

Apples & Pears Entertainment Group
Level 1, 440 Collins Street
Melbourne Vic 3000

19th February 2020

Dear Christian

On behalf of our emergency teams across the country, I want to thank you and everyone at Apples & Pears Entertainment Group for your incredible contribution of \$10,525.00 to our Disaster Relief and Recovery work.

Red Cross has been responding to Australian disasters for more than a century, but we have never seen fires of this size and scale. The impact is being felt far and wide: in the tragic loss of lives, homes, livelihoods, wildlife and places that are sacred and special; in the smoke in the air, the stifling heatwaves, and the physical and emotional toll that comes with fighting an enemy for months on end, with more fires predicted right up until March.

The outpouring of support we've seen in response has been overwhelmingly generous.

We are humbled to have seen first-hand what the power of people, communities and businesses like yours, uniting in this time of crisis, can achieve. Here's a snapshot of what we are doing.

Right now:

- Our emergency teams are on the ground, **working in evacuation and recovery centres**, providing psychological first aid, comfort and support as people cope with their distress and plan their next steps. They're registering people's whereabouts to ensure their loved ones can find them.
- Our team are working hourly with emergency services, the police, state governments, Australian Defence Force and other organisations like ours to ensure people's needs are met and to distribute **food, water and other emergency supplies**.
- We are reaching out to communities who are isolated or unable to access services easily; going where they are as soon as it is safe, or reaching out through satellite phones where it is not. We're **taking the time to support people experiencing vulnerability** due to their complex needs or deep disadvantage. Our mission in times of disaster is to ensure no-one is left behind.
- Our **emergency cash grants** are being distributed to people whose homes have been lost to the fires, to help them cover immediate expenses. We've committed \$61.5 million for these initial grants and there will be more financial aid on the way.

- We're investing in and planning **recovery programs** that are tailored to each community, building on their strengths, their unique needs and their capabilities. We're consulting with affected people and communities, and independent advisors – committed to making this a community-led recovery. Our experience with disaster recovery tells us that it will take years for many of these communities to regain their sense of control – to settle into a 'new normal' – a life in which people can feel safe and thrive.
- We are leveraging the full breadth of this knowledge and experience, built over more than a century of work in disasters, both here in Australia and overseas. This includes new and best practice approaches from the global disaster response and recovery sector, and close collaboration and coordination with local organisations. We will ensure maximum impact and minimal duplication.
- Importantly, we are also looking after **our own volunteers and staff** after months of intense community support. Since the fires started in earnest last year, we've deployed almost 2,000 trained staff and volunteers to 103 evacuation centres across five Australian states/territories. Many of them have been working around the clock and their wellbeing and safety is paramount – we will be relying on them, their energy and compassion, for many months to come.

It has been a catastrophic summer for our country, but dark days like these always remind us of the strength in humanity. Thanks to you, we will be there every step of the way, directly supporting people and communities as they recover.

Thanks to you, we have the resources to answer the call.

On behalf of our emergency teams, and all the people they help, thank you.

Sincerely,



Judy Slatyer

CEO, Australian Red Cross

Ps. Please share this with your colleagues to let them know how much we appreciate your support. And, if you have time, you can also find frequent updates on our ongoing response, as well as helpful resources and incredible stories of human strength, via our Emergency Services blog: www.redcross.org.au/stories/emergency-services.

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