

Sue Boyce

Liberal Senator for Queensland



The Queensland *on*Line

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VICTORIAN BUSHFIRES

It's so hard to find the words to say how very sorry I am for the people of Victoria who have been affected - and are being affected - by the bushfires.

By the time this is over, I imagine that almost everyone in Victoria and many people throughout Australia will have been touched.

Even in flood-devastated North Queensland, especially Ingham, there are people more worried about family and friends in the South than they are for themselves.

Before returning home to Queensland in the mid-1990s, I lived just outside Whittlesea for the best part of 10 years. My children went to school at Kilmore and we ran cattle at Murrindindi so I know much of the area destroyed by fire very well.

In summer, the grass around the Whittlesea area takes on a particularly wonderful wheaten-gold colour. But beautiful as it is, it masks a dangerous dryness that causes many minor - and some major - fires every year.

The people of Whittlesea and Kinglake and Kilmore and all the surrounding areas live with the threat of fire every summer. Maintaining and testing pumps and other fire-fighting gear is just a normal part of the rhythm of life in this part of the world.

But this time the fire was, in many cases, too great.

Family friends near Kilmore, Flowerdale and Kinglake have lost their homes and cars and some have spent hours and hours in fear. I've waited while family and friends waited to hear about their loved ones. So far, my news has been all good but for so, so many it hasn't and there will be more bad news to come.

If you are able to assist, please send money to

- Red Cross http://www.redcross.org.au/vic/services_emergencyservices_victorian-bushfires-appeal-2009.htm
- Bendigo Bank http://www.bendigobank.com.au/public/specials/bushfire_appeal_feb09.asp
- Salvation Army <http://salvos.org.au/>
- St Vincent de Paul - <http://www.vinnies.org.au/home.cfm?nocache=932312>
- Wildlife Rescue - <http://www.wildlifevictoria.org.au/cms/index.php>



Click Here
to invite a friend
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- Gippsland Emergency Relief Fund - <http://relieffund.org.au/>

Other offers of assistance should be directed to

- Victorian Bushfire Fund - 1800 811 700

Other information about the bushfire is available at

- Bushfire Hotline - 1800 240 667 www.cfa.vic.gov.au
- Latest updates http://www.cfa.vic.gov.au/incidents/incident_updates.htm
- Urgent threats - <http://www.theage.com.au/national/urgent-threats-20090208-80k1.html>
- Condolence Book - http://blogs.theage.com.au/yoursay/archives/2009/02/condolence_book.html

If there is anything I can be doing to assist you or your family, please don't hesitate to contact my office in Brisbane or Canberra.

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