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## General

# Victorian floods wreak havoc

15 February 2011

**Victoria has not been spared from the spate of natural disasters assaulting Australia this summer. But, just like elsewhere in the country, ASU members have been at the forefront of preparation, response and relief measures. We thank them for their critical work as we send our sympathies to those affected.**

Workers in local government and utilities are often mobilised early in times of crisis. When a flood is forecast and there is time to prepare, as happened in a number of places in Victoria this summer, those workers are there transporting sand, shutting down utilities infrastructure, boarding public facilities, assisting the public to make private preparations, etc. They'll be there when the initial crisis is over, dealing with the aftermath, and trying to return services to a state of normality as quickly as possible.

Social and community services workers are likewise mobilised, but their focus is on people and ensuring that evacuation and relief centres are set up and ready to help communities as they confront the damage. In some cases, when energy and town water flows again, when buildings and roads are fixed, the human damage goes on. Community services workers are there for the long term ensuring people struggling have a helping hand.

The floods in Victoria this summer were often a slow motion disaster, confronting affected communities with the spectacle of watching their towns slowly sink and then just as slowly resurface. A very sad spectacle. This did allow some communities to put in place obstacles to the rising waters that saved homes and public assets, but so much damage was nevertheless caused across the state.

## Useful information

Floods affecting your work? For more information, please have a look at Fair Work Ombudsman's information sheet: [http://www.asuvic.asn.au/vic\\_floods.pdf](http://www.asuvic.asn.au/vic_floods.pdf)

Did your home get flooded? Know your insurance rights - have a look at this information sheet [http://www.asuvic.asn.au/union\\_newsletter\\_jan11.pdf](http://www.asuvic.asn.au/union_newsletter_jan11.pdf)

Further information about the Victorian floods can also be found on the State Government website, including information on how affected Victorians can access assistance: [http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/emergency/current-events/flood\\_recovery](http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/emergency/current-events/flood_recovery)

If you are interested in volunteering to assist affected communities, more information can be found here: <http://www.volunteer.vic.gov.au/about-volunteering/news-and-events/helping-in-victorias>

## How to donate to Victorian flood relief

As we did with the Queensland floods, we are encouraging Australians to dig deep in helping affected communities recover. The Red Cross has a specific fund you can donate to:

<https://www.redcross.org.au/Donations/onlineDonations.asp>

*(At step one, choose from the drop down menu "Red Cross Victorian Floods Appeal 2011")*

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