

A statement from Red Cross

Chris Darwan featured in your Today story on Friday 29 May has received a total of \$50,000 in Red Cross grants as he also received an additional \$10,000 for a re-establishment grant to help him be safely accommodated as we come into winter. Red Cross announced an [expansion of grants](#) in recent weeks.

There were also claims on the show that Red Cross promised assistance to South Coast Donations Logistics, with specific reference to fencing, in coordination with BlazeAid.

While we continue to engage with local charities and support their efforts where we can, we can confirm Red Cross grants don't cover the repair of fencing on properties. Other agencies are offering support for these issues.

Red Cross is engaged in these collaborative recovery arrangements established in each of the affected States, including through representation on various state and local recovery committees, as well as with the Federal Government, through the National Bushfire Recovery Agency.

People can access support with fencing through the NSW government [public land boundary fencing program](#).

Our local volunteers were there to support people in the South Coast during the fires and we've continued to support the community ever since. COVID-19 has made it harder for our emergency teams to do door-to-door outreach, so we've had to rely more on phone and online support. As restrictions ease, we're resuming our face-to-face recovery and outreach work.

We know that there are still many people who are yet to come forward for grants and we encourage them to access support that is available to them. They can do so by ringing 1800 733 276 or by visiting redcross.org.au/grants

Additionally, our community recovery programs in affected communities will run for the next three years. Because we know – with more than 100 years' experience responding to disasters, including the Black Saturday bushfires of 2009 – that recovery, including re-building, dealing with issues of trauma and other mental health impacts, re-establishing strong social networks and having access to information and services, takes many years. Our grants are one important part of a much larger recovery response by governments and many others - they are a way for people to cover many immediate, medium and long term costs within a very complex and long-term recovery process. We will continue to spend and distribute all remaining funds to support people and communities impacted by the bushfires across states.