

MEDIA RELEASE

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Release of Southern Bushfire Impact Report and Resources (1/5/20)

Community Industry Group is pleased to announce that it has today released a report outlining the impacts of the 2019/20 bushfires on community organisations, and on vulnerable individuals, families, and communities in South East NSW; as well as two video resources highlighting the issues and responses for aged services providers, and the impact of trauma.

“Throughout the bushfire crisis and beyond, community service organisations have been on the ground providing support to affected individuals, families and communities,” said Community Industry Group CEO, Nicky Sloan. “From alert to evacuation to post-fire recovery, providers across a range of sectors including aged care, disability, child and family, homelessness and more have witnessed and experienced first-hand the successes and challenges of disaster recovery.”

As the regional peak body for these services, Community Industry Group has met with service providers to gain insight into what worked well, what didn't work, and what learnings can be implemented to improve outcomes for future disasters.

“The report we have produced describes the overall impact of the bushfire crisis, as well as the recovery and response processes that took place and/or are currently taking place,” Ms Sloan added. “Importantly, it also documents some of the personal reflections and stories of the people working to support individuals, families and communities impacted by bushfire – either directly or indirectly.”

The report, which can be found [here](#) also includes recommendations for immediate and future actions. It will be shared widely with recovery leaders and practitioners, with key government departments and representatives, and with the Royal Commission into National Natural Disaster Arrangements.

Along with the report, Community Industry Group are also releasing two video resources both are available from the Community Industry Group website or through the [Group's Youtube](#) channel.

- A Webinar titled **Trauma after a Bushfire** which has been created to help individuals, families and service providers understand how to support someone through a traumatic event, like a bushfire.
- **Aged Care in a Bushfire**, a video developed in partnership with the Seniors Rights Service, which documents the experience and learning of aged services providers across Eurobodalla and the Bega Valley.

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“The **Trauma after a Bushfire** webinar has been developed by our mental health trainer,” Ms Sloan said, “it offers simple and practical strategies to support someone who has been through the recent bushfires, and also helps family members, friends, and service providers to identify if someone is struggling as a result of the experience.”

The webinar, which has been designed to be a quick and easily understood resource is available free of charge and also include useful phone numbers and websites to access further support.

Finally, the **Aged Care in a Bushfire** video captures the experiences of leaders and staff members of several aged services providers who worked to protect and support older people through the 2019/20 bushfires.

“We have been delighted to partner with Seniors Rights Service to produce this resource,” Ms Sloan said. “It really demonstrates the heroic efforts of aged service providers in supporting older people at times of crisis.”

“Particularly in these times, it’s very affirming to be able to demonstrate the way that aged care providers rise to a crisis,” added Margaret Crothers, Seniors Rights Service South Coast Advocate. “We want to recognise that, while we have highlighted a few providers, organisations up and down the coast responded equally well. We would like to recognise the contribution all aged service providers made, and continue to make, at this difficult time.”

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About the Community Industry Group

Community Industry (formerly known as Illawarra Forum) is the peak body working for community services and organisations in the South East of NSW. It supports community organisations, promotes expertise and innovation in community development, fosters industry development and provides advocacy for social justice.

Community Industry Group represents the non-government community services industry in the South East of NSW, and works closely with numerous organisations which provide support to vulnerable people across the region.