



# MEDIA RELEASE

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## Hope when all hope is lost

It's hard to have hope for the future when bushfire has ravaged your small farm and destroyed the business your husband built with his father, but Glynis Limberg has hope thanks to Vinnies.

When Glynis and her husband Ray's small cattle farm near Esk was impacted by not one but two separate bushfires late last year, their home was fortunately spared, but they lost her husband's sawmill, tools and everything he needed for his small woodturning business, as well as a number of their livestock and all their fencing.

Glynis said driving away from the property was one of the scariest moments of her life.

"We were just trying to catch our breath and then I went outside and thought 'Oh. No, it's just so bad," she said.

"It was nearly in our front yard. The police came and then picked up the geriatric cat and my mother-in-law and then that was our cue to go.

"It was a horrific drive in itself because further down the road the fire took hold and I could feel the radiating heat through our car window, I couldn't see anything.

"It was just black smoke right across – you couldn't see any more than about a metre in front, so I just told myself 'just keep going, just drive', so I just had to pray no trees had come down across the road or anything like that.

"I was glad my mother-in-law was in the police car behind us because I could let out my frustrations and fear all by myself in the car.

"I was just horrified because I could lose everything, and all my pets were left behind in the house and I couldn't do anything. But the house survived."

Glynis said one of the worst aspects of the fire was not knowing what she would return to after the family was given the all clear to return home after three nights of worry.

"We lost 10 cattle and one of our horses died two nights later I think it was the stress of the whole thing.

"It took me a week to actually drive up to the sawmill and that still hurts to talk about my husband losing his sawmill. He and his father built that, and they worked that together. My father-in-law's been gone since 2002.

"My 11-year-old son shed tears because he'd been up there with his dad and helped drive the tractor and helped his Dad at the sawmill sometimes.

“The council said we could go home after two nights but we still had no power to the house and when we have no power we have no water and no way to keep food cold and we’d lost all the food in the fridges.”

After rounding up all surviving cattle and animals, the initial steps of figuring how to start again began for Glynis.

And that’s where Vinnies was able to provide her and Ray with some light at the end of what will be a long tunnel ahead for the Limberg family.

“We haven’t actually sat down to think about (the value of the loss) because that’s just emotional. My husband was thinking just to replace the sawmill would be \$80-\$90,000 on its own with second-hand stuff,” she said.

“The cattle yards, I don’t know, maybe \$15,000. And in the future some of those lost cattle would have carried calves.

“The planning (for the future) is very, very hard because when you’re traumatised you find it very hard to think too far ahead. We still have trouble thinking about what to do tomorrow.

“Vinnies has helped dramatically. My husband was so low he’d say ‘I don’t know how to get out of this’. He couldn’t see the future for a while, so I had to help him through his emotions and just tell him that the natural emotions that you go through are normal, that it’s all part of grieving.

“I’ve had to say to him ‘You don’t know what tomorrow brings, you have to be strong’”.

“The day St Vincent de Paul put that money into our account gave him so much hope, he knew he could feed his cattle.

“Once the income’s gone, that’s it. It’s organisations like Vinnies that have got us through.”

Vinnies assisted the Limbergs with \$3000 towards ongoing costs on their farm and provided Christmas hampers to give them a brighter Christmas and vouchers to use in local shops.

If you’ve been impacted by bushfires or drought and you need help, please call Vinnies Helpline on 1800 846 643.

**ENDS.**

Media contact: Vinnies Queensland Communications Officer Joshua Paterson.  
Phone: 0408 675 567 | Email: [joshua.paterson@svdpqld.org.au](mailto:joshua.paterson@svdpqld.org.au)