

Thursday January 30, 2020

## Appointment of clean-up contractor provides greater certainty to NSW bushfire communities

Today's announcement that a lead contractor has been appointed to conduct the clean-up of residential and commercial properties destroyed by the recent New South Wales bushfires will provide greater certainty to affected property owners.

Insurance Council of Australia (CEO) Rob Whelan said: "The insurance industry is pleased the NSW Government and Commonwealth Government have reached a joint funding agreement on property clean-up.

"Government-funded clean-up using a lead contractor for all bushfire-affected homes and commercial properties, whether insured or uninsured, is best practice following a bushfire catastrophe.

"All savings that insurers may accrue through this process will be passed on to policyholders to help them to rebuild their properties and their lives."

The ICA also said it was ready to assist the independent NSW expert inquiry into the 2019-20 bushfires, which was also announced today.

"The Insurance Council and its members are preparing to provide their expertise and insights to assist former Deputy Commissioner of NSW Police Dave Owens and former NSW Chief Scientist and Engineer Professor Mary O'Kane AC during the inquiry.

"This inquiry must be robust and far-reaching if it is to provide insights and effective recommendations, and the ICA would welcome contributing to its final terms of reference.

"Much can be learned from these fires to help prevent or reduce the impact of future bushfires in NSW, in particular the roles of mitigation, building design and land-use planning.

"The ICA encourages the inquiry to examine levels and causes of non-insurance and underinsurance in bushfire-hit regions, including the effect that state taxes and levies have had on the cost and purchase of household and business policies in the state."

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