

# RURAL AID DELIVERS WATER TANKS TO FIRE IMPACTED COBARGO

207 residents will each receive a 1000 litre water tank

Rural Aid is trucking in 207 water tanks to Bega Valley Shire residents to assist the community with their recovery from the devastating bushfires that swept through the area on New Year's Eve.

The 1000 litre Schutz IBC water tanks, funded from a News Corporation donation to Rural Aid, will be delivered to the Cobargo Show Grounds, on Thursday 21 May 2020, for distribution to 207 verified, aid registered farmers and community members.

Rural Aid CEO John Warlters said we're hopeful that this generous donation will help make life a little easier for families in the Cobargo region who lost so much to fire. We're also resoundingly grateful for the support of the Cobargo Bush Fire Relief Centre who have helped make this logistically possible.

"The Bega Valley Shire, on the New South Wales south coast, was one of the worst fire affected communities when fire swept through and devastated the region in December 2019 and January 2020," John said.

"Our farmers and their communities are going through challenging times. The community have been impacted by one of the longest droughts in recent history, followed by fires that have devastated the land, people, livestock and homes. Now they are dealing with the impact of current restrictions during recovery as they attempt to rebuild.

"Many of the residents in the area, some over an hour away, are making daily trips to the Cobargo Showgrounds to shower, obtain water from the Council's standpipes and buy bottled drinking water.

"With the weather growing colder as winter approaches, we're hopeful the 1000 litre water tanks will make life a little easier for these communities. Having access to drinking water on their properties will facilitate cooking, bathing or simply starting the day with a cuppa.

"We're proud to be able to assist farmers and the Bega Valley community in any way we can. Along the New South Wales south coast, we've also been able to support farmers through the provision of hay, restocking and on the ground counselling."

## Rural Aid's continuing support

Just like any other business through this COVID period, the Rural Aid team is pivoting and finding ways to navigate restrictions to continue to deliver on the ground for farmers and rural communities.

"We're obviously able to achieve this under slightly reduced capacity, but thanks to our operations team, we're continuing to deliver much needed support," John said.

"We're recognising a greater need for our services than ever before and have found unique ways to stay connected with rural communities via our counsellors through phone calls and online webinars including our Community Builders Webinars Series.

"Of course, our volunteers are currently sitting tight and we hope that they will be back helping our farmers and rural communities over the coming months.

"I would also like to take this moment to say thank you to our supporters, many of whom have been impacted recently too, but who continue to recognise the level of resilience and fortitude our farmers display.

"Whether through a simple act of kindness in writing a letter of support to a farmer, purchasing Aussie produce or through a donation – we, at Rural Aid, thank you and are grateful for your ongoing support."

Cobargo Water Tank Delivery Information:

When: 7am Thursday 21 May 2020

Where: Cobargo Showground, Bermagui Road, Cobargo NSW 2550

Media: 0447 116 757 | [media@ruralaid.org.au](mailto:media@ruralaid.org.au)

Spokesperson: Rural Aid CEO John Warlters | 0409 618 641

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About Rural Aid

Rural Aid is one of Australia's largest rural charities. Well known for the highly successful 'Buy a Bale' campaign, the charity also provides financial assistance, water and counselling to farmers in times of drought, flood or fire. Other initiatives support its vision that farming and rural communities are safeguarded to ensure their sustainability both during and after these natural disasters. Visit [www.ruralaid.org.au](http://www.ruralaid.org.au) for further information on these programs and other support for our rural communities.

Visit [www.ruralaid.org.au/snapshots](http://www.ruralaid.org.au/snapshots) for Rural Aid's latest assistance statistics.

Visit [www.ruralaid.org.au/towns/webinars/](http://www.ruralaid.org.au/towns/webinars/) to be part of the Rural Aid Community Builders Webinars Series.

Follow Rural Aid for updates on:

- Rural Aid – FB: @ruralaidaustralia | IG: @ruralaid | IN: Rural Aid Ltd | TW: @ruralaidaustralia
- Buy A Bale – FB: @buyabaleofhay | IG: @buyabale | TW: @buyabale

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#### Impact of NSW fires

Livestock loss across NSW as a result of the fires exceeded 13,000 with over 16,000 landholders estimated to have been impacted by the fires. Southern NSW had the greatest losses with more than 12,000 head of livestock dying as a result of the fires<sup>1</sup>. As of 28 January 2020, the fires in NSW had burnt 5.3 million hectares or 6.7% of the State<sup>2</sup>.

#### Bureau of Meteorology

The Bureau of Meteorology noted in the Events section of its Annual Climate Statement 2019, published on 9 January 2020, that, 'The extensive and long-lived fires appear to be the largest in scale in the modern record in New South Wales, while the total area burnt appears to be the largest in a single recorded fire season for eastern Australia'<sup>3</sup>.

- Warmest year on record for Australia - mean temperature 1.52 °C above average
- Warmest year on record for New South Wales and Western Australia
- Annual total rainfall 40% below average with much of Australia affected by drought

<sup>1</sup>Sourced from NSW Department of Primary Industries

<sup>2</sup>Sourced from Parliament of Australia Parliamentary Library

<sup>3</sup>Sourced from Bureau of Meteorology (BOM)

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