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Event Details

Event Title Eyre Peninsula Bushfire
Event Category Bushfire
GLIDE Number
Event Start Date 10/01/2005
Event End Date 12/01/2005
Duration of Event 2 day/s

Location

Zone South Australia
Region Adelaide
Map

Human Casualties

People Killed 9
People Injured 110
People Affected
People Homeless
People Evacuated

Property Damaged**Damaged****Destroyed****Financial Cost**

Insured Cost \$27,700,000.00
Loss Assessment Cost
Commercial/Industry Cost
Total Cost \$27,700,000.00

Cost Source Insurance Disaster Response Organisation @August 2005

Cost Type Provisional

Information Sources

Source/s Printed Press - Melbourne Herald Sun
Printed Press - Sydney Daily Telegraph
Printed Press - The Age
Printed Press - The Australian
ABC Premium News
The Advertiser
South Australian Department of Premier and Cabinet situation report 19 January 2005
Description January 2005 articles
Severity/ Impact Nil
Impact Range Adelaide

Details

The Eyre Peninsula fire began on Monday 10th January and was contained by fire authorities, but 70 km/h winds and temperatures above 40 degrees pushed the blaze over containment lines on the Tuesday morning. As the day progressed, more than 145,000 hectares were burnt. 48,000 hectares were burnt in and near the small townships of Wangary, Wanilla, North Shields, Poonindie, Louth Bay, Greenpatch, and Yallunda Flat.

More than 300 Country Fire Service personnel, with assistance from landholders, combated the fire. The Port Lincoln airport was temporarily closed, preventing additional fire fighters flying in from Adelaide to help locals and volunteers fight the fire. The South Australian State Coordinator declared a major emergency (under section 23 of Emergency Management Act 2004) for the Eyre Peninsula from noon on 12 January until 16 January.

As the fire tore through North Shields, a small settlement north of Port Lincoln, residents were ordered to leave their home and head to the beaches. The blaze raged through the caravan park at North Shields, destroying cabins and caravans. Residents at Louth Bay, were forced to evacuate and seek refuge on a beach. Some residents had to be rescued from the sea by emergency services after taking refuge in the water.

Eight people, including four children, died in their cars as they tried to flee the firestorm. A local schoolteacher also died when flames engulfed the Shell Museum at North Shields, near Port Lincoln. Approximately 110 were reported injured, including five who suffered serious burns and were flown to Adelaide for treatment. Several people were treated at Port Lincoln Hospital for burns and smoke inhalation.

Fire fighters reported extensive damage to livestock and property. Property destroyed included 50 homes, dozens of cars, 15 caravans, two buses, three cabins, one shop, three vans and four boats. There was also extensive damage to rural infrastructure, including water mains, power lines and telephone infrastructure. There were approximately 47,000 livestock (primarily sheep) killed or subsequently destroyed by the fire. All fencing within about 890,000 hectares was destroyed, and of those hectares affected, 95% of pastures were also destroyed.

Eyre Peninsula residents came together to provide emergency accommodation and assistance for fire victims at several assembly points. Recovery centres were established at Port Lincoln High School and Cummins Bowling Club. Emergency assistance grants were made available to assist the recovery process.

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