



Senator the Hon Michaelia Cash
MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT, SKILLS, SMALL AND FAMILY BUSINESS
SENATOR FOR WESTERN AUSTRALIA

John Barilaro
DEPUTY PREMIER
MINISTER FOR REGIONAL NSW, INDUSTRY AND TRADE

Damien Tudehope
MINISTER FOR FINANCE AND SMALL BUSINESS

Shelley Hancock
MINISTER FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT

JOINT MEDIA RELEASE

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NSW FIRE-AFFECTED BUSINESSES AND COUNCILS ENCOURAGED TO ACCESS FINANCIAL SUPPORT

Small businesses and councils affected by the bushfires can apply for a suite of financial assistance packages thanks to the NSW and Commonwealth Governments.

The financial support includes grants of up to \$50,000 for small businesses directly affected by bushfire, up to \$250,000 to Local Government Areas, a Bushfire Working Capital Loan of up to \$50,000 and low interest loans of up to \$500,000 to eligible small businesses, primary producers and not-for-profits in bushfire impacted council areas.

Federal Minister for Employment, Skills, Small and Family Business, Senator the Hon Michaelia Cash said, thousands of small businesses have been impacted by the recent bushfires both in the disaster-declared areas and in surrounding areas.

“These financial support measures will provide much needed funds for affected small businesses in the early recovery phase to help them get back on their feet,” Minister Cash said.

Deputy Premier and Minister for Disaster Recovery John Barilaro said the bushfires had devastated entire communities.

“As we move into the recovery phase, communities are facing unprecedented challenges and there will be many difficult months ahead,” he said.

“These grants and loans will assist bushfire-affected communities to get back on their feet.”

Financial assistance includes:

- Grants of up to \$50,000 are available for eligible small businesses and non-profit organisations with direct damage to their premises, equipment or stock from the bushfires and can help to pay for repairs, via [Service NSW](#);
- Payments up to \$250,000 to Local Government Areas impacted by bushfire for small scale local activities that will kick-start the social and economic recovery of their communities;
- Loans of up to \$500,000 specifically designed to provide an immediate injection of money to help return and continue business operations by covering salaries or wages, rent, lease and rates, as well as purchase of goods and services, via [NSW Rural Assistance Authority](#).

Funding is provided jointly from the NSW and Commonwealth Governments through Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements.

Minister for Finance and Small Business Damien Tudehope said he encouraged small businesses to apply for the funding, which would assist in getting bushfire-affected communities up and running as soon as possible.

“Small enterprises are the lifeblood of their community and we want to do everything we can to support them during this time of recovery,” he said.

Minister for Local Government Shelley Hancock said the bushfire recovery phase is also about supporting communities to come together and heal.

“Local councils are the backbones to their communities and we’re committed to doing all we can to help them as they start to heal and rebuild their communities.”

Small Business Grants

The Commonwealth Government announced on Monday, 20 January, a Small Business Bushfire Recovery Package that included recovery grants, concessional loans, a Small Business Financial Support Line, Local Economic Recovery Plans and tax relief. Those small businesses who have already accessed up to \$15,000 under the existing Small Business Grants scheme, can now apply for additional funds, bringing the total available to \$50,000.

The assistance is being provided through the joint Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements between states and territories and the Commonwealth Government.

The grant is being administered through Service NSW and is available to eligible, fire-affected small businesses within Category C declared Local Government Areas (LGAs) since 31 August 2019.

For more information on eligibility criteria and to register to apply for the grant, visit

<https://www.service.nsw.gov.au/transaction/register-small-business-bushfire-recovery-grant>

Bushfire Community Resilience and Economic Recovery Fund

Councils will be offered payments of a minimum \$100,000 and up to \$250,000 for small scale local activities that will kick-start the social and economic recovery of their communities. This quick and flexible funding will be made available to eligible councils from early February 2020.

Councils can use funding straight away for events or initiatives that support local business and industry recovery, as well as community resilience and wellbeing.

Examples could include:

- local recovery support services for impacted small businesses;
- local industry recovery events;
- neighbourhood and community strengthening activities that focus on building capacity, community strengthening and resilience.

These Community Resilience and Economic Recovery Grants have been previously announced and are being provided through the joint Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements between states and territories and the Commonwealth Government.

Bushfire Working Capital and Recovery Loans

The Bushfire Working Capital Loan is up to \$50,000 and is specifically designed to provide an immediate injection of money to help return and continue business operations by covering salaries or wages, rebuilding infrastructure and purchase of goods and services. Its terms are up to five years, with a two year interest free and repayment free period.

And the larger Bushfire Recovery Loan of up to \$500,000 is over 10 years, with a two-year interest free and payment free period. It is available for significantly larger investments where required.

The loans are jointly funded by the State and Federal Governments under the Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements. Applications and details are on-line, via the NSW Rural Assistance Authority www.raa.nsw.gov.au.

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