

Thursday 23 January, 2020



High Country welcomes support for regional bushfire recovery

A State Government announcement today of a \$200,000 grant to assist the region's tourism industry recover from the impact of bushfires has been welcomed by Tourism North East.

TNE's acting CEO, Sarah Pilgrim, confirmed late last week that the High Country's tourism industry had been hard hit. To date, nearly 270 tourism businesses have been surveyed for the week 2 to 9 January with over half of tourism businesses reporting 100 percent losses and a further quarter reporting losses higher than 75 percent. Additional modeling commissioned by TNE by specialist tourism consultants, Urban Enterprise, also estimated that the March 2020 quarter losses by regional tourism businesses would be (conservatively) between \$183 and \$208 million.

Responding to the Victorian Government announcement today, Ms Pilgrim said the \$200K grant would enable Tourism North East to immediately support regional tourism industry recovery efforts through a digital marketing initiative that would provide free ATDW (Australian Tourism Data Warehouse) listings for "each and every tourism business in the High Country."

"What this funding does is provide individual tourism business operators the tools to leverage State and Federal marketing strategies underpinning bushfire recovery efforts", Ms Pilgrim said.

She said this would ensure an online presence at a national, State, region-wide and destination level through the key online tourism marketing platforms of Tourism Australia, Visit Victoria, Victoria's High Country and each of the High Country's destination websites around the region. The free listings will be provided to those tourism businesses renewing a current ATDW listing and newcomers to the region's digital marketing platforms for the duration of the bushfire recovery period.

TNE also welcomed announcements of:

- More than 115 leading sport and business bodies have committed to holding meetings and conferences in bushfire affected areas of the State
- Tourism Australia's announcement of an initial \$76million tourism recovery package, including a \$10 million regional tourism events initiative
- Visit Victoria's range of marketing activities including enlisting the support and clout of high profile Victorians and major events.

While bushfires and smoke are still impacting areas of the Alpine National Park, Mount Buffalo and the Upper Murray, the vast majority of the High Country's towns and villages have not been directly impacted by bushfires and most businesses remain open, including the alpine resorts of Falls Creek, Mt Hotham, Dinner Plain and Mt Buller. TNE continues to encourage anyone intending to visit the region to check the [Vic Emergency](#) and [EPA Air Watch](#) sites for the latest information.

Sarah Pilgrim, Acting CEO, Tourism North East is available for interview. Please contact Sue Couttie, 0419 522 064 to arrange.