

FOR PRESS:

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VICTORIAN BUSHFIRES

Statement by the Acting Prime Minister, Mr. John McEwen

I was most distressed to hear of the shocking bushfires which have today occurred in Victoria.

I am sure that all Australians will join with me and the Commonwealth Government in expressing their deepest sympathy to the relatives of those people who have lost their lives in the fires. Our sympathy also goes out to those who have been injured and who have lost homes and material possessions as a result of the disaster.

As is usual in cases of this nature the defence forces are prepared to give the authorities who have control of the fire fighting operations the most assistance that is possible. The Commonwealth Government also stands ready to assist the Victorian Government on a \$ for \$ basis for the relief of personal hardship and distress suffered by those people affected by the fires.

CANBERRA
8 January 1969