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MINISTER FOR EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AND NORTH QUEENSLAND RECOVERY

MINISTER FOR DEFENCE INDUSTRY

SENATOR FOR WESTERN AUSTRALIA

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JOINT MEDIA RELEASE

13 April 2019

**\$9.9 MILLION RECOVERY PACKAGE TO SUPPORT COMMUNITIES AFFECTED BY THE
TASMANIAN BUSHFIRES**

A \$9.9 million Economic and Community Recovery Package is being made available to support communities affected by the Tasmanian bushfires.

Funding for the Package is being provided through the joint Commonwealth-State Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA).

Minister for Emergency Management and North Queensland Recovery Senator the Hon Linda Reynolds CSC said the bushfires had a significant impact on communities, infrastructure and essential services, disrupting community activities in the Central Highlands, Derwent Valley, Huon Valley and West Coast local government areas.

“The bushfires struck during Tasmania’s peak summer tourism season which had an immediate impact on tourism and the local economy,” Minister Reynolds said.

“This assistance package includes funding to promote tourism, support businesses and repair damaged recreation and community facilities.

“The Commonwealth and Tasmanian governments are working closely to support affected communities with their recovery.”

Tasmanian Premier Will Hodgman said the Economic and Community Recovery Package would support longer term community and economic recovery initiatives in the fire affected regions.

“This assistance package will play an important role in social and economic recovery, which is crucial to the health and wellbeing of the Tasmanian community,” Premier Hodgman said.

“It will support businesses to restructure, diversify and reposition themselves, and enable the promotion of tourism opportunities in the target regions.

“It will also fund the restoration and reinstatement of Parks and Wildlife Service assets and infrastructure, which will help the economic recovery of local communities which rely on these parks for tourism and visitors.”

Assistant Minister for Agriculture and Water Resources Senator Richard Colbeck said communities were still dealing with the impacts of this bushfire season.

“These bushfires have had a devastating impact on local communities and businesses, affecting the ability for individuals to earn a living,” Assistant Minister Colbeck said.

“For the sake of local jobs, the important message is that the affected regions are now well and truly open for visitors and business alike.”

The Package will also provide dedicated Community and Economic Recovery Officers who will work with affected businesses and local communities, a grants program and a range of social recovery initiatives to meet an urgent need for improved support networks in fire affected areas.

The \$9.9 million Economic and Community Recovery Package is in addition to the range of assistance already made available under the DRFA to help affected individuals, families, small businesses and local councils with their recovery from the bushfires.

More information about these initiatives will be made available in due course.

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