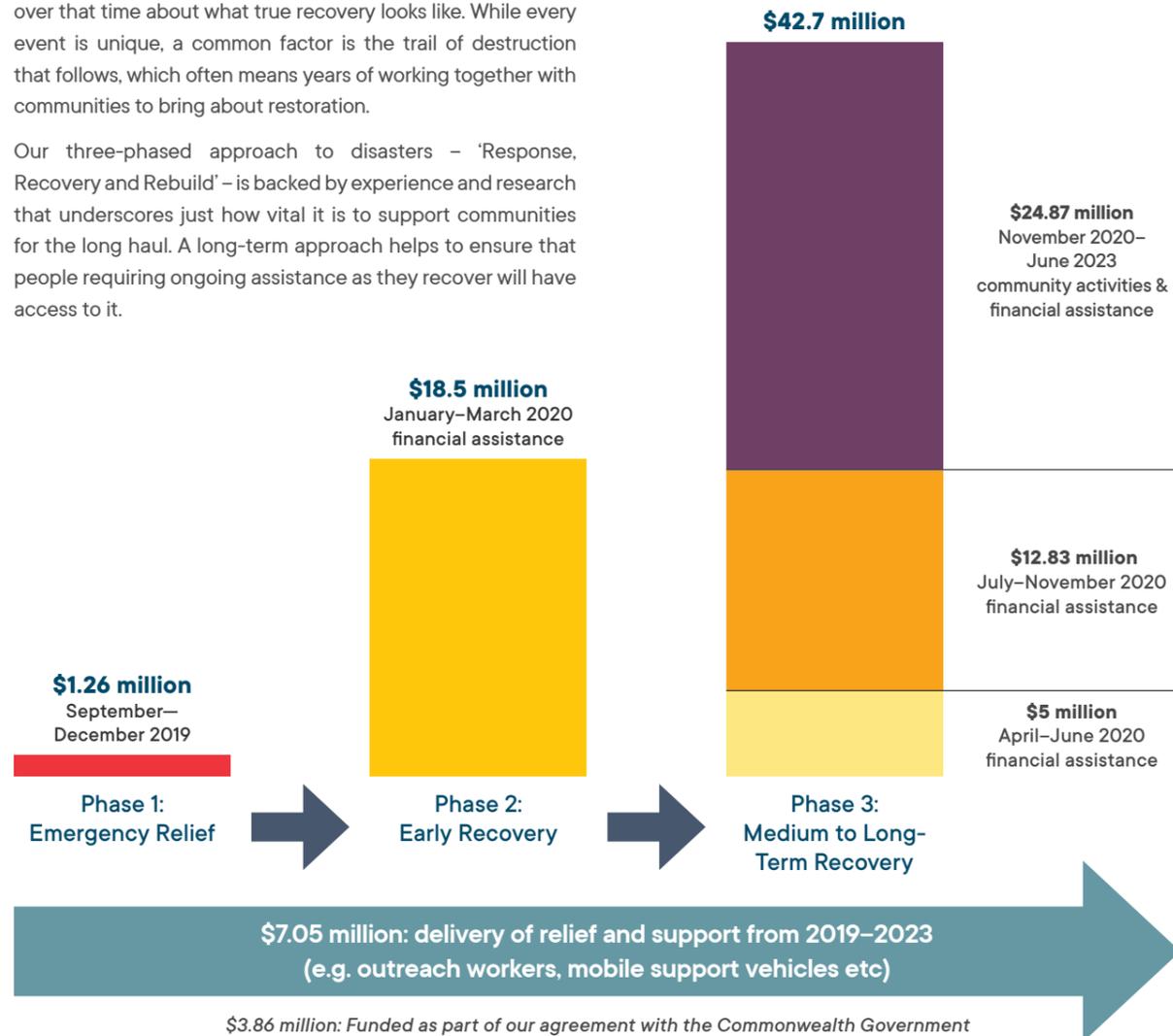
Numbers as at 9 November 2020.

Stages of bushfire assistance

One of the common themes that has emerged from the public has been around why all funds are not distributed immediately to those affected.

The Salvation Army in Australia has been responding to disasters and other crises since 1887 and has learned much over that time about what true recovery looks like. While every event is unique, a common factor is the trail of destruction that follows, which often means years of working together with communities to bring about restoration.

Our three-phased approach to disasters – ‘Response, Recovery and Rebuild’ – is backed by experience and research that underscores just how vital it is to support communities for the long haul. A long-term approach helps to ensure that people requiring ongoing assistance as they recover will have access to it.



Phase 1: Emergency relief: Activating at evacuation and recovery centres during and in the immediate aftermath of the disaster, Salvation Army Emergency Services (SAES), rural chaplains and local Salvos met the immediate needs of those impacted. In this phase, food, water, shelter and medicine were a priority. Salvos were also providing emotional and spiritual support to people during that stressful time.

Phase 2: Early recovery: After the initial emergency settled down, impacted people had time to assess the damage to their homes and livelihoods. Finding temporary stable accommodation and adjusting to a ‘new normal’ happened in this period. Direct financial assistance provided during this phase assisted people to cover expenses such as living costs and the extensive clean-up of their properties.

Phase 3: Medium to long-term recovery: This is the phase many people are now in and where they come across large expenses. As council permits get approved and the initial shock of the disaster eases, many are beginning to rebuild permanent structures. For others, this is the first time they have reached out to The Salvation Army for help. In addition to providing individuals and families with further financial assistance, this is where we also support with community activities. Local Salvos are active participants in community consultation to support recovery needs, help map out a way forward and invest in local initiatives to restore vibrant communities. As a national organisation that is locally embedded, Salvos not only understand their community – they are a part of it, which means they are often there before, during and after a disaster strikes.



Grants

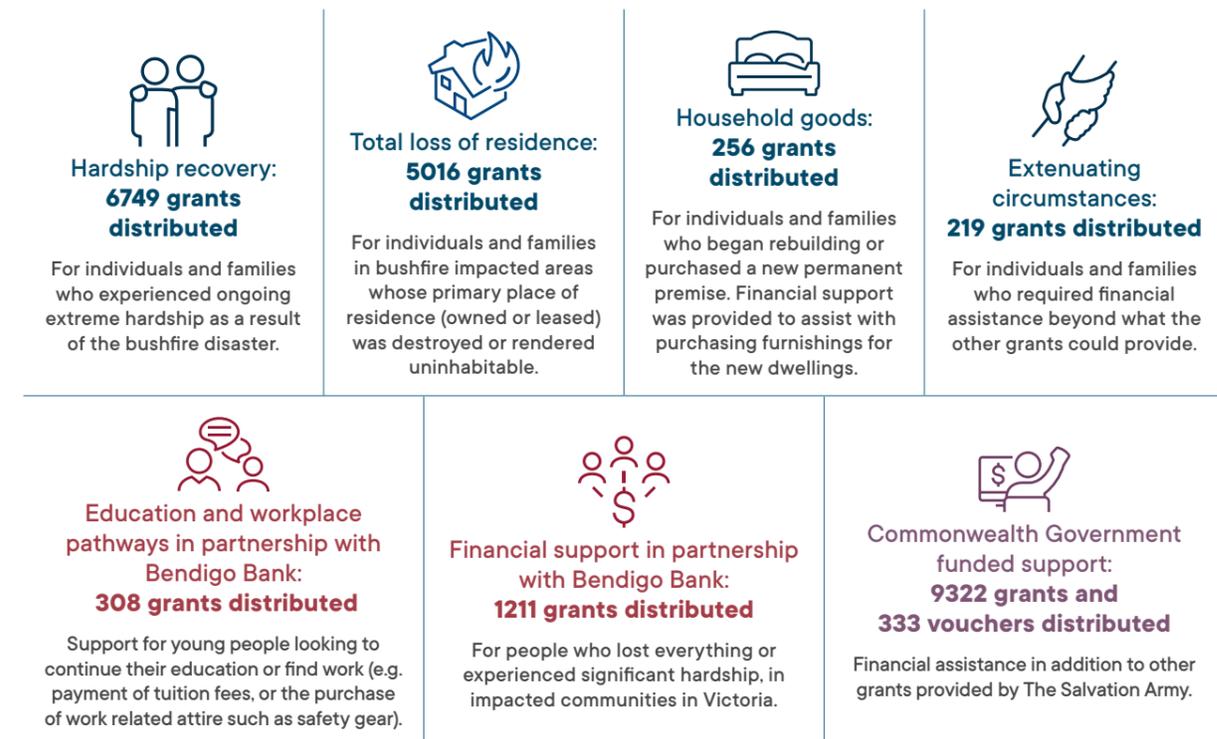
The Salvation Army has and continues to provide a suite of financial grants to help people get back on their feet, support those who are rebuilding, or aid with replacing lost furniture, household items and tools.

Grants were designed and allocated based on the number of people who were likely to need it and the type of support required across the months and years involved to recover from such as large-scale disaster. While some people accessed multiple grants, others only contacted The Salvation Army for the first time later into their recovery journey.

People were able to apply for these grants through a dedicated Salvation Army disaster relief telephone number and in person. As a result of the temporary closure of recovery centres in response to COVID-19 restrictions, a

large portion of financial assistance was provided over the phone. Salvos also connected with people across more than 22,000 suburbs, informing them of the type of support available to them or referring them onto other agencies for specialist support, such as mental health care. Grant details were also shared on social media and advertised through local newspapers and community noticeboards.

On average, it took three to four days to process a grant application and make payment, assuming documentation to confirm identity and eligibility were provided. Where applicants did not have documentation, or lost them in the fires, Salvos reached out to local councils, fire authorities and other recovery groups, to help process people’s applications as quickly as possible. As of 9 November 2020:



The Salvation Army is a public benevolent institution (PBI) – a type of charitable institution whose main purpose is to relieve poverty or distress. This means we can only support people; not businesses, animals or physical infrastructure.

Under our Deductible Gift Recipient (DGR) status, The Salvation Army also cannot use financial donations for broader community projects such as rebuilding or repairing sporting clubs, community neighbourhood centres, wildlife recovery or environmental rehabilitation.

Specialist financial assistance

The Salvation Army's Moneycare and Doorways programs also provided vital support to individuals and families during the bushfires.

After fires tore through the Adelaide Hills, just before Christmas 2019, The Salvation Army's Moneycare team was there to provide advice and assistance. Financial counsellor Karyn Hicks is still supporting the fire-affected community, helping people to access bushfire grants and offering financial planning and other support.

She said some people who presented for support were weeping, while others sat in shocked, stunned silence. A majority never asked for any sort of 'charity' or support before.

"Most of the properties affected are rural. One issue is loss of pasture for stockfeed. Others lost stock as well, or the ability to run their rural businesses in other ways."

As a community volunteer, local resident Heather has always helped others and never asked for help before – that is, until she lost her home to fire in the Adelaide Hills on the afternoon of 20 December.

The devastating fire burned through around 25,000 hectares of land, destroyed more than 70 homes and damaged hundreds more. At least 4000 farm animals were killed, as well as untold numbers of native wildlife. Tragically, the fire also claimed the life of Heather's neighbour.

"I lost everything...all fencing, sheds, house and all the contents," Heather recalls.

With Salvation Army bushfire funds, she was able to re-seed pasture and organise other essentials not covered by insurance.

As a Justice of the Peace, Heather helped many others after the fires with paperwork, but having just lost her own home, she herself felt overwhelmed.

"The fact that (Moneycare financial counsellor) Karyn and others were there to help with paperwork as well, meant so much," Heather said.

"It got to the stage where if you gave me another form to fill in, I just probably wouldn't have coped. So, to have somebody like the recovery team, my case manager and Karyn doing the things she did to help me get some of the grants through, lifted so much pressure."

Although the road ahead remains long, Karyn said she felt privileged to represent The Salvation Army as part of a wider recovery team.

"The recovery centre here is amazing," she shared. "The staff are absolutely amazing. We've got mental health services available, Rural Business Support to help people apply for business grants and a person from Primary Industries and Resources."

"We work really well together. We've all got that common thing of just helping, wanting to help people when they need it, practically and also with a listening ear. There have been many tears – many, many tears," Karyn added. "We're here to give people whatever they need at the time and everyone's just so appreciative."

"You can't believe how grateful we are to you guys and all the people who have donated. Every little help we have gotten has come from everyone's kindness. All of you that help put that together and are on the ground trying to help us, it blows our minds."

- Hazel, Cobargo NSW

Connecting with remote communities

When the tight-knit community of Wyaliba was decimated by bushfires in November 2019, the residents suffered unspeakable trauma and loss.

While a range of government and non-government organisations – including The Salvation Army – have provided much-needed support, the recovery process has been hindered by the remoteness of the community.

Wyaliba is a privately-owned area of remote bushland 40 kilometres east of Glen Innes, New South Wales. Most of the 100 residents live off the grid.

While the community received plenty of media attention in the weeks following the disaster and assistance arrived not long after, clean-up and long-term recovery has been challenging, with many unforeseen detours, hold-ups, and emotional and physical obstacles to overcome along the way.

With poor service so deep in the bush, assessing individual claims for assistance via telephone or email proved difficult for Salvos Bushfire Recovery Teams. A further complication was the fact that the homes were not registered as separate addresses, unlike other bushfire-impacted communities.

"The problem was the documents – they couldn't actually get any documents to prove there was a loss of dwelling compared to a dwelling that was registered. They've just built up their dwelling by themselves," said phone assessor, Leah.

A unique approach had to be taken. After planning and creating working templates to gather the information they

needed, a team of eight Salvation Army workers – made up of assessors, outreach workers and financial counsellors – set out in the mobile recovery Winnebago to spend a week with the people of Wyaliba.

Bushfire Recovery Team leader, Shane Mehew, said the experience was eye-opening.

"I was listening to a lot of trauma," says Shane. "One guy there was crouched down in a concrete structure with his missus and his dog and a wet blanket over him while the flames were just going over the top. He tried to get out, but his car was melting – he showed me all the damage."

"His recovery support will be more mental health, dealing with his trauma, financial help to get back on his feet and help with rent," said Shane.

Delays in council approvals have also held back rebuilds.

"The rebuild process is completely not straight forward," Leah said. "There's a lot of different people who they need to go through. Even getting contractors out there to have access to their lot, given how much debris there is laying around. There's just no tracks anymore because everything is everywhere."

Leah added that The Salvation Army's bushfire grants were invaluable in helping residents with the rebuilding process.

"It gives them an opportunity to finally start getting things cleared and rebuilt so they can settle."





Temporary housing pods

The Salvation Army entered into an initiative with the New South Wales Government and the Minderoo Foundation to provide bushfire-affected families with a temporary home while they rebuild.

Under the initiative, to which The Salvation Army contributed \$1.5 million, temporary accommodation 'pods', with built-in electricity, water and sewer connections have been set up on people's properties for a period of up to two years. The pods are different sizes, depending on the needs of the property owner or size of the family being assisted.

The Salvation Army has supported 150 households through this initiative.

Sara Gardner's home in Mogo, New South Wales, was one of more than 3000 houses destroyed during the Black Summer bushfires.

"We were completely wiped out – everything gone," Sara recalled. "We were on a seven-acre property with two houses, a full mechanic's workshop and stables."

As one of the first recipients of a recovery pod, Sara and her family have been grateful for the temporary home while they

investigate more permanent solutions. But the combined effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, recent floods and Sara's mum being unwell, has mounted extra pressure on the family. Although she has received financial support from other charitable and government agencies, she has been particularly grateful for her Salvos bushfire outreach worker, Tammy.

Tammy has been working with Sara and her family to provide not just financial support through bushfire grants or gift cards, but also a listening ear, as the family navigate their way through different challenges.

When flooding caused some damage to Sara's pod recently, Tammy was quick to assist. "Tammy has been awesome. She rings me up, asking me how I'm going and if I need anything," Sara said. "We have a joke and we don't just talk about what's going on, we talk about everything."

It's this ongoing emotional support and friendship with Tammy that Sara has been particularly grateful for, adding she was happy to have someone to chat with and lean on – someone who not only understood her struggles but could also offer support outside of her family.

Support every step of the way

Knowing that the recovery journey for people impacted by the fires is different for everyone, The Salvation Army remains committed to journeying alongside people every step of the way. This often means providing multiple financial grants to meet different needs, but more importantly, ongoing emotional and spiritual support.

It was at an evacuation centre in Taree, New South Wales where Brian Nixon and his wife Karen first came into contact with The Salvation Army and connected with Salvo officer, Bruce Harmer. Chatting with Bruce at the time, Brian shared his immediate experience of evacuating his property and the reality of discovering the loss of his home and belongings.

"We heard that our home was burnt out and even had photos sent to us so we knew what to expect," Brian shared. "There was only a bit of our bedroom not burnt, so I could get a few clothes full of ash, but everything else was gone."

Taking part in The Salvation Army's bushfire response in Taree, Bruce recalled their first exchanges.

"Brian and Karen had been evacuated to a motel on the edge of Taree because they had lost their home in the fires. They had a few items with them that they had grabbed on the way out the door and that was all. I can only imagine what feelings they were processing in those very early days of such personal loss. I would chat with Brian and Karen often at the motel and struck up a friendship that remains today."

Almost a year on, Brian said the road to recovery has been slow and difficult. The clean-up of his six-acre hobby farm in Rainbow Flat alone has been a massive job.

"In the beginning, it was the rain and the weather," said Brian. "Then the house had been demolished and the shed had been demolished and everything had been taken away. That was done probably within three months. But they only took the house and shed. All of the burnt trees and burnt fences were still left, so we've had to pay for that, which I think was \$11,000."

While they had house insurance, the estimated bill for the clean-up and rebuilding has been far greater than the insurance company's payout. Brian said he was grateful to have received several grants from The Salvation Army and other charities to assist with different stages of the recovery process.

These grants enabled Brian and Karen to address their immediate needs in the beginning – such as buying some extra clothes and household items.

The grants also helped with the extra clean-up of the property – a necessary step towards attaining a fire rating from the council, which will then allow them to apply for planning and building permits. While the fire rating is still pending, any plans to rebuild are stalled and, at this stage, Brian believes it will be another 12 to 18 months before they can even begin construction.

For Brian, the shock of what happened didn't hit him straight away – as has been the case for many others in his community. He said the ongoing friendship, advice and support he has received from Bruce has been great in helping him deal with a number of challenges. "Bruce has been really good to me. He's a very supportive person. If I need advice or something, I'll ring Bruce."

With Bruce based in Melbourne and state border closed for a period due to COVID-19, regular contact through phone calls has enabled him to continue supporting Brian through the difficult times, but he is hoping to be able to visit Brian and Karen before Christmas.

"My wife, Carolyn, and I were able to visit Brian and Karen at their temporary accommodation three months after the fires, delivering a hamper to help them through and spending time to just listen and encourage," said Bruce. "I look forward to the day when I can visit them in their own home. We will continue to call each other and when possible catch up in person."

Brian and Karen have lived through an unimaginable year of heartbreak and loss, compounded by personal injury and setbacks. While the road to recovery is still a long one, support from Bruce and The Salvation Army Bushfire Recovery Teams will continue now and into the future, as the couple work to re-establish themselves on their property.

"We are so thankful and everyone has been so helpful and supportive of each other," said Brian. "It's a bit overwhelming though; nobody thought it would be like this. If there's one silver lining, it's the friendship I built with Bruce – I may have lost everything else, but I gained a great friendship."



Unlocking the door to hope after a crisis

A new year can mean a fresh start, but any plans Victorian resident Cindy had for the future were thrown into chaos on 29 December last year when a bushfire alert escalated into a fight for survival.

Cindy was forced to evacuate her house in Bairnsdale, East Gippsland, when it came under threat from bushfires.

"I got the text message saying the Buchanan fire was imminent, so I put my dogs in the car," said Cindy. "I locked the door to my house behind me and I was really frustrated with having to leave because I thought I would be back tomorrow."

With literally nowhere to go, she found some emergency accommodation under a stranger's roof for a few days before temporarily moving into a friend's shed. Ten days later, Cindy returned home only to find it had been reduced to ash and rubble in the fires. Realising she had narrowly escaped with her life, she now knew she had to start rebuilding – physically and emotionally.

Cindy was connected to various social services, but things didn't go to plan, and a series of events left her homeless. She also began displaying symptoms of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder. She walked the streets of nearby Lakes Entrance for three days with her meagre possessions and her dogs. Cindy admits she had almost lost hope by this stage.

It was at this low point that Cindy met Lea Davis, a bushfire outreach worker for The Salvation Army in the East Gippsland region.

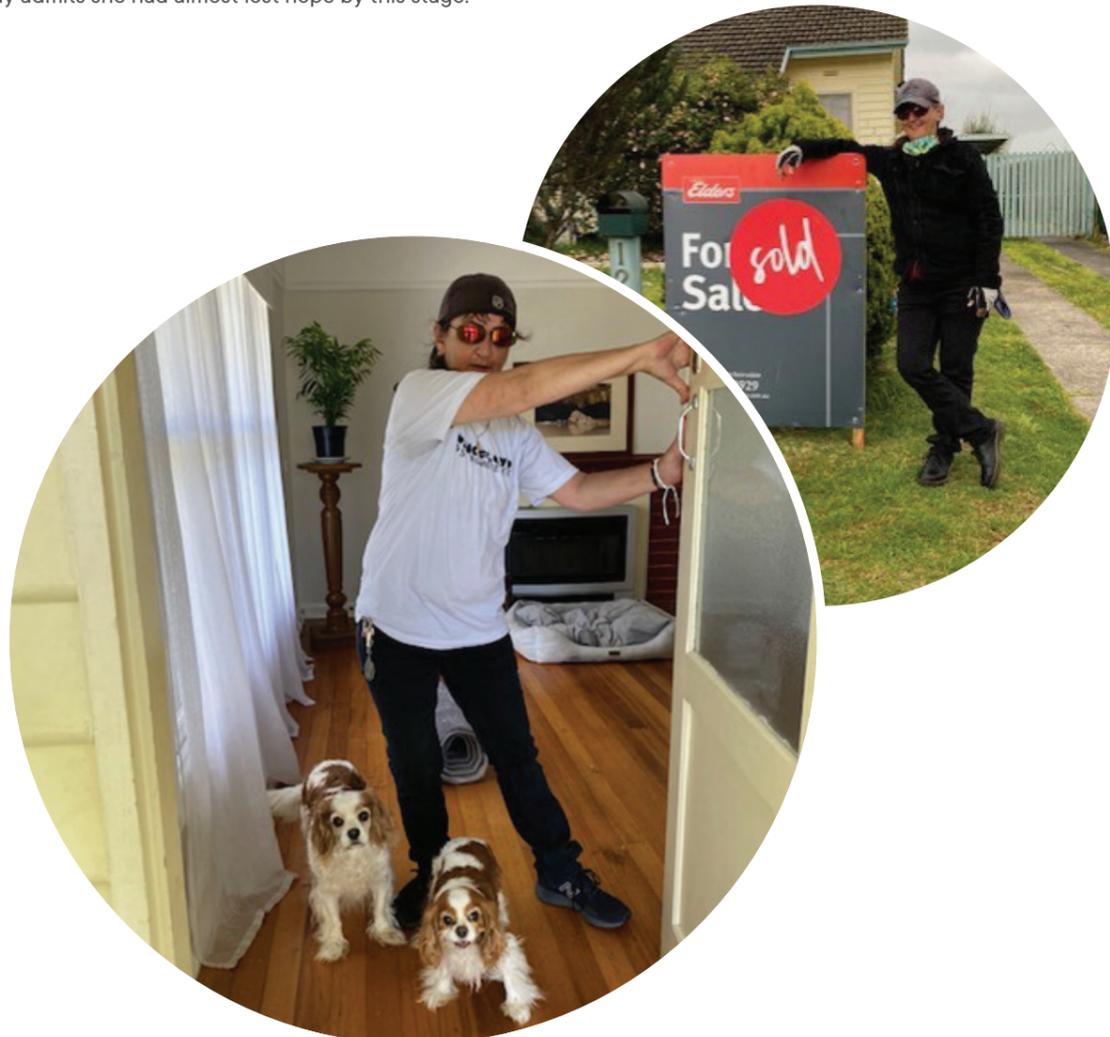
"When I first met Cindy, she was really angry," said Lea. "I think she was caught up in a myriad of letdowns and disappointments, and this had left her feeling she had lost all hope of ever getting back on her feet."

Lea's 'solution-focused' therapy gave Cindy hope. She found she was eligible for a bushfire funding grant from The Salvation Army and Lea helped her secure short-term accommodation.

"I listened to Lea and I thought, 'This is a real person,'" Cindy recalled. "It was good to see someone who looked in my direction ... but actually saw me."

Cindy began her 'fresh start' and successfully applied for a home loan. In October, she moved into her new house.

She credits her late parents for giving her the tenacity to get through tough times – and the support of Lea to let the healing begin. "I don't think they [my parents] let it be in my nature to give in. In the face of adversity, I keep going," said Cindy. "I can now start my life again."



"The Sallies [Salvation Army] have been absolutely helpful and I appreciate everything they've done. I'm still in shock because you never think it's going to happen to you until it happens – they just called and came by with a fridge, washing machine and TV."

– Patrick, Blue Mountains NSW

Recovery continues

Recovery after any disaster takes time. The Salvation Army knew that the sheer magnitude of the Black Summer bushfires would mean years of helping communities rebuild, not to mention the added complexities and financial hardship experienced by many as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

More than 12-months since Salvos fed and cared for first responders and evacuees, Salvation Army bushfire outreach workers remain in New South Wales, Victoria and South Australia, identifying new areas of need, or where ongoing support is required.

As of 9 November 2020, The Salvation Army distributed \$37.59 million in direct financial assistance. On average we continue to assess more than 300 applications for financial grants every week, in addition to providing emotional and spiritual support. \$24.87 million has therefore been allocated towards community activities and further financial support for people, until June 2023. This includes emotional and mental health support, funding to pay utility bills, new community initiatives and grants to support people with minor repairs or replacing household goods and furnishings.

The Salvation Army has and continues to work with government bodies, as well as other agencies and committees, which is integral to ensuring we're up to date with what is being provided into communities and any future initiatives.

ADVISORY BOARDS AND GROUPS WE ARE INVOLVED WITH

- National Bushfire Recovery Agency
- National Peak Bodies Bushfire Recovery
- National Charities Bushfire Recovery
- Recovery Community Partners Working Group (Resilience NSW)
- Bushfire recovery groups in Gippsland, Snowy Valley, Alpine and Towong
- East Gippsland Psychosocial Recovery Meeting
- Bushfire operations recovery meetings with the New South Wales government and other non-government organisations
- The Salvation Army Bushfire Recovery Advisory Group

Thank you

Thanks to the generous donations of our partners, supporters and everyday Australians, we were able to immediately mobilise support as fires tore through the country.

We would also like to acknowledge the significant number of volunteers who supported Salvation Army Emergency Services teams at the peak of the disasters. Thank you to our volunteers, who provided support at more than 290 locations and across 5700 shifts.

We would also like to thank the following generous supporters who donated in excess of \$100,000.

Australian Pacific Airports Corporation Limited	Myer
Bendigo Bank	NewsCorp
BP	PepsiCo Australia Pty Limited
Chemist Warehouse	Prezzee
Doterra Healing Hands Foundation	Real Estate Industry Collective Initiative
Gandel Foundation	Reece
General Motors Holden Pty Ltd	Ritchies
Hillsong Church	Scentre Group
Idemitsu Australia Resources	The Coca-Cola Foundation
Kmart	The Daily Edited
La Trobe Financial Services	The Lewis Foundation
Lite n' Easy	The Warehouse Group
Lowes	Toyota Motor Corporation
Metricon	Transurban
Motion Picture Distributors Association of Australia	Vicinity Group
MUFG	Westpac
	Woolworths Limited



Words from our major bushfire corporate supporters

Chemist Warehouse

"We knew we wanted to be a part of [bushfire relief], we just weren't sure how. There were quite a number of institutions and charitable organisations offering help. We had to decide who would be the most effective and we felt The Salvation Army were best served to undertake the role. The purpose of our philanthropy is to give back and to build a better future for all of us together."

- Sam Gance, CEO, Chemist Warehouse

The Coca-Cola Foundation

"We were incredibly proud The Coca-Cola Foundation partnered with The Salvation Army to provide immediate emergency assistance including meals, water and medical supplies to those who needed it most. With Coca-Cola Australia's long-standing relationship with the Salvos, we wanted to play our small part to help and express our heartfelt thanks to everyone on the frontlines of this national crisis. We were humbled by the courage and resilience of everyone impacted by this tragedy."

- Russell Mahoney, Director Public Affairs, Communication and Sustainability, Coca-Cola South Pacific.

La Trobe Financial

"The bushfire crisis in Australia during January 2020 reminded us of the true spirit and resilience of Australians. When under duress Australians quickly unite, lend a hand, and do so without question – we become one nation.

The Salvation Army do an extraordinary job in helping people re-build their lives in extraordinary circumstances. During the 2020 bushfires so many people lost their home or were affected financially. In keeping with our corporate value of always placing 'others before self' it was important for us to do our part and contribute."

- Greg O'Neill OAM, President & CEO, La Trobe Financial

Westpac

For 140 years Westpac has shared a strong partnership with The Salvation Army, based on a common purpose to help Australians and our communities. As Australia's oldest bank, we've helped our customers and the community in good times and bad, and The Salvos has a long history of helping communities in times of disaster. So it is no surprise that The Salvation Army is Westpac's partner of choice in times of disaster response and recovery.

During the Black Summer Fires we wanted to show our support by backing the incredible efforts of The Salvation Army Emergency Services team, who are on-the-ground providing practical and emotional support for those who need it the most. We did this by supporting our customers and employees to donate, and with our corporate contribution, the Westpac community supported The Salvos' work to help affected communities respond, recover and rebuild.

- Ross Miller, Chief Customer Engagement Officer, Westpac Consumer Bank

Woolworths

"Woolworths is part of almost every community across Australia, including those regions that were affected by the devastating 2019-20 summer bushfires.

Woolworths customers and team members were amongst the many Australians directly impacted by this unprecedented natural disaster. We knew we had to act quickly and rally together to support our natural disaster partners through the Woolworth Group S.T.A.N.D (Support Through Australian Natural Disasters) program.

"S.T.A.N.D was born out of the need and desire to help Australian communities with disaster preparedness, response, recovery and resilience. We are very proud to partner with The Salvation Army in this program who are well equipped to perform the vital role of providing the practical on ground assistance and emotional support that is so crucial in times of disaster.

"One year on and we are more committed than ever to S.T.A.N.D and supporting the important work of The Salvation Army in helping communities rebuild and get back on their feet."

- Brad Banducci, CEO, Woolworths Group



Adam Goodes, a Woolworths S.T.A.N.D ambassador, is pictured with Brett, who was assisted by The Salvation Army.



The Salvation Army Australia

salvationarmy.org.au

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Recognition of Traditional Custodians

The Salvation Army acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the lands and waters throughout Australia. We pay our respect to Elders, past, present and emerging, acknowledging their continuing relationship to this land and the ongoing living cultures of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples across Australia.