

media release



Proper Bay Port Lincoln fire update

Wednesday, 14 January 2009
2.15 pm

Firefighters from the SA Country Fire Service (CFS), the Metropolitan Fire Service (MFS) and the Department of Environment and Heritage (DEH) have continued to fight the Proper Bay fire near Port Lincoln overnight.

CFS Chief Officer Euan Ferguson, announced this morning that crews had made good progress during the night.

“The good efforts of firefighters overnight saw a backburn put in place and this morning the threat of the fire had reduced. As at 9.17 am this morning the fire is considered as controlled,” Euan said.

In excess of 250 firefighters and 25 appliances worked to control the fire in extreme weather conditions of low humidity, strong winds and high temperatures.

It was a difficult and often dangerous job for the firefighters with four firefighters sustaining injuries.

Approximately 280 hectares of land has been burnt and damage sustained to three domestic houses, a number of sheds and boarding kennels.

One million dollars worth of damage has also been sustained to two fish processing plants.

Euan says, “This incident strongly reinforces the need for members of the public to take responsibility and activate their Bushfire Action Plans in order to plan for and prevent such incidents. Those in bushfire risk areas need to decide well in advance of any bushfire threat whether they will Stay and Defend or Go Early”.

Many properties that were under threat within the perimeter of the fire were saved by the quick action of the agencies involved.

MFS Chief Officer Grant Lupton commended the work of all agencies, saying “A rapid multi-agency response from the CFS, MFS, DEH and SAPOL helped reduce the damage from what could have potentially been a greater area”.

According to Euan, the recovery process started yesterday afternoon.

“An Emergency Relief Centre was established and emergency accommodation was found for a number of residents overnight. Counselling and recovery assistance is available to those affected”.

In further support of the recovery process, there will be a community meeting tonight at the Waybacks Football Club Rooms, Port Lincoln, from 7 pm.

The Proper Bay fire is now controlled with approximately 100 firefighters and 15 appliances still on the scene. SAPOL are continuing to manage a number of road closures in the area.

The cause of the fire has not yet been determined, however, a multi-agency team of CFS, MFS and SAPOL fire cause investigators are currently conducting investigations at the scene.

Due to the continuing hot weather the community is reminded that there is still a real risk presented by the fire.

The community in the surrounding area need to ensure they remain Bushfire Ready and continue to activate their Bushfire Action Plans. The community should be vigilant throughout the weekend and into next week, while the state continues to experience hot dry weather.

For further information call the CFS Bushfire Information Hotline on 1300 362 361 or visit the CFS website at www.cfs.sa.gov.au