

ARM YOURSELF

'Arm Yourself' is a new vaccination campaign calling for Australians to protect themselves and their loved ones by getting the COVID jab.

I strongly encourage those eligible to come forward and receive their jab, so our everyday lives can return to normal.

The Federal government has ramped up vaccine supplies to continue momentum:

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- Over a third of adult Australians have now been vaccinated.
- The supply of Pfizer vaccines is also increasing, with one million doses hitting Australian shores this

You can book your COVID-19 vaccination via: covid-vaccine.healthdirect.gov.au/



COVID-19 DISASTER PAYMENTS FOR VICTORIA

It's been another tough year in the wake of more lockdowns (the fifth in our state of Victoria) and uncertainty.

The Nationals in government are standing with Victorians as the situation continues to evolve.

This includes COVID-19 Disaster Payments announced this week in response to the extended state-wide

We know how hard businesses and families have been hit by these lockdowns and are providing support to help get them through these trying times.

Eligible people will be able to get \$600 per week if they have lost 20 or more hours of work, and \$375 per week if they have lost between 8 and less than 20 hours of work, or a full day of work.

Claiming the individual payment online via myGov is the quickest and easiest option, and the payment is now recurring and automatically paid for any future weeks of a

More information about financial support available to Victorians, and how to claim is available on the Services Australia website at: COVID-19 Disaster Payment





OUR PLAN TO SECURE THE FUTURE OF REGIONAL COMMUNITIES

A MESSAGE FROM Bridget

Earlier this month marked 10 years since I was elected to the Senate for Victoria.

In the same week, I was privileged to be sworn in a Minister of the Crown virtually, from the regions, from my home base of Wodonga in north-east Victoria.

It's a great honour to serve as the Minister for National Recovery and Resilience and Emergency Management, and Minister for Regionalisation, Regional Communications and Regional Education under the Morrison-Joyce Government.

It comes during incredibly challenging times with the COVID-19 pandemic and as our regions recover from bushfires, floods and drought, and I will work tirelessly to support them through the recovery.

The pandemic has also seen a shift in workplace arrangements with more people working from home and relocating to our regions.

I look forward to exploring opportunities on this front for

As a Nationals Senator, I will always be guided by my values and beliefs that Australia must be a secure prosperous and sovereign nation, and all Australians, regardless of where they live, deserve access to equal opportunities that benefit them and their communities.

The job has begun, and I look forward to getting out into the regions as soon as possible.

Take care and I hope to see you soon!



Senator Bridget Mckenzie Nationals Senator For Victoria Leader of The Nationals in the Senate



\$2.7 MILLION FOR NORTH EAST VICTORIA **CHILD CARE SERVICES**

Over a dozen services in the electorate of Indi will receive a share in \$2.7 million through the Liberal and Nationals Government's Community Child Care Fund.

It helps improve access to child care and increase workforce participation in remote, regional and disadvantaged communities.

This is fantastic news for our local kids, hard-working families and ultimately for our community.

It will also have a positive economic benefit by allowing more local parents to get back into work or to take on additional hours if they choose.

The funds will support services in areas such as:

- Wangaratta
- Benalla
- Tawonga
- Mount Beauty

It means more families in north-east Victoria can take advantage of our Child Care Subsidy if they choose to work, learn or volunteer.

The Nationals in Government is investing around \$10 billion in child care this year to support around 1 million

More information on the Community Child Care Fund can be found at: www.dese.gov.au



ANOTHER BLOW FOR LOCAL TIMBER INDUSTRY

The Victorian State Labor Government has undercut Australian businesses, after opting to use imported timber for the construction of Melbourne Metro's new Anzac Station, rather than hardwood sustainably grown and processed in regional Victoria.

The decision to use engineered timber from the German company, Hess Timber **undermines local jobs and the forestry industry.**

This is yet another blow for our local timber industry. We have some of the best timber in the world in our own backyard, such as *Australian Sustainable Hardwoods* based in *Heyfield*, but this State Labor Government is again using an overseas company for timber constructions. **That's just not on.**

We know the forestry industry is sustainable and adheres to very strict regulations, with Australian foresters upholding some of the highest environmental standards in the world. Yet the Andrews State Government is still hell-bent on shutting down Victoria's native timber industry by 2030. It's ludicrous.

Melbourne Metro's new Anzac Station will see approximately 30,000 people walk past it a day while catering for train and tram users, pedestrians, cyclists and motorists.

So why aren't we showcasing our world-class timber?

It's tougher than steel, lower emission to produce, and it's beautiful.

The Victorian Government owes us an explanation and it's about time it started backing local jobs.



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North-east Victoria communities are being encouraged to apply for a share in \$280 million of Australian Government bushfire recovery funding.

Guidelines have been released for the **Black Summer Bushfire Recovery** grants program, providing funding direct to our communities to help in their ongoing recovery after the 2019-20 bushfires.

Grants can range from **\$20,000 to \$10 million** and are open to community organisations, businesses and councils in Local Government Areas that were disaster-declared.

The Liberal and Nationals Government has committed more than **\$2 billion to bushfire recovery support**, but we know disaster recovery is a long haul.

Applications are now open and close on

2 September 2021.

Guidelines and the preview application form are available from the Business Grants Hub at **business.gov.au/bsbr**

RECOVERY SUPPORT PACKAGE FOR VICTORIANS IMPACTED BY FLOODS AND STORMS

Our thoughts go out to our friends in Gippsland who have been affected by the recent floods.

We've made sure that fellow Victorians impacted by the June storms and floods will now be supported by:

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- A \$13.8 million Recovery Support Package, ensuring they have the necessary assistance to recover.
- An additional \$8.9 million to Emergency Relief and Food Relief providers across NSW and Victoria.

Affected Victorians are encouraged to contact the Victorian Storm and Flood Recovery Support Program by calling 1800 560 760.

The phone line will be open from 8am-7pm Monday to Friday, and 9am-1pm Saturdays.

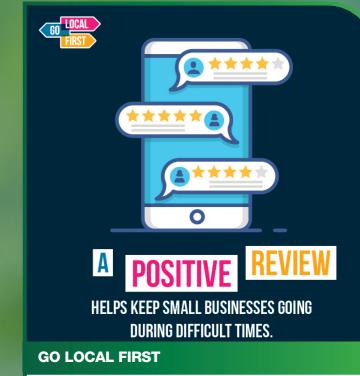


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Regional towns are the engine room of our nation's economy and account for over 60 per cent of exports. Recognising this, the Liberal and Nationals Government announced funding for businesses to help strengthen our supply chains.

I encourage local businesses and manufacturers to apply for matched grants of between \$50,000 and \$2 million under the Supply Chain

Resilience Initiative that's a key part of the Government's \$1.5 billion Modern

Manufacturing Strategy.

It aims to help address supply chain vulnerabilities across medicines and agricultural production chemicals.

Projects could include scaling up existing manufacturing and workforce skills capability or increasing supply chain transparency through technology.

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