

# Natural Disaster Financial Assistance

Bulletin 15, 15 January 2026

This is a special edition covering the current Victorian Bushfire event, AGRN 1242.

## NDFA Bulletin 15

The Bulletin is sent out on a regular basis and includes updates and reminders around the Victorian Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA) and the CMS (Claims Management System). It is emailed to all Council CMS registered users, Council contacts and Council's general email.

## Victorian Bushfires (commencing 7 January 2026) – AGRN 1242

An information page has been set up on the Emergency Recovery Victoria website to assist with common questions regarding DRFA eligibility and the claims process in relation to this event.

<https://www.vic.gov.au/january-2026-victorian-bushfires-agrn-1242-drfa-information#supporting-documents>

## DRFA information sessions specific for the Victorian Bushfire event

Our Department of Transport and Planning DRFA assessors have organised two DRFA information sessions for the **22 and 23 January 2026** specifically for this event. If you have not received an invite and would like to be invited, please contact [Lyndee.Peters@transport.vic.gov.au](mailto:Lyndee.Peters@transport.vic.gov.au).

## Potential extension of time for emergency works

Discussions are taking place with the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) regarding a potential extension of time for emergency works, noting that the current allowable time period is 7 April 2026. Advice will follow regarding the outcome of this request.

## Update estimates in the CMS portal

Noting that initial estimates captured as part of the event notification are high level, it is important to continue to review and update these estimates as additional information becomes available and damage assessments are undertaken.

Estimates are not funding commitments and can be updated at *any* time with the only exception being when a certified estimate is approved for essential public asset reconstruction works. Timely updates of the estimates will assist with budgeting and will also provide data insights into the volume of claims and assessor resourcing requirements.

Please review and update estimates by the **31 January 2026** for this event, in addition to the other events.

## Standing Items:

### DRFA User Reference Group (URG)

If your Council is currently not represented in the Victorian DRFA User Reference Group, we encourage that you join the conversation. The time commitment is around 1 hour per month and is a great way for sharing challenges and experiences, providing feedback on the CMS and Victorian DRFA Guidelines and also networking amongst councils (community of practice). Please send an email to [chad.ryan@erv.vic.gov.au](mailto:chad.ryan@erv.vic.gov.au) or [ndfa@justice.vic.gov.au](mailto:ndfa@justice.vic.gov.au) to be included in the invitation list.

### New Users to the CMS

Councils wishing to add a New User to the CMS portal should email [NDFA@justice.vic.gov.au](mailto:NDFA@justice.vic.gov.au) and the form will be emailed. Please note the form will need to be signed by Council's CEO before access can be arranged. Access to the CMS has been capped at five (5) users per Council.

### User Guides and Videos

User guides and videos are available on the CMS covering how to complete an event notification, claims of various types, requests for advances etc. The 23 videos, each approximately 2 minutes in duration, should be the first point of reference for questions on the CMS.

Once logged into the CMS, this information is available under the User Guide tile from the Home screen.

### Previous versions of the Bulletin

Previous versions of the Bulletin are now available on the website at the following link:

<https://www.vic.gov.au/ndfa-bulletin-library-councils>