



FACTSHEET

Extension of Rural Properties Recovery Assistance Payment

The Victorian Bushfire Appeals Advisory Panel has agreed to the **extension** of the Rural Properties Recovery Assistance payment to assist rural landowners in the bushfire affected areas who have suffered distress and hardship.

Am I eligible?

You may now be eligible for the Rural Properties Recovery Assistance Payment if you own a property that is 2 hectares or more in bushfire affected areas that have suffered direct physical damage or destruction. This Payment was previously only available for properties of 5 hectares or more.

If you have already received a Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Assistance (NDRRA) Clean up and Restoration Grant or Special Circumstances Grant relating to your rural property, or the Rural Properties Recovery Assistance payment prior to the change in property size from Rural Finance Corporation you are not eligible.

What assistance is available?

The payment is to relieve the distress and hardship of **individuals** who have suffered direct physical damage or destruction to their property. If you are eligible you will be considered for the following payment depending on property size:

| | |
|--------|--------|
| < 2 ha | Nil |
| 2-3 ha | \$3000 |
| 3-4 ha | \$4000 |
| 4 > ha | \$5000 |

Payments will be made to your nominated bank account.

Is there a restriction on how the payment can be spent?

Payments are to relieve personal hardship and distress following the effects of direct physical damage or destruction to rural landholders and cannot be used for commercial activities such as fencing, re-sowing pasture or rebuilding infrastructure.

What information do I need to provide?

The Government recognises the extraordinary circumstances that families are facing and will work with individuals to ensure that any necessary information can be obtained in a flexible and sensitive manner.

The Government will need to reasonably establish proof of identity, proof of ownership of property and confirm that the property has experienced direct physical damage or destruction.

Who will administer the Rural Properties Recovery Assistance Payment?

The Rural Properties Recovery Assistance Payment will be administered by the Rural Finance Corporation.

How long do I have to claim?

You have until 31 December 2009 to lodge a claim for the Rural Properties Recovery Assistance payment. Applications beyond this date will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

How do I make an application for the payment?

Complete the Extension of Rural Properties Recovery Assistance Payment application form and send it along with copies of supporting documents to:

Rural Finance Corporation
PO Box 1313
Bendigo Central 3552

How do I find out about other assistance?

More information about other assistance administered by the Rural Finance Corporation is available on their website www.ruralfinance.com.au or by telephone: 1800 255 925.

Recent changes to Commonwealth laws have also amended eligibility for other assistance including:

- Damaged / destroyed principal places of residence where the property is owned by a company, trust or partnership.
- Farmers who are defined by the Australian Tax Office as 'primary producers' who require assistance to repair or restore farming activities such as re-fencing.

More information including application forms and fact sheets for other payments are available on the Department of Human Services website for the Victorian Bushfire Appeal Fund - www.dhs.vic.gov.au/bushfireappeal