



Building Commission



FOR BUSHFIRE BUILDING ADVICE CALL 1300 360 320

Bushfire Built Environment Support e-Bulletin, April 2009.

Thank you for volunteering to assist with the long and difficult task of rebuilding communities affected by the devastation caused by February's bushfires.

Your offer of support reflects the tremendous community spirit that has surrounded this tragedy. Importantly your support will play a significant part in ensuring that affected residents can rebuild their communities and homes as quickly as possible.

There is much to be done and a range of professions, trades and skills are still required to assist the affected communities rebuild.

To assist in this task, the Building Commission has created a volunteer section on its website. Here you will find details about how to volunteer.

Volunteer projects

The Minister for Planning established a Built Environment Bushfire Support Roundtable to ensure a coordinated response across the built environment to the bushfire support effort.

The Roundtable comprises relevant industry associations, unions, the insurance industry and government. It is working closely with the Victorian Bushfire Recovery and Reconstruction Authority (VBRRA) to ensure alignment with Government policy.

A built environment volunteer program is in place which identified a range of projects that will assist affected communities and best utilise the skills and expertise of our industry. A number of volunteer projects are already underway. These include:

- **Resident Building Advice** - qualified building surveyors and practitioners have been providing support to affected residents through a dedicated Bushfire Building Advice Line. To Friday 17 April the Advice Line has taken 2936 telephone calls from practitioners and affected residents.
- **Land Surveying project** - led by the Bushfires Surveying Taskforce this volunteer initiative is working to recover, reference and record surviving survey marks and monuments. To date, due to the support of volunteer surveyors, field work has been completed in Kinglake, Hazeldene, Flowerdale and parts of Castella and Steels Creek. Work is still to be finalised in Kinglake West, Strathewan, Humevale and Pheasant Creek. No surveying was required in Marysville. For more information visit www.dse.vic.gov.au and look for the Victorian Bushfires Surveying Taskforce.
- **Fencing** - led by the Victorian Farmers Federation this project is mobilising volunteer support to assist with rebuilding fencing on rural properties. By mid April dedicated teams of volunteers had worked hard to erect close to 1,500kms of fencing on over 400 rural properties across the State but they are still operating under capacity. Over 8,000 km's of boundary fencing was destroyed during the fires so the size of the task is enormous, with approximately 80 percent still to complete. You can volunteer now by contacting the **Victorian Farmers Federation** on **1300 882 833** or **03 9207 5555**.



Bushfire Home Design Service

The Office of the Victorian Government Architect and the Australian Institute of Architects have developed a service which draws upon offers of pro bono assistance to offer a range of well-designed house plans, and a consultation about how these might be tailored to suit individual needs, at no cost to the recipients.

The house designs will be capable of complying with the new Australian Standard for residential buildings in bushfire prone areas and have a focus

on sustainability and amenity.

The designs will be available through the VBRRA website from May and this will also be where potential beneficiaries of the service can register their interest.

If you are an Architect and would like to assist please volunteer now by visiting the website below.

👉 [Read more...](#)



Building Attack Level (BAL) Assessments

Volunteers are invited to undertake a BAL assessment on properties in preparation for the design and rebuild process.

Suitably qualified and experienced registered building practitioners (builders, building surveyors, building inspectors, engineers and other building professionals) are invited to volunteer to support affected property owners by undertaking an initial BAL assessment - volunteer now by visiting the Building Commission website: www.buildingcommission.com.au or by calling the **Bushfire Building Advice line on 1300 360 320**.

The Building Commission and Plumbing Industry Commission have also released a guide to assessing your property's Bushfire Attack Level (BAL). This guide is available by viewing the link below.

👉 [Read more...](#)



Volunteer now

A number of other key projects are under development. Some of these projects will be directly co-ordinated by the Building Commission and others will be progressed under the auspices of the newly formed Victorian Bushfire Recovery and Reconstruction Authority (VBRRA).

You may have already received a telephone call from the Building Commission to check your details, and to discuss when you are available to volunteer and in what area of expertise.

Please visit our website and volunteer now for any of the projects that are underway. Other projects will be commencing in the near future and your ongoing support will be invaluable.

A regular e-Bulletin will be distributed to advise all volunteers and their industry organisations of the status of each project and to call for volunteers to support specific tasks and key activities as they arise.

The VBRRA website contains news and information about the rebuild. Visit www.wewillrebuild.vic.gov.au for more.

👉 [Read more...](#)

Insurance

A number of volunteers have asked about insurance coverage for volunteers. The type of coverage and who provides it depends on the nature of the project, how it is being managed and whether a volunteer is providing their services as an individual or an employee of a company. In summary:

- For individuals volunteering as part of a formal volunteering project that is being managed by a Victorian Government department or agency, insurance coverage is likely to be provided for volunteers. However each project will undergo a risk assessment as a basis for determining insurance that may be provided. Depending on the project, volunteers may be required to attend training or a briefing, and in most cases will be asked to sign a volunteering agreement that outlines their obligations and insurance coverage.

- Individuals volunteering as an employee of a company should seek assurance from their employer that the employers insurance is adequate to respond to their activities as volunteers. This includes formal volunteering projects that are being coordinated by a Victorian Government department or agency.
- A small number of volunteering projects that are being managed by industry associations do not provide insurance for volunteers. This is explicitly stated in the briefing materials for these projects.

Before commencing work as a volunteer you should clarify the insurance arrangements with the volunteer project coordinator.

Information Privacy and unsubscribing

The Building Commission is committed to appropriately collecting and handling your personal information. If you wish to review the Commission's Website Privacy Statement or the Commission's Privacy Policy please click the "Privacy" hyperlink at the bottom of Commission's homepage.

Your personal information will be treated in the strictest confidence and will only be used for the purpose of recording volunteer interest in bushfire reconstruction.

Your personal information may also be disclosed to other government departments, authorities and/or community organisations for the purpose of providing information to assist with and organise bushfire reconstruction.

Please note that if you do not wish to have your details passed on, then we will not be able to use your skills for the bushfire reconstruction.

If you wish to be removed from our database, please click on the link below or call the **Bushfire Building Advice line** on **1300 360 320** between 9.00am-5.00pm Monday to Friday.

To unsubscribe from this mailing list, please reply to this e-mail with the subject [Unsubscribe](#)

Level 27, Casselden Place, 2 Lonsdale St, Melbourne VIC, Australia 3000. PO Box 536E, Melbourne VIC Australia 3001 Telephone +61 3 9285 6400, Facsimile +61 3 9285 6464, DX 210 299 Melbourne, Email, www.buildingcommission.com.au © 2009 Building Commission