

Gippsland Tourism Response and Recovery Group - Weekly Bulletin No. 10

Thursday 15th February, 2007

Gippsland Moves into Recovery

Now that the Great Divide Fire has been declared contained, planning is underway to ensure that the recovery process is undertaken as quickly and efficiently as possible. It is critical that we continue to support each other and be patient during this phase.

The GTRRG will continue to lobby for support from the Federal Government and Centrelink to assist operators who have been adversely affected by the fires. There is still considerable concern about the welfare of operators, particularly in the High Country as cash flow continues to tighten.

More Funding Announcements from the State Government

Minister for Regional and Rural Development John Brumby yesterday announced an extra \$1.5 million to assist Gippsland and the North East region get back on track after the bushfires. \$1 million will be allocated to fast-track the opening of iconic tourist attractions in both regions for key dates, such as the Labour Day long weekend and the Easter Holidays.

Of the \$500,000 package announced, \$300,000 will provide financial advice for non-farm businesses significantly impacted upon by fire, while the remaining \$200,000 will be utilised by councils and relevant groups to stage community events.

Gippsland Advertisements in Melbourne Newspapers Last Weekend

Half page advertisements have appeared in the Age and Herald Sun newspapers in the last week promoting Gippsland as open for business. The advertisements outlined Gippsland towns, roads and Parks now open to welcome visitors.

Gippsland to be Promoted on Melbourne Radio Stations

Parks Victoria's \$20,000 radio campaign to promote visitation to Gippsland will kick off this Friday. The campaign will feature television personality Coxy and a number of operators and locations throughout Gippsland. These two minute adverts/ community

service announcements will be broadcast on Radio 3AW, 774 Melbourne and a number of regional radio stations throughout Victoria.

GTRRG to Promote High Country at Victorian 4wd Show This Weekend

This weekend the GTRRG in partnership with Parks Victoria will host a site at the Victorian 4WD Show in Wandin. The site will promote areas of the Gippsland High Country that are open for business to 4x4 drivers. This event will give the GTRRG the opportunity to inform up to 8000 4x4 drivers and outdoor enthusiasts that areas of Gippsland are still open. For more information on the event please visit: www.victorian4wdshow.com.au

Jazz Festival to Honour 'Furies'

The Paynesville Jazz Festival is showing its appreciation to fire fighters and other emergency service personnel by offering them free admittance to all venues for the duration of the festival. Held over the weekend of 23-25th February 2007, the three day festival will feature some of Australia's finest jazz musicians playing jazz, swing and blues in beautiful waterfront, open air and indoor venues. For more information please visit: <http://www.paynesvillejazzfestival.com>

Musical Entertainment at Its Peak this Summer

The Mt Baw Baw Mountain Music Festival, to be held this weekend at Mt Baw Baw Alpine Resort, promises to be an event filled with family fun. The free festival will feature such impressive singers and bands as Basic Ingredients, Katie Knight, Alex Wilson and Danny Burton performing live across the weekend. For more information or to book accommodation please visit www.mountbawbaw.com.au or contact the resort on 1300 651 136.

Waterholes Guest House Shows Gratitude to Fire Fighters

The owners of Waterholes Guest House in East Gippsland are determined to give back to the CFA, DSE, Parks Victoria and other contractors who worked tirelessly to save their property last month. Waterholes will be donating \$50 from each booking received over the next 6 months to the CFA, as part of their 'CFA Donation Package'. For more information please phone 03 5157 9330 or visit www.waterholesguesthouse.com.au

Media/ Public Relations

GTRRG will continue to create positive media coverage for the region as we move into the recovery phase. Any ideas, issues or concerns in this regard should be forwarded to Jenny Brown on 5142 3462.

Many thanks to those who have forwarded 'Good News' and recovery stories this week. More would be welcome and can be sent through to: jennybr@wellington.vic.gov.au.

The need for a strong and unified response to bushfires is critical. If you are contacted directly by the media regarding the impact of the bushfires, please refer them to Chris Buckingham on 0429 869 638.

Bushfire Updates

ABC Radio is the best source of up to date information about the fire situation, stay tuned on the following frequencies:

Area:	Frequency:
Melbourne and Surrounds	774am
Latrobe Valley	100.7fm
Sale	100.7fm / 828 am
Orbost	97.1fm
Omeo	720am
Cann River	106.1fm
Mallacoota	104.9fm

Support Services for operators

If things are getting you down and you need someone to talk to, call:

LIFELINE Gippsland 24hr telephone counselling 13 1114

To access business planning support and advice through State Government please contact **Business Line 13 2215**

Tourism operators requiring financial assistance may be eligible for grants through Centrelink. All interested operators are encouraged to contact **Centrelink on 180 2233 or visit www.centrelink.gov.au** for further information.

The **Department of Human Services** has further information on grants, based on eligibility, to assist fire affected businesses, farms and non-for profit organizations. To be eligible, applicants must have suffered direct damage as a result of the bushfires, be unable to affect the necessary repairs from their own resources and have exhausted alternative sources of assistance. **Please visit www.dhs.vic.gov.au/emergency for details.**

East Gippsland Bushfire Information Line

East Gippsland Shire Council has established the Bushfire Recovery Information Hotline. People requiring further information within the Shire are encouraged to contact 1800 100 298 (8am-8pm daily) or for urgent enquiries outside these times to phone 0427 950 039.

Reference information

If you want more information on Gippsland's Response and Recovery effort please go to your dedicated tourism industry website: www.gippslandtourism.net.au

People looking for inspirational experiences in Gippsland can go to: www.inspiredbygippsland.com.au and www.parkweb.vic.gov.au
For information on the Gippsland Tourism Response and Recovery Group and industry information please go to www.gippslandtourism.net.au