

January 16, 2014

WA bushfire update: Bushfire clean-up costs

The Insurance Council of Australia (ICA) welcomes today's decision by the Federal and WA Governments to make additional funds available to clean-up properties destroyed or damaged in the Parkerville bushfire.

ICA CEO Rob Whelan said this decision will alleviate a significant amount of stress for those affected by the bushfire and help preserve their sum insured and entitlements under their policies, with these directed towards rebuilding their homes.

"Clean-up of fire damaged property places enormous emotional stress on families and communities – the decision by the Federal and WA Governments to allocate funds will speed up the clean-up process and help all those affected by the fires to move on and focus on rebuilding their lives," Mr Whelan said.

Insurance assessors continued to work on reviewing claims in bushfire-affected communities and insurers had geared up to prioritise inquiries and claims.

In addition, the ICA's disaster recovery specialist remains in the area working with local authorities and helping bushfire policyholders with questions about insurance claims.

Affected residents should contact their insurer as soon as possible to lodge a claim.

As of 9am (WA time) today more than 300 claims had been lodged, with estimated insurance losses of just over \$15 million. More claims are expected to be lodged.

The insurance industry continues to monitor the heatwave affecting south-eastern Australia, with grass fires and bushfires burning in several states. Fire services are concerned the heatwave could create severe to extreme bushfire conditions in many regions by the end of the week.

The ICA's disaster hotline – **1800 734 621** – can help affected Perth Hills residents who are not sure which insurer they are with, or who have general inquiries about the claims process.

For information and tips about recovering from a bushfire visit Understand Insurance:
<http://understandinsurance.com.au/types-of-disasters/bushfires#tab-2>

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