



Media release

18 November 2019

ATO grants two month deferral for bushfire victims in New South Wales and Queensland

The Australian Taxation Office (ATO) today announced that it will grant a two month lodgment and payment deferral to taxpayers impacted by the recent catastrophic bushfires in New South Wales and Queensland.

Acting Deputy Commissioner Andrew Watson said that people affected by the fires should focus on getting their other affairs in order and not worry about their tax obligations at this time.

“We have applied automatic lodgment and payment deferrals to postcodes impacted by the fires, meaning if you’ve been impacted by the fires you don’t need to contact the ATO or your tax professional – we’ve already done it for you,” Mr Watson said.

The quarterly Business Activity Statement (BAS) that would normally have been due on 11 November or 28 November for businesses using a tax professional will now be due on **28 January 2020**.

Monthly BAS lodgers also have an extra two months to lodge and pay, with the ATO automatically extending the due date until **21 January 2020** for the form which would normally have been due on 21 November.

Aside from businesses, individuals in impacted areas who have lodged their 2018-19 income tax returns and have received a bill that would normally be due on 21 November 2019 now have until **21 January 2020** to pay.

Mr Watson added that if taxpayers are concerned about their tax obligations, they should feel free to contact the ATO on **1800 806 218** to discuss how the office can support them.

“You can also discuss your options with your registered tax professional, if you have one”.

The ATO will continue to monitor the ongoing situation and make further decisions to include additional areas and/or provide further deferrals as needed.

Automatic deferrals have been put in place for the following 16 local government areas impacted by the bushfires:

New South Wales

- > Bellingen
- > Clarence Valley
- > Coffs Harbour
- > Glen Innes

- > Severn
- > Kempsey
- > Inverell
- > Mid Coast
- > Nambucca
- > Port Macquarie-Hastings
- > Richmond Valley
- > Tenterfield
- > Uralla
- > Walcha

Queensland

- > Noosa
- > Livingstone

Employers are reminded that they still need to meet their ongoing super guarantee obligations for their employees.

Automatic deferrals do not apply to large pay as you go withholders.

The ATO is also reminding business owners at this time that it is critical to keep their Australian business number (ABN) information up to date, as it is:

- > used by Emergency Services and other government agencies during times of natural disaster
- > used by the Government to identify where financial disaster relief is needed to help businesses recover in disaster affected areas, and
- > likely to be checked if they are applying for a grant or loan for their business.

Business owners can access, change or cancel their ABN details online at abr.gov.au. All changes made to their ABN online will take effect immediately.

The ATO has more information about help and support options on its website:

ato.gov.au/NaturalDisasters

Note to journalists:

File ATO footage is available for use in news bulletins:

ato.gov.au/Media-centre/Video-and-audio-files/ATO-file-footage-and-stock-vision/