



The Place To Be

# Media release

From the Minister for State and Regional Development

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Monday, 13 March 2006

## **\$65,000 TO TRANSFORM RAWSON'S BELLS HALL**

Bells Hall in Rawson will be refurbished and transformed into a pivotal community asset thanks to a \$65,000 Bracks Government grant, the Minister for State and Regional Development, John Brumby, announced today.

Mr Brumby said the funding to Baw Baw Shire Council was being brought forward through the Bracks Government's *Small Towns Development Fund* in response to the bushfires that swept through the area in January.

"The Government is doing all it can to help support fire affected communities, and this project will provide a focal point for sporting and social activities in the Rawson community," Mr Brumby said.

"The bushfire in the nearby Moondarra State Forest caused extensive damage to the surrounding area, and the Government is helping in the recovery process by providing support for vital community infrastructure projects to help communities get back on track."

Member for Narracan, Ian Maxfield said the Bracks Government was providing \$65,000 toward the \$97,500 total project cost, with Baw Baw Shire Council contributing the rest.

"This project will help to rebuild Bells Hall by installing a new hot water system, upgrading toilet and shower facilities, repairing the flooring and roof, and installing disabled access from the car park," Mr Maxfield said

Mr Brumby said the Bells Hall refurbishment was one of 10 community infrastructure projects under the Bracks Government's \$10.8 million recovery package for Victorian communities affected by the January 2006 bushfires.

The recovery package includes:

- **\$3 million** to assist farmers and rural landholders with business recovery, pest control, soil erosion and the de-silting of dams;
- **\$2.2 million** for a range of initiatives to rejuvenate the natural and built environment including:
  - rebuilding walking trails in the Grampians to reactivate tourism, the continuing engagement of summer fire crews until April to rebuild trails, with priority given to "iconic" trails to enable them to open before Easter;
  - boosting the State's fire mapping capacity to assist Parks Victoria with assessing the extent of fire damage;
  - measures to assess and protect cultural works; and
  - repairs to damaged water authority works.
- **\$1.6 million** in new tourism industry support, including a marketing and advertising campaign to help bring people back to the bushfire affected areas;

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- **\$300,000** for Ararat, Northern Grampians, Southern Grampians shires and the Rural City of Horsham for community development initiatives;
- **\$135,000** for small-scale community projects across all the fire-affected areas;
- and **seven** community infrastructure projects brought forward under the Government's *Small Towns Development Fund (STDF)*, in Ararat, Halls Gap, Rawson, Walhalla, and Yea.