

From our District Governor (9675) re: Bushfire Relief



Over the past weeks I've received countless enquiries about the status of the Australian bushfire crisis. It is incredibly heartening to know that we have so much support from all around the world. Please allow me to share with you the following info from our **District Governor Dianne North** (an incredible lady who oversees many of these projects) to hopefully help you understand what's been happening:

"We understand that Rotarians want to get in there immediately to assist but that is what agencies such as the Salvation Army do best.

All the Australian District Governors are encouraging Rotarians and Rotary Clubs to donate to the Rotary Australia World Community Service (RAWCS) Bushfire Relief Appeal (<https://rawcs.org.au>).

This money will be distributed when a Rotary Club sees a need and applies for money for this particular purpose. A District Governor Appeals Committee has been set up to decide if this meets the criteria. Rotary Clubs that receive money will be accountable and will have to provide reports on how the money has been spent and what it achieved. **That is why we are recommending that donations go to Rotary Australia World Community Service (RAWCS): <https://rawcs.org.au>**

We are also encouraging Rotary Clubs to **"Adopt-a-Town"** in a fire-affected area whereby they go to visit the town, spend money on accommodation, meals and local produce to support local businesses who have all been affected. This project was initially set up for drought relief but has now been extended to bushfire-affected towns.

Our District Bushfire Relief Coordinator, Ally Cox from Picton Rotary Club has been working hard in trying to see where we can assist. For immediate assistance we have provided meals for the volunteer firefighters, we have supplied them with P2 masks, and also supplied these masks to members of the community experiencing breathing difficulties or are involved in the cleanup.

Ally has been communicating with Blaze Aid which is a group that goes into areas to repair fences, rebuild sheds, etc. They rely on the government to supply the materials (or money) for them to use. This is where the RAWCS fund will assist Rotary Clubs. A Rotary Club will identify the need and then apply for the money from RAWCS to buy the materials that are needed for the task. This is part of the long term recovery plan.

At this stage we are asking clubs to continue to raise money for the long term need."

I hope you find the above insights useful and please feel free to contact me or Dianne North (dianne_north@bigpond.com) directly should you have any further questions or concerns. Thank you.