

Press Release, Premier's Website

CHRISTINE NIXON TO HEAD BUSHFIRE RECONSTRUCTION AUTHORITY

From the Premier
Wednesday, 11 February 2009

The Premier John Brumby and Prime Minister Kevin Rudd today announced the establishment of the Victorian Bushfire Reconstruction and Recovery Authority to be headed by Victoria Police Chief Commissioner, Christine Nixon.

The Victorian Government, in partnership with the Commonwealth Government, will establish the Authority to coordinate bushfire recovery activity across Victoria.

The Authority will be responsible for coordinating activities of all Local, State and Commonwealth Government agencies, and the many community organisations involved, aimed at helping communities to recover and rebuild.

"The Victorian Bushfires are the worst natural disaster Australia has ever faced. A special authority is being established to help coordinate the massive rebuilding exercise," Mr Brumby said.

"While emergency assistance measures are underway to directly help those individuals affected by the current bushfires, the Government must begin to focus on the immediate steps and longer term activities required to help communities recover and rebuild.

"Also today, I have strengthened the arrangements for Relief Centres. The Minister for Community Services Lisa Neville is responsible for all Relief Centres.

"Ms Neville is appointing senior Department of Human Services (DHS) officials to be Captains for each centre, to ensure that people receive the assistance they require, regardless of which agency, department or level of government that relief is coming from.

"Workers on the ground are doing a magnificent job and this coordination will help to ensure the right help goes to those who need it."

The Head of the new Victorian Bushfire Reconstruction and Recovery Authority will be the outgoing Commissioner of Victoria Police, Christine Nixon, who will report directly to the Premier.

"Ms Nixon has made an outstanding contribution to Victoria as Chief Commissioner of Victoria Police. She will continue to make an outstanding contribution to Victoria in her new role heading up the rebuilding of our State after these devastating bushfires," Mr Brumby said.

"Ms Nixon has the organisational expertise and the compassion for Victorians required to undertake this crucial role. She is the ideal person to chair the Victorian Bushfire Reconstruction and Recovery Authority.

"Our State has been devastated by these terrible bushfires. It is my mission to rebuild affected communities - and Christine Nixon will be crucial to delivering this."

Ms Nixon officially will take up the new role from Monday, 2 March. In the immediate term, she will focus on her current post as Chief Commissioner of Victoria Police, while Victoria responds to the bushfire emergency. In the intervening period, Ms Nixon will start to consider the issues associated with rebuilding and recovery.

The Premier will be assisted by a Ministerial Advisory Group. The Group will include the Commonwealth's coordinating Minister for the bushfire disaster, Jenny Macklin.

The Authority will undertake a rapid response to address the recovery needs of affected communities through advice and coordination of funding and the prioritisation of expenditure and rebuilding efforts.

The Commonwealth and State Governments will share equally the costs of rebuilding communities that have been affected by this natural disaster.

Mr Brumby said the Authority will help regions, towns and individuals recover and rebuild in a way that is safe, timely, efficient, cost effective and respectful of individual and community needs.

The Authority will ensure that the community actively participates in the process of rebuilding and recovery and that individuals are consulted closely and provided with real choices. This will be supported through a Community Reference Group.

The Authority will be supported by a dedicated project team with the specialist skills needed for the reconstruction and recovery task, and will be overseen by the Premier and a Ministerial Advisory Group.

So has the Vic Govt got it wrong?

Senate F&PA Committee

Tabled Document

Inquiry: Budget Estimates 2010-11

Date/Time: 25 May '10

Witness Name: Sen. Ronaldson

Organisation:

