Media Release
Russell Northe MLA
Member for Morwell

Wednesday 8 February 2012

TRIBUTE PAID IN PARLIAMENT TO BUSHFIRE VICTIMS

Nationals Member for Morwell Russell Northe last night paid tribute to those impacted by the Black Saturday and January bushfires which affected the Gippsland region in 2009.

Mr Northe spoke in Parliament about the 3rd anniversary of the fires that affected the lives of so many Victorians, including those residing in the Morwell Electorate.

"Today is the 3rd anniversary of the catastrophic Black Saturday bushfires and it's a time for reflection as we remember the 173 lives lost along with the many other Victorians who were impacted by that terrible event.

"Prior to Black Saturday Gippsland experienced the Delburn complex of fires in late January 2009 that destroyed many homes and assets in and around the Boolarra and Yinnar district and those communities are also in our thoughts today."

On Black Saturday many communities across the Latrobe Valley were devastated with 11 fatalities and countless assets, stock and wildlife lost.

"One cannot underestimate the role of our various emergency service personnel along with recovery agencies, service clubs, local businesses and the respective community recovery committees that have played such an integral part in the response and recovery phase," said Mr Northe.

"On Sunday I was pleased to join with the Premier and Deputy Premier to launch the Callignee Memorial Project which contains the contributions of many local community members of all ages who have been able to convey by way of "artistic tiles" their own personal stories. It is a credit to all involved and in particular Leanne Crowe and the Callignee Memorial Group for their tireless efforts.

"These attributes are reflective and typical of the leadership displayed across all our bushfire affected communities and on the 3rd anniversary of the Black Saturday fires we salute those who have played a key role as our communities recover whilst we also remember the lives lost and the families and communities who endured this tragedy."