

Friday March 8, 2019

## Insurance Council declares Catastrophe for Bunyip bushfires

The Insurance Council of Australia (ICA) tonight declared a Catastrophe for properties damaged or destroyed in the Bunyip bushfires in Victoria.

ICA General Manager of Communications Campbell Fuller said property owners affected by the bushfires should contact their insurers as soon as possible to lodge claims and seek assistance under their policies.

He urged property owners to heed the advice of emergency services before returning to their properties.

“The declaration means claims from affected policyholders will be given priority by insurers. Claims will also be triaged to direct urgent attention to the worst-affected property owners,” he said.

“This declaration was made in consultation with the office of Premier Daniel Andrews and Emergency Management Victoria and followed reports of almost 30 destroyed properties and about 70 damaged.

“It is too early to place an estimate on losses so far, and the full extent of property losses may take several weeks to be known.”

Under the declaration the ICA has:

- Activated its disaster hotline – [1800 734 621](tel:1800734621) – to assist policyholders if they are uncertain of their insurance details, or have general inquiries about the claims process
- Mobilised ICA staff to work directly with local services and affected policyholders in the affected region
- Established an industry taskforce to address and identify issues that arise

The Catastrophe declaration is intended to help reduce the emotional and financial stress experienced by households and businesses affected by the bushfires.

“I encourage anyone who has suffered property damage to contact their insurer as soon as possible to seek guidance on the claims process and the assistance they are entitled to under their policy.”

For bushfire recovery tips visit: <http://understandinsurance.com.au/types-of-disasters/bushfires>