



## MEDIA RELEASE

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### **GANDEL FAMILY TO DONATE \$1 MILLION FOR BUSHFIRE RESPONSE EFFORTS - FUNDS DIRECTED FOR FIREFIGHTING RESPONSE, SUPPORT FOR COMMUNITIES AFFECTED THROUGH WELFARE ORGANISATIONS, AND ANIMAL RESCUE ACTIVITIES -**

Australia is in the grip of one of the worst bushfire seasons on record, with several States and Territories battling massive fires, thousands of people affected and communities devastated, and wildlife facing serious threats.

John and Pauline Gandel, together with their extended family, have decided to make a donation in support of the bushfire efforts on all fronts.

**Through their charitable entity, Gandel Philanthropy, the Gandels are making a total contribution of \$1 million towards the national bushfire response.**

The funds will support three key elements of that response - funding for firefighting efforts, through donations to volunteer firefighters in New South Wales (NSW RFS), Victoria (CFA), Queensland (QFES) and South Australia (CFS); funding to assist people and communities affected by the bushfires, through donations to national bushfire appeals of The Australian Red Cross, The Salvation Army and the St Vincent de Paul Society, for relief activities in all the affected areas; and funding for the efforts to save, protect and recover wildlife, through donations to WWF, WIRES (NSW Wildlife Information, Rescue and Education Service) and MKC/The Rescue Collective.

John and Pauline said "The needs in this crisis far outstrip our contribution, but regardless we felt that we had to do our bit, and support as many key organisations as we can, in the hope that we can help make at least some difference to the lives of our fellow Australians devastated by this emergency.

We also hope that this contribution will encourage others to help out in any way they can. Every donation, big or small, every hour of volunteering and every donated food or clothing item can - and will - make a difference to those in need."

They further added "Australians are well known for standing together in difficult times. Now is the time to come together, to show our community spirit and to face this great challenge with compassion and empathy for those fighting the fires and those affected by fires.

While there was minimal loss of life to date, every single death is a tragedy and our thoughts are with the families of those who perished. We commend the heroic and brave actions of our firefighters and wish them the best of luck in their ongoing efforts. We also hope that the people and communities affected by fires will have a speedy and full recovery, and we hope our wildlife organisations will be supported to successfully rehabilitate our precious flora and fauna."

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