



Victorian Bushfires Surveying Taskforce

Bulletin 1

26 February 2009

This bulletin is to provide you with an update on the surveying response to the Victorian bushfire tragedy.

A taskforce has been established to coordinate the response and a brief has been circulated identifying the actions to be undertaken and calling for volunteers to perform some of the initial survey work.

4500 hours volunteered

At the end of February, 80 expressions of interest had been received including offers from 150 individual surveyors amounting to approximately 4500 hours of work. This is a fantastic response and more offers of volunteer work would be greatly appreciated.

Obviously all the volunteers are keen to start assisting with the recovery work as soon as possible. However, gaining access to the fire-affected areas remains an issue and will limit for some time the type of work that can be done. SGV and SII are looking into this matter and through their contacts with the Bushfire Reconstruction and Recovery Authority (BRRA) and Victoria Police hope that some access will be arranged shortly. It is likely that SII will be establishing GNSS basestations in the restricted areas within the next week or two.

Joining forces

There are some fire-affected areas which are accessible and where some of the recovery work has commenced. In Bendigo for example, surveyors from DSE, Tomkinson, Cummins and Coomes have banded together to coordinate the survey response in that region. Areas have been identified and allocated to the firms so that the recovery and preservation of marks can occur before any demolition and clearing of sites.

In Horsham, Ferguson & Perry are conducting an audit of the permanent marks in the fire areas and are liaising with Horsham Rural City Council to ensure the remaining marks are preserved. Land Victoria is supporting this work by providing maps and survey information for these areas and is willing to provide the same support to similar recovery work in other areas. So, if you live or work near a fire-affected area where access is not an issue, please consider getting together with other surveyors in your area to coordinate a response.

Desktop assessments

Another way that volunteers can assist now is to perform an assessment of part of the cadastre in one of the fire-affected areas without going into the field. If you have worked in Marysville, Kinglake, Kinglake West or Pheasant Creek and have a general knowledge of the related cadastre, you may wish to volunteer to do a 'desktop' assessment and identify the marks or monuments worth recovering and preserving. You can also volunteer to look at and assess existing information. As mentioned, Land Victoria will provide all the survey information to assist with the task. If you can contribute in this way, please send an email to volunteers@acsv.com.au indicating the area or areas you have an interest in.

This work is seen as a critical precursor to locating and referencing the marks and monuments on the ground, which is again expected to be performed by volunteer surveyors once access to the areas is obtained and the OH&S requirements and compliance procedures identified. The taskforce would like to reiterate that surveys for the re-establishment of road alignments and property boundaries will generally occur at a later stage. The taskforce still considers the most appropriate use of the volunteer work is to secure the reference marks and monuments so that future surveys can be performed efficiently and economically.



Department of
Sustainability
and Environment



A section relating to property boundaries and touching on the work of the taskforce has been included in the Building Commission's publication *A guide to a safe return to your property*. The guide has been prepared to assist people affected by the bushfires to safely return to their properties and provides advice on various matters, including survey, they need to consider.

Once more, if you would like to volunteer your services for any of the tasks mentioned above or any of the recovery-type work planned for when the fire-affected areas can be accessed, please send an email to ACSV at volunteers@acsv.com.au with your details and an explanation of how you wish to contribute. If you require any further information, please contact the Office of Surveyor-General Victoria on 8636 2525 or the ACSV office on 9326 9700.

The taskforce would like to thank those who have already volunteered their services and looks forward to working cooperatively with all involved to assist in the bushfire recovery. The taskforce is meeting weekly and will regularly distribute information bulletins on the progress of the project.

Further information

For further information on the work of the taskforce or the progress of the project, please contact the Taskforce Leader Mr Eddie Cichocki on 8636 2545 or email eddie.cichocki@dse.vic.gov.au.