

Media Release



16th February 2021

The Salvation Army provides a multi-level response to the Wooroloo Bushfires

The Salvation Army has and continues to respond to the Wooroloo Bushfires in support of our first responders and the community who have experienced devastating loss and heartbreak. In one of the largest bushfires in recent years, 86 homes were destroyed and leaving hundreds more displaced.

The Salvation Army's response was immediate with our incredible volunteers providing over 18,000 meals through our Emergency Services ensuring our first responders were well cared for. As evacuation centres were established, our chaplains provided a listening ear and advocacy during a disorientating time.

Warren Palmer, Public Relations Secretary says "The loss of 86 homes and the displacement of many hundreds in the community has caused major upheaval and distress. Not only are people dealing with loss but facing an uncertain path ahead in recovery. The Salvation Army together with our partners recognise this and are working to help support this road to recovery both in immediate and the longer-term needs."

On the 8th February, the Recovery Centre was opened in Gidgegannup and The Salvation Army has been providing two case workers and a financial counsellor to assist in their early recovery needs. To date over 218 people have been assisted through the provision of financial assistance and other significant supports. This will likely continue for another full week.

Whilst there are present needs, many will need to draw upon support as they consider their longer-term recovery plans. The Salvation Army with the support of our partners have joined into an initiative with the Minderoo Foundation to provide bushfire-affected families with a temporary home while they rebuild.

Under this project, temporary accommodation 'pods' will be built with electricity, water and sewer systems and will be 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.

"This is a wonderful initiative that will bring great comfort and stability to those seeking to rebuild and we were very keen to partner with the Minderoo Foundation again. We are very appreciative of partners such as HBF, FMG and other supporters who understand that for many this will be a difficult road ahead and have joined with us in this opportunity" Warren Palmer said.

"We are pleased to be assisting the Minderoo Foundation, The Salvation Army and other partners in this initiative to help those impacted by the devastating Wooroloo bushfire. This is a challenging time for Western Australians and HBF is committed to supporting the health and wellbeing of our members, people, and the community," HBF Chief Executive Officer John Van Der Wielen said.

More than 257 pods have been allocated to families across NSW, Victoria and South Australia during the devastating bushfires of 2020 and have served as a significant hand up through the difficult recovery process.

Lee Goddard, Partner Ecosystem and Ground Operations Leader Minderoo Foundation said, "It's so important for people to be able to stay on their land when they've lost everything. We're proud to be partnering with the Salvation Army, an organisation that has been at the forefront of helping Australians in need for over 140 years,

to make pods available for residents affected by the Wooroloo Bushfires. These are one of the solutions we're working to provide to people in need through our close partners."

The Salvation Army will continue to monitor and assess our capacity to provide further support to this community reeling from a terrible ordeal.

If you would like to support the work of The Salvation Army in our emergency disaster response, donations can be made through www.salvationarmy.org.au or calling 137258 (13Salvos).

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For more information, please contact Warren Palmer, Public Relations Secretary, The Salvation Army, Western Australia on 0417 909 964