



5 February 2010

## ADRA Commemorates 2009 Victorian Bushfires

Wahroonga, New South Wales — One year after bushfires ravaged Victoria, tragically taking the lives of 173 people and destroying more than 1800 homes, the Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) Australia paused today to remember those affected and pray for their ongoing healing and recovery.

This Sunday, 7 February, marks one year since the ‘Black Saturday’ fires swept through Victoria, irrevocably changing the lives of thousands and shocking an entire nation. ADRA Australia commemorated this event with a time of reflection and prayer for the survivors and for those who lost loved ones and homes in this terrible disaster.

“This weekend will be a difficult time for many, as they remember the events of a year ago, and our thoughts and prayers are with those impacted by this horrible event,” said ADRA Australia’s Chief Executive Officer, Jonathan Duffy. “We pray for their recovery and healing—physically, emotionally and spiritually; and for the rebuilding of their homes, communities and lives. Their resiliency and strength is awe-inspiring and we would like to encourage them at this time.”

ADRA Australia prayed for the survivors of the disaster, for those still recovering from injuries and for those who lost loved ones, property or possessions. The agency also spent time in prayer for the volunteers and workers who responded at the time and for those now planning future responses based on the lessons learned.

In addition, ADRA Australia spent time in reflection and thanksgiving for the many people who supported the response effort with time, goods and donations. Following the devastation of the ‘Black Saturday’ bushfires, the Australian people expressed their sympathy through an amazing outpouring of generosity. The Victorian Bushfire Appeal, which was administered by the Australian Red Cross, raised more than \$388 million, with \$374 million already allocated to the ongoing recovery and reconstruction efforts. ADRA Australia immediately contributed to this national appeal and extends heartfelt thanks to its many supporters for their kind donations, which enabled this quick response.

“Our supporters have very big hearts and have been wonderfully supportive of our work and we thank them very much for their generosity,” Mr Duffy said.

ADRA Australia invites its supporters to consider how they can mark this occasion in appropriate ways to show support for those still recovering from this disaster.

ADRA Australia is a non-government organisation (NGO) engaging in sustainable development projects and emergency management activities for people in need in Australia, the Pacific, Asia and Africa. It is a member of the Australian Council of Social Services (ACOSS) and has full accreditation with the Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID). It is a member of the Australian Council for International Development (ACFID) and is a signatory to ACFID’s Code of Conduct. ADRA Australia is part of the international ADRA network, which has a presence in 125 countries. ADRA is the worldwide humanitarian arm of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. For more information about ADRA Australia, or to sign up for email updates, visit [www.adra.org.au](http://www.adra.org.au).

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Media Enquiries:

Candice Jaques

p 02 9489 5488

m 0407 172 305

e [news@adra.org.au](mailto:news@adra.org.au)

[www.adra.org.au](http://www.adra.org.au)