

January 9, 2013

## Bushfire update and advice for policyholders

The Insurance Council of Australia has issued an update on the current bushfire situation in Tasmania, New South Wales and Victoria.

The ICA continues to monitor the situation across south-eastern Australia and remains in contact with emergency services in fire-affected states.

ICA CEO Rob Whelan said: “The ICA would like to acknowledge the extraordinary efforts of all fire services involved in battling the bushfires in protecting the lives, homes, businesses and property of Australians.”

### **Tasmania**

- Preliminary data collected by the Insurance Council of Australia (ICA) shows more than 510 claims have now been received from policyholders affected by the Tasmanian bushfires, with losses estimated about \$49 million.
- Further expansion of the declared catastrophe area in Tasmania is possible given the ongoing nature of the fire situation.
- ICA CEO Rob Whelan says it is expected that once people start to return to their homes these numbers will rise.
- “At present we believe more than 100 properties in Tasmania have been destroyed. Homeowners must remain vigilant and follow the advice of emergency services until the danger has passed,” he said.
- “ICA and insurance company staff are on the ground at recovery centres in Tasmania assisting policyholders with insurance-related questions.”

### **New South Wales**

- No significant property loss in the state
- ICA CEO Rob Whelan said: “Despite NSW experiencing more than 140 bushfires yesterday, at this stage there has been no significant property loss in the state.
- “However, property owners must remain on guard, with the weather bureau expecting hotter conditions to return.”

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## Victoria

- The Initial estimate for bushfire damage in Victoria yesterday is \$9 million
- ICA CEO Rob Whelan said: “A small number of properties near Chepstowe, including a homestead, have been destroyed. Insurers continue to monitor the situation and are ready to respond to any developments.”

The ICA disaster hotline is operating to help people affected by the bushfires who are not sure which insurer they are with, or who have general inquiries about the claims process.

The hotline number is: **1800 734 621**

For general advice about preparing for bushfires visit:

<http://www.insurancecouncil.com.au/for-consumers/consumer-tips/bushfire-preparation>