

Australian Bush Fires Update: 17 January 2020

RWNZ National Office has been in close contact with our sister organisation in Australia, **Country Women's Association of Australia (CWAA)**, in the wake of the devastating bush fires. We have offered our support and sought guidance on what would be of most use as those affected come to terms with their changed reality.

Amongst those profoundly impacted is one of CWAA's State Presidents, who like 2000 other families, has lost her home. The Australian president of CWAA, Tanya Cameron wrote to RWNZ saying, "**we are certainly in uncharted territory at present and many of our Members have been impacted to varying degrees.**"

We have also been in contact with ACWW South Pacific Area President, Gail Commens who lives in NSW and has been on the ground helping evacuees, cooking and delivering food to the fire fighters and delivering food and supplies to affected families. She advised; "many of our CWAA Members have lost homes, livestock, land and possessions. Many still don't know to what extent, because they are not allowed to return to their area yet."

The response to those in need has been incredible and plenty of volunteers have come forward to help wherever they are needed. Fortunately, the volume of donated food has meant that both affected families and fire-fighters are well catered for.

Many people are also suffering from the smoke from the fires which Gail describes being like a thick fog. It is so bad some days that the day is like night. Many have sore, irritated eyes and throats and the smell of smoke pervades everything.

In response to our offers of assistance, Tanya and Gail have expressed their deep gratitude. While the immediate needs for food, water and shelter have largely been addressed at present, they advised **that financial assistance is what is needed urgently to assist the many and varied needs of those affected.**

RWNZ National Office will be collecting donations which will be forwarded to CWAA to distribute and apportion across the country as they see fit.

Donations can be made three ways; online, internet banking or cheque.

Use the [link on our website](#) to donate online

If paying by cheque please make your cheque payable to RWNZ and mail to RWNZ, PO Box 12-021, Thorndon, Wellington 6011. Please indicate on the reverse of the cheque or by including a note that the cheque is for the ACWW Australian Bush Fire Fund.

If paying by Internet Banking, please deposit into the following bank account: ANZ: 06-0501-0778590-00, Please use your name as the reference and CWAABush as the code.

Many thanks.