

Bushfire under the DRFA

January 2026



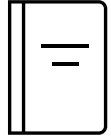
Department
of Transport
and Planning

1. Introduction

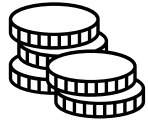
1. Introduction
2. What is the DRFA and why DTP
3. Category A Relief and Recovery
4. Category B Essential Public Assets
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2. What is the DRFA and why DTP



- The Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA) are a Commonwealth determination providing a cost sharing arrangement between States/Territories and the Commonwealth.



- The arrangements enable the State and Commonwealth to provide financial assistance, to support **certain relief and recovery** measures following an eligible disaster. They **do not cover all costs** that may be incurred resulting from an eligible disaster.

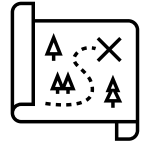


- Recovery is a shared responsibility of individuals, households, businesses and communities, as well as for all levels of government.



- Four categories of assistance
 - Category A: Assistance to individuals
 - Category B: Essential public assets
 - Category C: Community recovery
 - Category D: Exceptional circumstances

2. What is the DRFA and why DTP



- In Victoria, DRFA is administered by Emergency Recovery Victoria (ERV) within the Department of Justice and Community Safety (DJCS).



- Department of Transport and Planning (DTP) are engaged by ERV to act as the Assessing Authority and facilitate certain parts of the DRFA process with Local Government, Resort Management Boards and Catchment Management Authorities.



- The DTP DRFA Assessment team is your key point of contact for all things DRFA Category A and B.

Public support programs not covered in todays session:

<https://www.vic.gov.au/january-2026-victorian-bushfires#printable-flyer>

3. Category A– Relief and Recovery Assistance to Individuals

a) Emergency food, clothing or temporary accommodation

(incl operation of Emergency Relief, Recovery and Evacuation Centres)

b) Repair or replacement of essential items of furniture and personal effects

c) Essential repairs to housing

d) Demolition or rebuilding to restore housing

e) Removal of debris from residential properties

(incl clean up activities in immediate vicinity of residential dwellings required to allow residents to return to their own home including removal of hazardous trees, debris and disaster related damaged building material)

f) Extraordinary counter disaster operations

(Incl evacuation of threatened and impacted residents, bushfire response activities, rapid damage assessments, cleaning and refilling of potable water supplies.)

g) Personal and financial counselling

(incl individual and group counselling sessions, provision of information, outreach strategies, referrals to specialist support)

h) Employment of Community Recovery Officer

3. Category A– Relief and Recovery Assistance to Individuals

Emergency food, clothing or temporary accommodation

Operation of an Emergency Relief Centre

- May be called many names, eligibility is concerned with what services are provided.
- Provide temporary and essential needs of impacted individuals. Services will vary depending community need and capacity of centre. May include:
 - Provision of basic catering
 - Emergency bedding
 - Housing companion animals of evacuated residents
 - Showers and other amenities
 - Connection with services and agencies
 - Community relief meetings
- ERC's will generally cease operation once immediate disaster impact has passed and immediate need diminishes
- Longer term operation post 'Transition to Recovery' including operation as Community Recovery Hubs or Information Centres should be funded via Category C Community Recovery Program.

Emergency Accommodation

- Available to permanent residents displaced by a disaster
- Initially coordinated and provided by Councils
 - Generally up to 5 days.
 - Up to 28 where access is delayed or dwelling is damaged or destroyed
 - DTP involvement is limited to Council coordinated accommodation up to 28 days.
- Beyond Emergency Accommodation, medium to long term temporary accommodation needs are case managed by DFFH



*Only extraordinary labour costs are claimable for Cat A activities.
Applies to both directly and indirectly impacted councils*

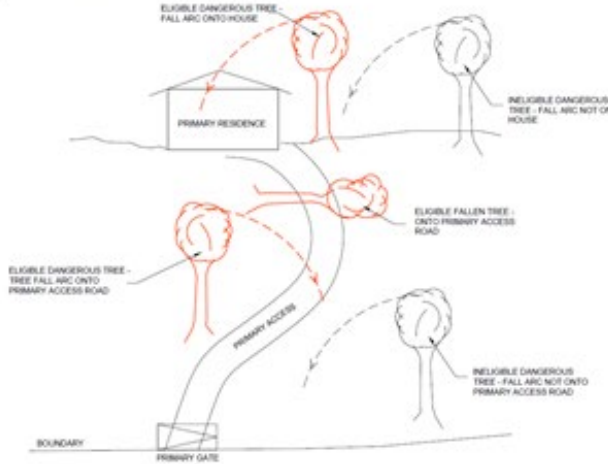
3. Category A– Relief and Recovery Assistance to Individuals

Removal of debris from residential properties

- Intent of activity is to help individuals with removal of disaster related debris from their home to make it safe and habitable, allowing residents to return to their own home.
- Removal of debris is restricted to the immediate vicinity of the primary place of residence, essential service connections and primary access.
 - Removal of fallen trees and green waste
 - Removal of trees that have become dangerous
 - Removal and disposal of spoiled food
 - Removal of hazardous material (such as asbestos)
 - Removal of disaster damaged building material
 - Removal of septic waste.
- There will be interaction and overlap with discrete programs incl:
 - State Supported Clean Up
 - Waste levy waiver

NOTES:

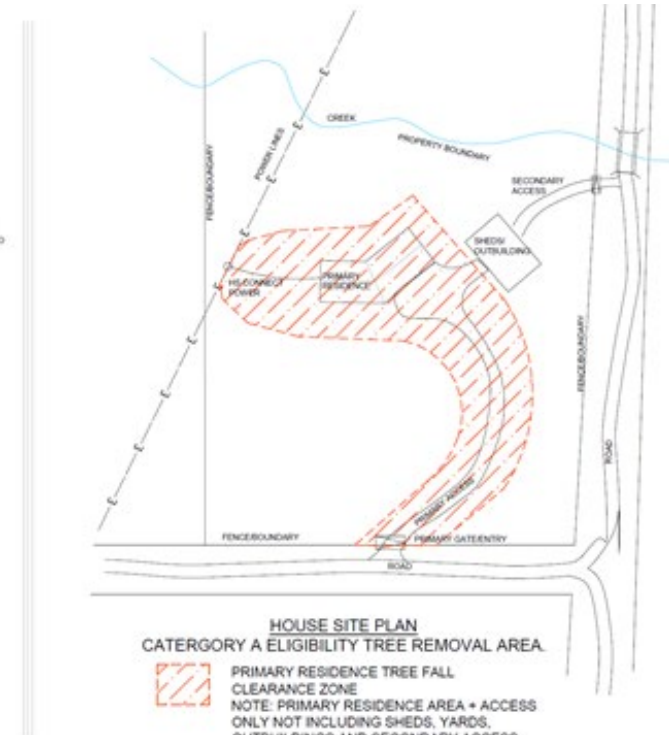
1. PROPERTY MUST BE THE RESIDENT'S "PRINCIPAL PLACE OF RESIDENCE".
2. TO BE ELIGIBLE DEBRIS MUST BE IN THE ZONES IDENTIFIED THAT MAKE THE DWELLING UNSAFE, UNINHABITABLE OR INSECURE.




SCHEMATIC DIAGRAM
TREE FALL DIAGRAM - DANGEROUS TREES

NOTES:

1. FOR A STANDING TREE TO BE DECLARED DANGEROUS AN ARBORIST'S REPORT IS REQUIRED.
2. SUPPORTING EVIDENCE IN THE ARBORIST'S REPORT SHALL INCLUDE SITE PHOTOS AND MEASUREMENTS DEMONSTRATING POTENTIAL IMPACT AND AN ASSESSMENT IDENTIFYING WHY THE TREE IS CONSIDERED "DANGEROUS".



HOUSE SITE PLAN
CATEGORY A ELIGIBILITY TREE REMOVAL AREA.

 PRIMARY RESIDENCE TREE FALL CLEARANCE ZONE
NOTE: PRIMARY RESIDENCE AREA + ACCESS ONLY NOT INCLUDING SHEDS, YARDS, OUTBUILDINGS AND SECONDARY ACCESS.

CATEGORY A ELIGIBILITY - PRIVATE LAND, PRIMARY RESIDENCE
DANGEROUS TREE/FALL ZONE + DEBRIS REMOVAL DIAGRAM



How will you demonstrate eligibility once material has been removed from site?

3. Category A– Relief and Recovery Assistance to Individuals

Extraordinary Counter Disaster Operations

Cat A CDO

Intended to provide assistance to individuals who are under threat from or who have been directly affected by a disaster

- Evacuation of threatened / affected people incl companion animals
- Bushfire response activities to directly support an individual
- Rapid damage assessments on residential properties (incl secondary impact assessments)
- Cleaning and refilling of residential potable water systems

Cat B CDO

Intended to protect the general public ensuring public health and safety immediately before, during and after a disaster event.

- Establishment and operation of Municipal Emergency Coordination Centre
- Opening and closing of disaster impacted roads and establishment of detour routes
- Bushfire suppression activities
- Restoration of assets damaged while undertaking eligible counter disaster operations

4. Category B– Essential Public Assets

a) Counter disaster operations for the protection of the general public

b) Emergency works for essential public assets

(urgent works required to restore an essential public asset to an acceptable level of service)

c) Immediate reconstruction works for essential public assets

(urgent works to fully restore an asset to its pre-disaster function)

d) Essential public asset reconstruction works (certified estimate)

(long term programmed works required to fully restore an asset to its pre-disaster function)

Other Cat B measures

e-i) In addition to measures a to d, additional forms of assistance under Cat B may be made available including concessional interest rate loans, interest rate subsidies, freight subsidies and grants to small businesses, primary producers, needy individuals and non-profit organisations impacted as a direct result of disaster.

Refer to ERV and DEECA (AgVic) for further information on support for Primary Producers

4. Category B– Essential Public Assets

Definition of an Essential Public Asset

A transport or public infrastructure asset of an eligible undertaking which, the state considers, and the Commonwealth Government agrees, is a necessary part of a state's infrastructure and is integral to the normal functioning of a community.

Eligible Assets

transport assets are local government owned roads and bridges and their associated components, which may include:

- Road pavements and surfacing;
- Culverts and drainage structures;
- Bridges and floodways;
- Road embankments and batter protection;
- Stormwater drains and culverts;
- Footpaths and pedestrian bridges (limited)
- Roadside furniture and delineation

Ineligible Assets

- Community infrastructure such as Town Halls and recreational facilities
- Privately owned, managed or maintained roads and bridges;
- Environmental assets including natural vegetation, waterways, rivers, beaches, forests, reserves;
- Fencing, except where related to protection of an essential public asset;
- Pedestrian and cycle paths that are not considered to be transport infrastructure
- Fire trails or fire access tracks managed by local government;
- engineered erosion control structures that only protect open space or private land; and
- those assets (or part of) damaged due to contributing factors such as poor design, poor construction, inadequate maintenance or pre-existing damage.

4. Category B– Essential Public Assets

Emergency works for essential public assets

(urgent works required to restore an essential public asset to an acceptable level of service)

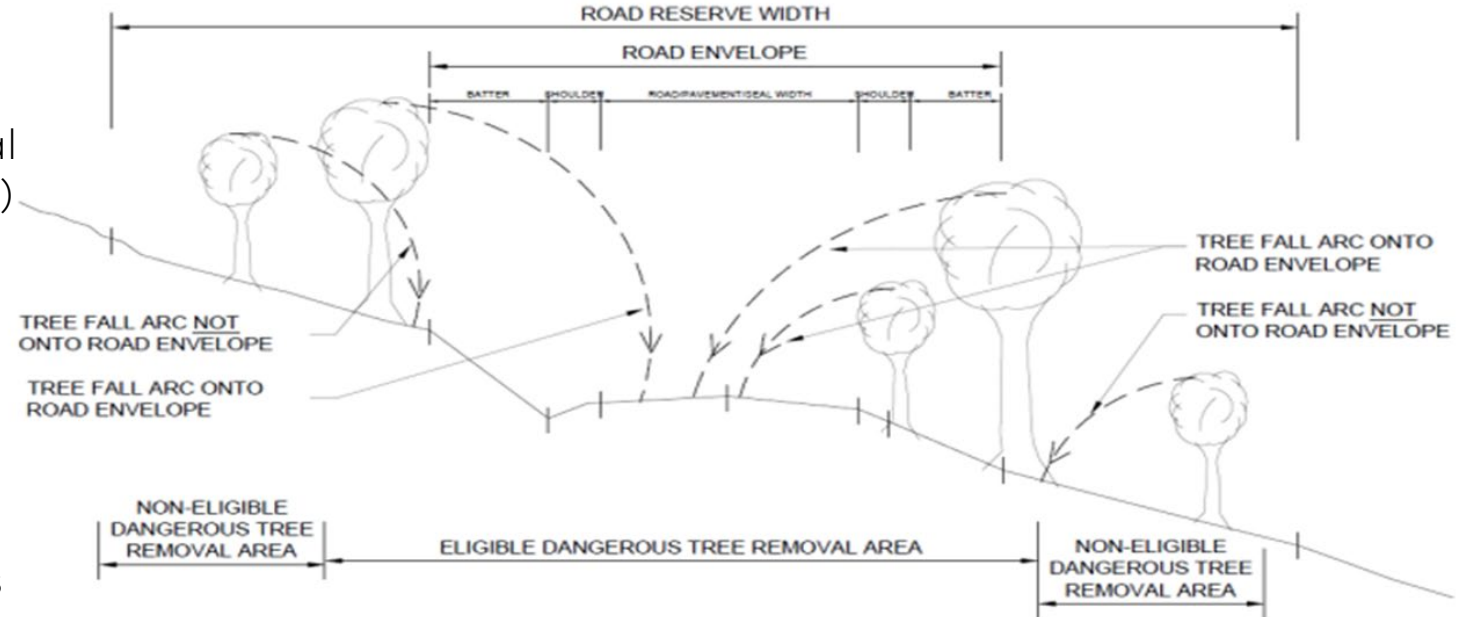
Works do not require any pre-approval to undertake

Typical Works

- Impacted asset inspections
- Identification and treatment of hazardous trees
- Identification and treatment of road furniture hazards
- Identification and treatment of road surface, pavement and drainage hazards



Flash flooding impacts common after bushfires with very little rain.
Follow up events likely



DESCRIPTION

PO 31653: AGRN 882

Asset #3262

10/8 Ross Lane, [REDACTED] 12R 4P

EWP crew x 1 - 9 hours \$[REDACTED] + gst

Consulting Arborist x 1 - 9 hours \$[REDACTED] + gst

Truck driver x 1 - 9 hours \$[REDACTED] + gst

Arborist x 1 - 9 hours \$[REDACTED] + gst

Tipper and operator x 1 9 hours \$[REDACTED] + gst

20T Excavator and operator x 1 - 9 hours \$[REDACTED] + gst

Articulated loader x 1 - 9 hours \$[REDACTED] + gst

Traffic control x 2 - 9 hours \$[REDACTED] +gst

4. Category B– Essential Public Assets

Immediate reconstruction works for essential public assets

(low complexity, urgent works to fully restore an asset to its pre-disaster function)

- Undertaken to return an asset back to its pre disaster function, and where no *REPA works* are required
- Approval from the Assessing Authority is required before immediate reconstruction works are undertaken.
- Works must be completed within **three (3)** months. Any works that cannot be completed within 3 months must be completed as REPA
 - Gravel resheeting, patching, grading and pothole repairs where it fully restores a road
 - Replacement of damaged culvert/s
 - Repair of major pavement failure/s
 - Restoration of landslips utilising engineered structure/s

Essential public asset reconstruction works (certified estimate - REPA)

(long term programmed works required to fully restore an asset to its pre-disaster function)

- REPA works are those reconstruction works, other than specified Emergency Works that can not, or are not practical to complete within three (3) months of an eligible event and are those undertaken to return an asset back to its pre disaster function.
- works that are of lesser urgency, higher complexity and may require Council to gain funding certainty prior to committing to project.

5. Timelines

- **Event start date:** 5 January 2026. End date TBC
- Please lodge claims regularly as expenditure is incurred. Expenditure this FY MUST be claimed by 31 August 2026
- **Cat A Relief and Recovery and Cat A CDO:** Typically 3 months.
 - We know that more time will be required by many councils with longer recovery programs. Start talking to your assessor about timelines as your recovery needs become clearer and programs develop
- **Cat B CDO:** 3 months.
 - Application has been made to the Commonwealth regarding an extension of time. Discuss individual council needs with your assessor
- **Cat B EW:** 3 months from date of access
 - Application has been made to the Commonwealth regarding an extension of time. Discuss individual council needs with your assessor
- **Cat B IRW:** 3 months from date of access
 - Unlikely any extension would be considered. If works cannot be completed within 3 months. Utilise EPAR / REPA
- **Cat B EPAR:**
 - Estimates due 31 March 2027
 - Works to be completed 30 June 2028
 - Expenditure claimed on completion of works.

6. Photos

- Critically important and required across ALL Cat B Emergency Works, Immediate Works and Essential Public Asset Reconstruction
- Think about where you can use photos to support Relief and Recovery and Counter Disaster Operations
- Photos need to be representative of the cost, damage, and location. Where damage is continuous, the supply of photos must also be representative of the affected asset location
- Frequency required should be determined by the visibility of damage captured in the images
- Highly recommend taking both Damage, and Completion photos for Emergency Works.
- Photos must have intact metadata which includes geolocation and datetime stamp for 'Date Taken'.
- Refer 'How to guide 2 – Photographic evidence – July 2024'
- <https://www.vic.gov.au/category-b-emergency-works>

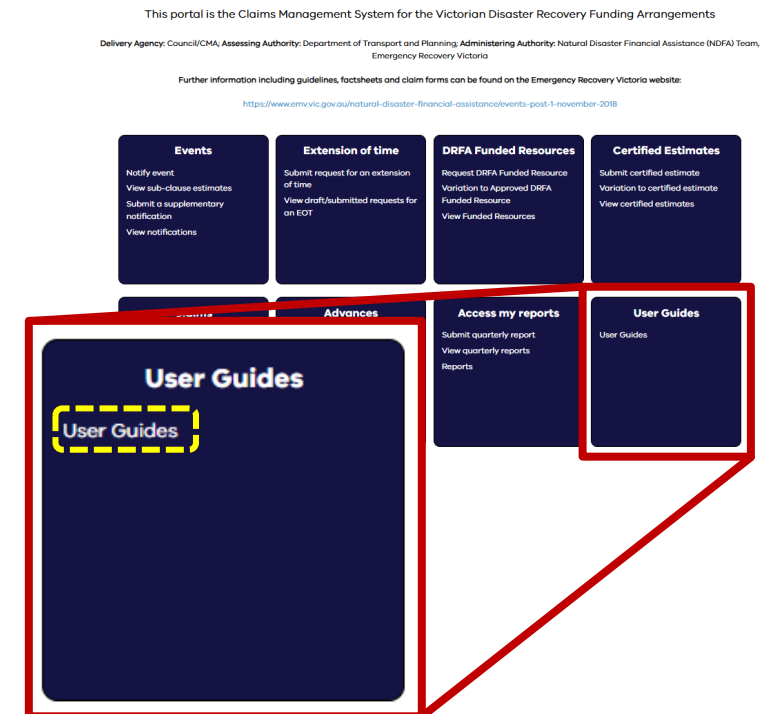


*You will have thousands of photos.
How will you ensure compliance with DRFA evidence requirements?
How will you efficiently capture, collect, sort, store and present your
supporting evidence?*

7. Resources and Support

- Your assessor is here to help and support you navigate the DRFA. Use them.
- We do not always have contact points across all Council relief and recovery activities. If your feeling lost, please reach out.
- DRFA General Awareness training is available to all councils. Reach out to Lyndee Peters
- Tailored training can be provided where specific needs are identified.
- ERVs DRFA website contains a wealth of information including Guidelines, Tip sheets and How to guides.
- Event specific Q&A's are located at below link and regularly updated
- <https://www.vic.gov.au/january-2026-victorian-bushfires-agrn-1242-drfa-information>
- Use the 'Tool Box' to navigate to relevant resources for your category of work.
- <https://www.vic.gov.au/drfa-resources-guidelines-and-forms>
- ERVs Claims Management System. Make sure you have active users. To add, remove or change users please reach out to ERV NDFA team ndfa@justice.vic.gov.au
- To find resources to help you navigate the CMS, follow the link on the home page under 'User Guides'.

CMS Guides



Thank you



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