

06 November 2023

VETERANS, EMERGENCY SERVICES, AND POLICE INDUSTRY INSTITUTE AUSTRALIA (VESPIIA) SENDS SUPPORT TO FIRST RESPONDERS IN WESTERN AUSTRALIA AND QUEENSLAND.

VESPIIA would like to extend out immense thanks and gratitude to the responders to the fires in Kings Park over the last few days.

The constant willingness of our fire fighters to place themselves in harms way should never be taken for granted or forgotten. We extend our thanks to the families of those responders. Families are often our greatest source of care and support, and to maintain the home and family in the face of so much uncertainty during these disaster events, takes unimaginable strength.

To learn these fires have been purposefully lit is incomprehensible. It is unfathomable that a fire would be purposefully lit, placing responders, people and homes and risk, and causing such significant destruction of country.

There are currently over 20 other significant active fire and hazard events requiring response from the Department of Fire and Emergency Services (DFES) and their personnel. Our first responders have been under significant pressure with continuous large scale disaster events, including the COVID-19 pandemic, over the last four years with little reprieve.

Purposeful arson incidents place even further burden and stress on a response force that is already working to capacity.

We also send our support and thanks to the responders in Queensland, who have been battling bush fires in rural areas for several weeks now. The long-term nature of these deployments take a significant toll on the responders, their families and the communities affected. We wish them a speedy end to these fires.

VESPIIA is committed to supporting the staff, volunteers and organisations providing wellbeing support to our first responders and their families and will continue to work with DFES and other agencies and organisations to ensure the mental and physical health of first responders and their families, during this time and into the future.

If you can, please consider donation to providing support and programs to first responders across Australia.

If you or someone you know has been affected by a natural disaster, please contact:

Beyond Blue: 1300 224 636

Lifeline: 13 11 14

Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements WA: +61 8 6392 1642 or +61 8 6392 1639

Open Arms: 1800 011 046