



Victorian Bushfires Surveying Taskforce

Bulletin 5

16 April 2009



Volunteer fieldwork update

The “eagle has landed”. After a number of false dawns while resolving the issue of insurance coverage for volunteers, the fieldwork planned for the Kinglake region began on Friday 3 April.

Four crews braved the wind, rain and ultimately thick fog of that first day to begin the surveying of their allocated areas in and around Kinglake, Kinglake Central and Flowerdale. Work continued across the weekend into this week, with only marginally better weather conditions!

Notwithstanding the weather, the Office of Surveyor-General Victoria’s (SGV) area supervisors have reported the obvious camaraderie between the surveyors and of their genuine desire to work together and ‘get in’ and help the local communities.

Surveyors are to be commended for their attitude and the local residents have indicated their appreciation for the work being performed.

A total of 10 areas in Kinglake and Kinglake Central, six areas in Hazeldene and another nine areas in Flowerdale, Kinglake West, Steels Creek and Strathewen have been identified as needing recovery surveys.

Those firms and individuals who have been allocated an area requiring recovery surveys have received the survey information for their respective areas, performed desktop assessments prior to commencing their surveys and, in many instances, completed their field work.

In those areas identified by SGV as needing surveying, and under the supervision of Colin Hall LS and Paul Reidy LS from SGV, the following firms and individuals have been involved in the first stage of the recovery surveys as volunteers in the Kinglake region:

- Area K1 - *Barker Monahan*, through Dave Monahan, Adam D’Intino and Chris Webley
- Area K2 - Matt Heemskerck and Adam Criddle, supported by *JCA Land Consultants*
- Area K4 - *Hansen Surveying* through Peter Hansen and Phillip Nash



Volunteer Leah Simmons from Millar Merrigan

- Area K5 - *Spatial Works* through Lindsay Perry and Matt McCabe (Lindsay is also involved as a member of the Victorian Bushfire Surveying Taskforce)
- Area K6 - *Prior & Kelly* through Ben Sadlier and Ted Litterbach
- Area K7 – *Bortolli Wellington*, through Scott Wellington and Ben Koyama
- Area K8 – *Neil Webster & Associates*, through Neil Webster and Wein Lau
- Area KC1 – *Lawlor & Loy*, through Michael Loy, Dean Eddy and Byron Page
- Area KC2 – *Kirkpatrick and Webber* – through Andrew Smith, Geoff Buckle and Matt Yates

In Flowerdale, *Millar and Merrigan* through Leah Simmons and Shaun Crosset, who although not working strictly within the area identified by SGV as requiring survey recovery work under the VBST, have extended a survey to assist with the recovery work.

In Hazeldene, *Landair Surveys* through Eric Birzulis has completed GNSS surveys in Area H4.



Department of
Sustainability
and Environment

A significant amount of the work being performed to date has been carried out using traditional traversing methods but this has been hampered by the poor weather conditions.

Perhaps as a result of this, or because the 'areas' identified and selected by SGV are simply too big, some surveyors are concerned that they may not be able to provide sufficient time to complete their allocated area.

The VBST acknowledges the contribution of all volunteers and has no expectations of the amount of time volunteers can commit to the recovery program.

It is completely acceptable for a volunteer surveyor to determine how much time he or she can commit to the task, and where necessary, leave an allocated area in a partially completed state.

In these circumstances, all that can be asked is that surveyors 'close' their part of the task and notify SGV's area supervisor of the package that remains to be completed.

It will then be necessary for the survey documentation (as discussed in the *Guide to surveying areas affected by the 2009 Victorian bushfires*) to be promptly provided to SGV to enable the organisation and management of the surveying of the remainder of the package to be completed in an efficient and timely manner.

SGV has currently received one Plan of Re-establishment resulting from the fire recovery work and this has been provided by *Coomes Consulting* in Bendigo.

Advisory service

Phil Dingledei (*KLM Spatial*) and Terry Mawson (*Coomes Consulting*) have both attended the Kinglake Recovery Centre to provide advice to residents on the re-establishment of parcel boundaries.

While several residents have attended the centre to seek advice, the number of visitors for this purpose is not at the level anticipated.

The VBST is of the view that the need to provide surveying advice can be better served by the SGV area supervisor of the day dealing with the initial enquiries and then referring them directly to the ACSV.

This has worked well and the ACSV is providing the enquirer with the telephone number of a listed volunteer surveyor who has offered to provide free advice on boundary re-establishment matters.

The names of the surveyors are being chosen by selecting the 'next name' from the list of available volunteers.

Marysville

Marysville has been visited by Peter Williams (SGV) and Lindsay Perry who have both commented on the legacy of ground control resulting from the location of Marysville within a Proclaimed Survey Area.

Given the strength of this control, and the recovery work of SGV's geodetic team, it is unlikely that there will be a requirement for the performance of mark recovery surveys.

However, it may be that value can be derived from the performance of desktop audits by volunteers to confirm surveys. They can then be connected to the remaining ground control through a chain of monuments without the need for further survey work at this time.

Insurance

Negotiations with the Department of Sustainability and Environment (DSE) have been finalised and following the financial support of both DSE's Organisational Risk Division and Land Victoria, insurance cover has been made available to volunteer surveyors. In fact, the insurance provisions for the bushfire program are now to be adopted for all DSE volunteers.

In brief, the extent of cover available for the volunteer surveyors surveying the burnt areas is as follows:

- cover is provided through the Victorian Managed Insurance Authority
- the cover is in force from 1/4/2009 to 31/10/2009
- the insurance extends to cover up to 40 people surveying in any one group or when groups are combined
- weekly benefits up to \$3,000
- death benefit of \$500,000
- an aggregate limit of liability of \$10 million
- professional indemnity cover available for the duration with a limit of Indemnity of \$20 million in respect of any one claim and in the annual aggregate.

Survey control

With the installation the GPSnet reference at the Kinglake Ranges Recovery Centre and the updating of the ground mark network in the Flowerdale/ Kinglake and Marysville regions, the geodetic surveyors from SGV have moved their focus to Gippsland and installed and observed permanent marks in Traralgon South and Callignee.

It is anticipated the data from the observations will be processed and made available this week.

Additional geodetic control will be placed in Granton next week.

Spatial Information Infrastructure (SII) has been unable to find a suitable site in Marysville for a permanent GPSnet reference station and will now install a temporary station at Buxton.

Community meetings for residents

Community meetings are being held by the relevant shire councils to provide information on matters such as road conditions, support for residents and the provision of services by the Department of Human Services.

As a part of this process, Colin Hall from SGV has attended two of these meetings to inform the community of the role being performed by the volunteer surveyors.

Given the sensitivity of local residents to photographers, Colin has advised the meetings of the purpose of surveyors using cameras and assured them that photography is being used strictly as records associated with surveying.

Regional update

Beveridge Williams is progressing well with the recovery of survey marks in areas around Traralgon South and Callignee and this will be assisted with the placement of coordinated marks by SGV's Geodetic Section.

Investigations will be made to assess the requirement for mark recovery surveying to be carried out at Boolarra.

Under the direction of *Rotary*, and with the assistance of Roger Muller from DSE, boundary re-establishment surveys are being arranged in Bendigo.

It is envisaged that these surveys will proceed when advice has been provided by *Grocon* on the clearing of the sites.

The owners of approximately 50 per cent of the 130 properties affected by the fire have requested assistance in re-establishing their property boundaries.

Further information

Colin Hall has been managing SGV's role in the taskforce while Eddie Cichocki has been on leave. Eddie is due to return on the 20 April so please continue to contact the Taskforce Leader Eddie Cichocki on 8636 2545 or email eddie.cichocki@dse.vic.gov.au. for further information on the work of the taskforce or the progress of the project.

The Taskforce website can be accessed at www.dse.vic.gov.au/vbst