

Geotechnical Assessment Rebate Program Guidelines and application process

1. What is the Geotechnical Assessment Rebate Program?

The Geotechnical Assessment Rebate Program (the program) will support landowners of properties where buildings were damaged or destroyed as a result of the Eastern Victorian Fires that have occurred since 21 November 2019.

The support will be provided as a one-off rebate payment, to eligible applicants, for 80 per cent of the cost of a geotechnical assessment required under the planning scheme, up to a maximum amount.

The program's intended outcomes are to support landowners to rebuild and to contribute to local economic activity.

The program is funded through the \$86 million Community Recovery Package, which is jointly funded by the Commonwealth and the Victorian Governments under the Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements.

The program will be open to applicants from 7 October 2020 until 31 May 2023.

It will be up to the applicant to arrange a suitably qualified geotechnical consultant to undertake the required assessment, to the satisfaction of the council.

2. Who can apply?

To be eligible to apply for funding:

- You must be the landowner or have the written permission of the landowner to apply.
- Buildings on the property must have been damaged from direct impacts of bushfire, as verified through the bushfire recovery clean-up process.
- The geotechnical assessment must be conducted by a suitably qualified geotechnical consultant to the satisfaction of the local council.
- The assessment must be required to satisfy the requirements of the Erosion Management Overlay in the East Gippsland Planning Scheme or the Steep Land local planning policy in the Towong Planning Scheme.
- The property is in the municipality of East Gippsland or Towong.
- You must be intending to rebuild in the same Local Government Area.
- Provide the relevant mandatory supporting documentation as outlined in **section 8**.

3. Who cannot apply?

You are not eligible to apply if:

- You are not located in part of the municipality of East Gippsland or Towong Shire that has been impacted by the bushfire;
- The damage to a building on the property was not directly from 2019/20 Eastern Victorian bushfires;

- You have received support through other Commonwealth, State or other government programs that could be used towards a geotechnical assessment;
- You have already received support for a geotechnical assessment through this program .

4. What will be funded?

The program will provide support for required geotechnical assessments prepared by a geotechnical consultant to satisfy the requirements of the:

- Erosion Management Overlay within the East Gippsland Planning Scheme, to the satisfaction of the East Gippsland Shire Council, or
- Steep Land local policy of the Towong Planning Scheme, to the satisfaction of the Towong Shire Council.

And a standard soil report to support an application for a Building Permit.

5. What will not be funded?

The program will not fund the following activities:

- The purchase of land;

6. What are the funding details?

The total funding available is \$230,000.

The program will provide up to 80 per cent of the cost of:

- a standard soil report to support an application for a Building Permit, up to a maximum of \$400.
- a full geotechnical assessment including, to satisfy the requirements of either:
 - the Erosion Management Overlay in the East Gippsland Planning Scheme to the satisfaction of the East Gippsland Shire Council, up to a maximum of \$2,000, or
 - the Steep Land local policy of the Towong Planning Scheme for a proposed building site with a slope of 20 per cent or greater, to the satisfaction of the Towong Shire Council, up to a maximum of \$2,000.

If your total costs are greater than the maximum support outlined above, you will need to meet the additional costs.

Eligible applicants can make a submission for a higher rebate if extenuating circumstances have caused unforeseen costs to be incurred. Any such request will be considered and decided by the working group for this program.

Support will be provided in a one-off rebate payment.

7. What are the assessment criteria?

Your application will be assessed against the eligibility criteria and provision of supporting documentation (**section 8**).

Support will be awarded to applications that satisfy the eligibility criteria, subject to available funds

8. What supporting documents will need to be provided?

Please submit the following documents with your application:

- Identification that shows the property address and that you are the owner, or acting on behalf of the owner (e.g. rate notices, electricity bills, phone bills, drivers' licence or similar)
- Tax invoice/s (copies are acceptable) for the completion of a geotechnical assessment on the land by a suitably qualified geotechnical consultant.
- Tax invoice/s (copies are acceptable) for the completion of a soil test on the land by a suitably qualified consultant.
- Evidence that the geotechnical assessment has been conducted by a suitably qualified geotechnical consultant, and meets the requirements of the planning scheme, to the satisfaction of the relevant council.

9. What are the funding conditions?

Confirmation

Successful applicants will receive notification via email from Melbourne Water confirming the total financial support the applicant will receive for each rebate component they applied for.

Legislative and regulatory requirements

In delivering the activity rebate recipients are required to comply with all relevant Commonwealth and state/territory legislations and regulations, including but not limited to:

The Privacy Act 1988 (Commonwealth)

The Freedom of Information Act 1982 (Vic)

Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004

Tax implications

Applicants should consult the Australian Taxation Office or seek professional advice on any taxation implications that may arise from this rebate funding.

Payments

Payments will be made as long as:

- You have provided the correct details of the account that the funding will be deposited into;
- You have provided correct invoices as required; and
- Other terms and conditions of funding continue to be met.

Privacy

Any personal information about you or a third party in your application will be collected by the department for the purposes of administering your rebate application and informing Members of Parliament of successful applications. Personal information may also be disclosed to external experts, such as members of assessment panels, or other government departments for assessment, reporting, advice, comment or for discussions regarding alternative or collaborative rebate funding opportunities. If you intend to include personal information about third parties in your application, please ensure that they are aware of the contents of this privacy statement.

Any personal information about you or a third party in your correspondence will be collected, held, managed, used, disclosed or transferred in accordance with the provisions of the *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014* and other applicable laws.

BRV is committed to protecting the privacy of personal information in accordance with the *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014* (Vic), *Public Records Act 1973* (Vic), *Health Records Act 2001* (Vic) and other applicable legislation.

For further information about how BRV handle personal information, please contact BRV by email at connect@brv.vic.gov.au.

10. What is the application process?

Before applying, please read and understand these guidelines, the application form published on www.melbournewater.com.au/RaSTRprogram

If you have any extenuating circumstances that have caused unforeseen costs or have impacted your eligibility, please contact Melbourne Water to discuss your application.

Applications are submitted online using the online portal.

To apply, go to the program web page: www.melbournewater.com.au/RaSTRprogram and click on the 'Start New Application' button. To return to a saved draft application, click on the 'Access Saved Application' button.

Attaching required documents:

Supporting documents must be in an acceptable file type, such as Word, Excel, PDF, or JPEG. The maximum file size for each file is 5 MB.

When you submit your application, you will receive an acknowledgement that the application has been received.

You will receive an application number when you submit an application online. Please quote this number in all communications relating to your application.

If you have documents to submit that cannot be attached to your online application you can email them to RaSTRprogram@melbournewater.com.au, quoting your application number. Attach all documents to one email, zipping the files if required.

Make sure your application is submitted by 11.59 pm on 31 May 2023.

If you cannot complete the application online, you can complete the application form and email or post a hard copy together with the supporting document via the contact details below.

Late and incomplete applications will not be considered.

11. Additional information

11.1. Delivery of the program

Melbourne Water is responsible for administering this program on behalf of Bushfire Recovery Victoria, Victorian Government and the Commonwealth Government.

11.2. Program Contact Details

Post: Geotechnical Assessment Rebate Program

Melbourne Water

GPO Box 4342

Melbourne Vic 3001

Email: RaSTRprogram@melbournewater.com.au

11.3. Additional program information

Additional information is available at the program web page:
www.melbournewater.com.au/RaSTRprogram

If you require assistance submitting your application online, contact the Melbourne Water on 13 17 22 or RaSTRprogram@melbournewater.com.au

12. What is the notification process?

Successful and unsuccessful applicants will be notified after the assessment process is completed. All decisions are final and are not subject to further review. Unsuccessful applicants can ask for feedback on their application.

13. Key dates

| | |
|--------------------|----------------|
| Applications open | 7 October 2020 |
| Applications close | 31 May 2023 |

14. Checklist

Read these guidelines and the information about this program at www.melbournewater.com.au/RaSTRprogram before applying and complete the following checklist.

Have you:

- read these guidelines carefully?
- checked if you are eligible for support?
- checked if your activity is eligible for support?
- checked that you would be able to comply with all relevant laws and regulations in delivery of your activity?
- prepared the appropriate supporting document