

January 15, 2015

Catastrophe update: SA bushfires and Brisbane hailstorm

The Insurance Council of Australia (ICA) provides the following updates on the South Australian bushfires and Brisbane hailstorm.

ICA CEO Rob Whelan said policyholders affected by either catastrophe are encouraged to lodge their claims as soon as they can so that the claims process can get underway.

"Insurers are progressing claims and damage and repair assessments with affected customers," Mr Whelan said.

"We encourage policyholders affected by the catastrophes to lodge their claim with their insurer if they haven't done so already."

SA bushfires

As at 8.30am (South Australian time) today, 737 claims have been lodged by policyholders affected by the SA bushfires. Estimated insurance losses now stand at \$24.9 million.

Brisbane hailstorm

As at 8am (Queensland time) today, 100,223 claims have been lodged by property and motor vehicle owners affected by the hailstorm. Estimated insurance losses now stand at \$1,040 million.

General advice to affected policyholders

The ICA offers the following general advice to policyholders affected by either the SA bushfires or Brisbane hailstorm (more information is available at <http://understandinsurance.com.au/types-of-disasters>)

- Contact your insurance company as soon as you can, and seek advice about the claim process under your policy, as well as what you're covered for. Many insurers have 24-hour call centres
- Don't be concerned if insurance documents are not readily at hand. Insurance companies keep records electronically and require only the policyholder's name and address to find a policy
- Take pictures of damage to the property and possessions as evidence for your claim assessor
- Speak to your insurer before authorising repairs. Emergency repairs should only be undertaken in the first instance to make the property safe

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- Remove and discard damaged goods that pose a health risk - if possible, keep samples of materials and fabrics to show the assessor and store damaged or destroyed items somewhere safe
- Make an inventory of damaged possessions. This will help insurers process your claim

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

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