

Saturday September 7, 2019

Insurance Council declares Catastrophe for NSW and Queensland bushfires

The Insurance Council of Australia (ICA) this afternoon declared a Catastrophe for bushfires that have damaged or destroyed homes and property in northern New South Wales and south-east Queensland.

The declaration gives priority to claims from affected policyholders. Claims will be triaged by insurers to ensure support is directed to property-owners impacted by these fires.

ICA CEO Rob Whelan said more than 70 bushfires were still burning across southern QLD and NSW. The fires fanned by high winds have resulted in multiple property losses since September 5, with the focus today on the area around Stanthorpe close to the NSW /QLD border as well as locations in the Gold Coast hinterland. The extent of property loss is still to be determined, as is an estimate of the financial loss.

The Catastrophe declaration is intended to help alleviate some of the emotional and financial stress experienced by property owners affected by these bushfires," Mr Whelan said.

"Insurance companies are standing by to help their customers. 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."

Under the declaration the ICA has:

- Activated its disaster hotline – 1800 734 621 – to assist policyholders if they are uncertain of their insurance details, or have general inquiries about the claims process
- Community members can also enquire via www.disasters.org.au

The ICA is making arrangements to represent the insurance industry at community meetings in affected areas. The meetings will provide property owners with important information about the insurance claim process.

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

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