

Media Release

From the Building Commissioner

Friday 10 July 2009

Volunteers assist bushfire affected residents as they design and rebuild their homes

With the clean up of bushfire affected sites now complete, more than 50 volunteers, trained in new bushfire attack level assessments, are scheduled to help bushfire affected property owners who are about to design and rebuild.

The volunteer project, which will take place between mid July and September, will see a team of volunteers assess the Bushfire Attack Level (BAL) of building sites as part of an initiative recently announced by the Minister for Planning, Justin Madden.

“These BAL assessments are one part of the new residential building standards that have applied across Victoria from 11 March 2009,” Acting Building Commissioner Sarah McCann-Bartlett said.

“The BAL project aims to meet the most immediate requirements for residents rebuilding in fire affected communities, ensuring appropriate construction methods are incorporated in their new home’s design.

“Affected property owners, who are planning to rebuild are eligible for a free BAL assessment which will be carried out by volunteers who have been trained as BAL assessors.

“Volunteers will visit all affected areas over the coming months and help property owners determine their building site’s BAL using six steps under the simplified method of the Australian Standard 3959-2009,” she said.

Ms McCann-Bartlett invited property owners in bushfire affected areas, who are ready to design or rebuild, to register with the Building Commission’s Bushfire Advice Line and make an appointment with a BAL volunteer.

“We are fortunate to have the support of these BAL assessors to go on-site from mid-July and be on hand to support those who are ready to commence the rebuild.”

“The Bushfire Attack Level project is one of several volunteer initiatives aimed to utilise the building industry’s skills and provide support to fire affected communities as they plan to rebuild,” she said.

“These projects are co-ordinated by the Building Commission in partnership with the Victorian Bushfire Recovery and Reconstruction Authority and key building industry associations.”

To volunteer or obtain a brochure on the BAL assessment project phone the Bushfire Building Advice Line on 1300 360 320 or visit website www.buildingcommission.com.au

For further information visit www.buildingcommission.com.au