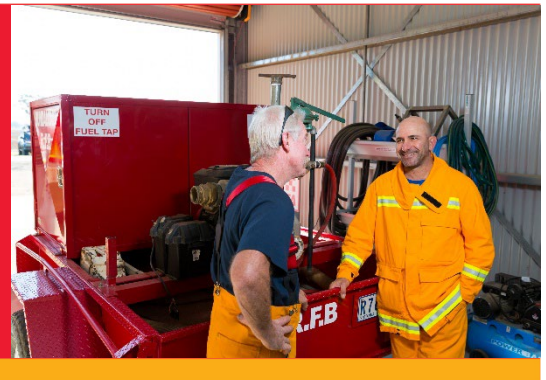


Wellbeing Support Services and Resources

TIP SHEET



CFA Members and their families impacted by the current fires have access to a range of internal and external support services and resources.

Wellbeing Support Line

Provides free and confidential support for CFA Members and their families via MAP (external mental health clinicians), Peers, Chaplains and the Organisational Wellbeing Team

WELLBEING SUPPORT LINE

One number to manage your wellbeing

1800 959 232

Providing CFA members and their families access to free and confidential wellbeing support



MEMBER ASSISTANCE
PROGRAM
(COUNSELLING)

PEER SUPPORT
PROGRAM

CHAPLAINCY
PROGRAM

ORGANISATIONAL
WELLBEING TEAM

24/7 support for CFA members and their families

External Support Options

Free and confidential services specifically for emergency services personnel

- Black Dog National Emergency Worker Support Service via telehealth on (02) 9843 9450
- Phoenix Australia Responder Assist via telehealth on 1800 329 191.
- Also consider a referral to a local mental health clinician via your GP.
- For immediate support call Lifeline on 13 11 14.

OUR COMMUNITY • OUR CFA



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Emergency Relief and Recovery

The Department of Families, Fairness and Housing is providing relief and recovery support to people impacted by the January 2026 fires:

- Emergency Relief Payments, accessed via the VicEmergency Hotline on 1800 226 226 (press 9 for an interpreter or call TIS on 131450).
- Emergency Recovery Support, accessed via the Emergency Recovery Hotline on 1800 560 760 (press 9 for an interpreter or call TIS on 131450).

Visit www.emergency.vic.gov.au/relief/#january_2026_fires for more information.

Volunteer Fire Brigades Victoria Welfare Fund

The Volunteer Fire Brigades Victoria welfare Fund provides small grants to CFA volunteers, long serving former volunteers and their families, who are experiencing significant financial hardship.

Typical cases involve prolonged illness, bereavement, loss of earnings, or the accommodation and travel costs associated with supporting a relative in hospital.

Brigade membership entitles coverage through the VFBV Welfare Fund to provide assistance for:

- members
- their families, and
- any ex-member of a brigade who was a registered volunteer for 20 years or more

Contact the VFBV Welfare Fund Secretary on (03) 9886 1141 welfare@vfbv.com.au.

CFA Injury Recovery and Support Services

Members who suffer personal injury as a result of their service as a member of CFA are provided compensation through the CFA Volunteer Compensation Scheme.

This scheme also covers volunteer property and journey compensation claims over \$2000. For more information visit CFA Members Online <https://www.members.cfa.vic.gov.au/brigades-operational/resources/injury-recovery-and-support-services>.

Checking in with someone

Don't wait for an issue to get worse, if you are worried about someone the below steps may help to check in with them or if you need support you can do so by calling the CFA Wellbeing Support Line (1800 959 232).

1. ASK AND LISTEN

- Make sure you're in a good headspace, and make sure there's time, privacy and no interruptions. Gently let them know you understand it's been really tough period and you're here to listen if they want to talk.
 - *How are you going at the moment?*
 - *It looks like this experience has been really tough for you, can you tell me more about that?*
 - *What are the main concerns you have at the moment?*
 - *Is there anything you need right now? How can I help?*
- Let them go at their own pace, try not to anticipate or assume anything. Repeat back your understanding of what they say. Listen carefully. Remain calm. Don't judge.

2. SUPPORT

- Encourage them to access support, and if needed, help them connect with services like the CFA Member Assistance Program, Peer Support and Chaplains.
- You may also encourage them to see their GP, a mental health professional, or a trusted friend or family member who they can confide in.

3. CHECK IN

- Keep the conversation going. If at the time they aren't up for talking, or respond with something like "All good", remind them you're there and open to chatting if they need.
- Keep checking in even after they access CFA wellbeing support services.
- If you agree on actions, follow through with what you've agreed to do and make sure they follow through on their agreed actions.
- Always remind them that you are acting out of love and care for their wellbeing. This isn't 'nagging' and it isn't weakness. It's care that will help them to continue doing what they love.

Wellbeing Self Check

Mental Health Continuum - a tool to help recognise and talk about wellbeing



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	LIFE IS GOOD	LIFE IS A BIT ROUGH	LIFE IS HARD	LIFE IS REALLY HARD
EXPLANATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good mental health/ normal functioning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mild distress in response to an event 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More severe and persistent impact on functioning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diagnosable mental illness • Severe and persistent impact on functioning
MOOD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Normal mood fluctuations • Calm and takes things in stride 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Irritable/impatient • Nervous • Sadness/overwhelmed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anger • Anxiety • Pervasive sadness/ hopelessness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Easily enraged/ aggression • Persistent anxiety/worry and/or panic attacks • Depressed mood/numb
THINKING/ ATTITUDE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good sense of humour • In control mentally • Can concentrate/focus 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Displaced sarcasm • Distracted/lose focus • Intrusive thoughts/ worries 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Negative attitude • Frequently distracted/ poor focus • Recurrent intrusive thoughts/worries 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Severely impaired concentration • Loss of memory/ cognitive ability • Suicidal thoughts/intent
PHYSICAL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Normal sleep patterns • Physically well • Good energy levels • Maintaining stable weight 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trouble sleeping • Low energy • Changes in eating patterns • Some weight gain or loss 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restless disturbed sleep • Increased fatigue • Fluctuations in weight 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can't fall asleep or stay asleep • Sleeping too much/too little • Physical illnesses • Constant fatigue/ exhaustion • Extreme weight loss or gain
BEHAVIOUR/ PERFORMANCE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physically and socially active • Performing well 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decreased activity/ socialising • Procrastination 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoidance • Decreased work performance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social withdrawal • Absenteeism from work • Can't perform duties/ tasks
SUBSTANCE USE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No/limited alcohol use/ gambling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular alcohol use/ gambling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased alcohol use/ gambling hard to control 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alcohol and gambling • Other addictions
SUGGESTED SUPPORT OPTIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wellbeing Hub online resources • Awareness sessions delivered by Peers or Member Wellbeing Advisors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peer Support • Member Wellbeing Advisor • Chaplain • Member Assistance Program (Counselling) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Targeted Psychological Intervention via Member Assistance Program or GP referral 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Targeted Psychological Intervention via Member Assistance Program or GP referral



WHERE ARE YOU OR YOUR BRIGADE/TEAM ON THE CONTINUUM?

Check in with how you are feeling and where that places you on the continuum. Consider using this tool within your brigade/team as a check in. Colours can sometimes be a more comfortable way to discuss wellbeing.



MOVING BACK AND FORTH IS OK

It's normal to move back and forth between the colours. Moving back towards the green can be as simple as using some strategies that have helped you in the past or may involve accessing professional support.



CONSIDER ACTIONS AND SUPPORT OPTIONS

The CFA thrive wellbeing app (accessed via the QR code) provides confidential insight into where you are on the continuum and suggests resources and supports.



SEEK SUPPORT IF NEEDED

The Wellbeing Support Line (1800 959 232) will connect you to the Member Assistance Program, Peer Support Program, Chaplaincy Program and CFA Organisational Wellbeing Team.

CFA thrive

A confidential online resource to support your health and wellbeing



Scan the QR Code or visit www.cfa.vic.gov.au/thrive to check where you are on the continuum and for more support options

CFA thrive is a web based application available via any internet browser

Recovery After Disaster

Ways to support your recovery



cfa.vic.gov.au

There is a wide range of normal reactions following a disaster. For many people these reactions will lessen over time as normal functioning returns. For others additional support may be needed from family, friends or specialist services.

Here are some changes you may notice in yourself or others:

EMOTIONAL/MOOD	Shock, grief, fear, anxiety, anger, guilt, irritability
THINKING	Confusion, disorientation, intrusive thoughts, nightmares
PHYSICAL	Feeling tense, difficulty sleeping, numbness, aches and pains, changes in appetite
BEHAVIOUR	Withdrawal, avoiding reminders, increased irritation, loss of interest in activities, increased use of alcohol or drugs.

How to support your recovery

PAUSE

Take a moment to acknowledge the event and how difficult it has been. It's okay to feel and behave differently in the aftermath. These changes are normal and temporary.

CONNECT

Spend time with family, friends and colleagues. Share what you've experienced and how you are feeling. Talking through our experiences assists recovery.

HEALTH

Get plenty of rest and sleep if possible. Focus on nutritious foods and physical activity. Be mindful of your alcohol intake and any other coping strategies that aren't helpful in the long-run.

ROUTINE

Return to your normal routine when possible and avoid major decisions while you are still strongly impacted by the event.

RELAXATION

Take time to do things you enjoy even for short periods. Consider breathing exercises, muscle relaxation or meditation to help with relaxation. There are plenty of online resources to guide you.

SEEK HELP

If the impact is lingering, seek additional support via the Wellbeing Support Line on 1800 959 232 or see your doctor/other health professional.

For more information visit cfa.vic.gov.au/wellbeing