

Bank returns more than \$1 million to help local Black Saturday bushfire victims

Tuesday, 29 December, 2009: Bendigo and Adelaide Bank's philanthropic arm, Community Enterprise Foundation™, has donated more than \$1 million to Black Saturday bushfire victims in Central Victoria.

The bank's Executive, Customer and Community, Russell Jenkins, said the initial community response to those affected by the bushfires was outstanding and has played a huge role in the rebuilding and recovery process.

"When we launched the Bushfire Appeal the day after the fires started, we never anticipated the overwhelming response from ordinary Australians who were keen to do whatever they could to help," he said.

"Since February, the bank has received more than \$8.5 million dollars in donations from about 35,000 donors.

"This money has been distributed to communities right across the state including hardest hit areas like Kinglake, Marysville, the Yarra Valley and Gippsland.

"For bushfire affected people living in Central Victoria this money has been used to rebuild infrastructure, initiate health programs and ensure the Country Fire Authority is well-equipped to fight fires."

More than \$1 million has gone towards supporting the following community programs and infrastructure projects;

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| ▪ Bendigo Community Health Services | Counselling and pamper packages |
| ▪ Loddon Mallee Housing Services | Emergency housing for fire victims |
| ▪ Future Employment Opportunities | Bushfire clean-up |
| ▪ Wildlife Rescue Emergency Services | Animal Aid |
| ▪ YMCA | Bendigo Says Thanks concert |
| ▪ Bendigo Uniting Care Outreach | "Our Place" |
| ▪ Country Fire Authority | Sedgwick CFA 2009/10 Fire-Season Preparation Plan |
| ▪ Country Fire Authority | Growing Fire Brigade infrastructure in Maiden Gully |
| ▪ Country Fire Authority | Contribution towards new tanker for Axedale |
| ▪ Conservation Volunteers Australia | Bushfire Environmental Recovery Program (fencing in Redesdale) |
| ▪ Mensheds Australia | Long Gully Multipurpose Facility/Mensheds |
| ▪ New Horizons Welfare Services | Essential infrastructure replacement |
| ▪ Conservation Volunteers Australia | Long Gully Community Garden |
| ▪ Conservation Volunteers Australia | Rehabilitation and Revegetation Project |
| ▪ Bendigo Community Health Services | Bushfire Health and Wellbeing Program for Children |
| ▪ Bendigo Community Health Services | Bushfire Health and Wellbeing Program for Adults |

Funds will continue to be distributed in 2010.