



PRIME MINISTER

For Media

18 March 1983

JOINT STATEMENT BY THE PRIME MINISTER, MR HAWKE, THE
VICTORIAN PREMIER MR CAIN AND THE SOUTH AUSTRALIAN PREMIER
MR BANNON

The Prime Minister, Mr Hawke, the Victorian Premier, Mr Cain, and the South Australian Premier, Mr Bannon, met today to discuss assistance for the States to help alleviate the impact of the recent tragic bushfires. It was agreed the existing commitments to the National Disaster Relief Arrangements would be honoured, in line with Mr Hawke's undertaking during the election campaign and new measures proposed by the States were also agreed to.

In respect of Victoria, these commitments are expected to cost a total of \$51.9 million for this financial year and 1983/4 and for South Australia \$27.6 million for the same periods.

In addition, the Federal Government agreed to provide this financial year special one-off Budgetary assistance to the States in respect of those Bushfires because of their severity. For Victoria special assistance will total \$19.5 million and for South Australia \$10.5 million. The amounts will be provided as grants to the States.

In the case of South Australia the impact of the bushfires on the State's timber industry will be examined further including the huge salvage operations required in the South-East region.