



Coffs Harbour City Council

Supporting Community Led Recovery

Liberation Trail Fire - November 12 2019

Fire Season Impacts for Coffs City Harbour Council

- Mount Browne, Eastbank and Liberation Trail bushfires from October through to December 2019.
- Resulting in 17 dwellings lost, 7 homes damaged *
- 27 outbuildings destroyed, 7 damaged *
- 47 properties in the Orara Valley were impacted, mostly affecting the village of Nana Glen*
- Total area burnt in the LGA 3 666 hectares **
- Smoke and ash from September onwards added to levels of anxiety and uncertainty within the broader community.
- In early November, North Coast Public Health advised residents to take precautions as bushfire smoke affected air quality.
- Residents suffered socially and economically with the cancellation of a major sporting event.
- The loss and devastation of the bushfires was compounded by subsequent flooding and COVID-19.

*Source: OEM State Impact Report – Northern NSW Report Date 23/03/20**

*Source: NSW National Parks & Wildlife Service***



Recovery - starts at response and must be community led

Early Recovery

- Immediate needs: water; cleared dangerous trees; emergency works to roads
- Community engagement
- A Community Project Liaison Officer was appointed and in April a Community Recovery Officer commenced

Recovery

- Communication (regular, different mediums, clear, transparent)
- Working Groups (community-led and internal)
- DRFA funding allocation
- Outreach and continued community engagement
- Bushfire Recovery Action Plan (endorsed by Council)
- Fencing and clean-up support (BlazeAid and BackTrack)
- Local Bushfire Support Team – Res NSW, DPI, Health NSW, local organisations and charities
- Grant support (Red Cross, The Salvation Army etc.)
- DA support and waiving of fees
- Business and tourism support (Tourist Trail)
- Recovery and Resilience events (e.g. Creative Art Project; Environmental Recovery Grants; workshops)



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Preparedness & Resilience

- Training of CHCC staff in communicating in recovery
- Building community capacity – RAMHP and Red Cross
- Hotspots Fire Project
- RFS Get Ready video collaboration
- Promotion of Get Ready weekend
- CRO link into LEMC
- Community education regarding evacuation centres and Neighbourhood Safer Places

- Planning for ongoing community events
- RFS brigade support
- Continued engagement with community and key stakeholders
- Building positive relationships between Council and community
- Building agency trust within community
- CRO collaborations across LGAs – strengthening community and council links
- Supporting tourism and business development

- M&E to capture lessons learned and outcomes achieved for future improvements



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