

Media Release

Keep an eye out for a pride of Lions in your local community next month

- *Australia's largest service organisation, Lions Australia celebrates Lions Awareness Day on 7th March*
- *Lions Australia promotes youth, provides community service, supports vital medical research and disaster relief and has over 1300 clubs across the country*
- *Lions volunteers pay annual membership fees to cover admin costs which means 100% of funds donated to your local Lions Club goes directly towards the cause*

5th February 2020: Many refer to Lions as Australia's best kept secret but next month Lions volunteers across Australia will be hosting a number of special events in their communities to celebrate Lions Awareness Day.

Since the first club was formed in Australia 70 years ago Lions has grown dramatically in size and impact with over 1300 clubs and 30,000 members now giving back through an array of community-based programs and initiatives.

Some Lions are on a mission to cure childhood cancer and diabetes, others are committed to assisting those impacted by drought and floods and many are simply working together to help people in need in their local community. One thing all Lions have in common is together they are making an incredible difference.

Over the past year, as our country has struggled through what could be its worst drought and bushfires in history Lions have mobilised to help those impacted.

Lions Australia CEO Rob Oerlemans says this year, Lions Awareness Day is an opportunity to recognise the incredible impact of the Lions network particularly in times of crisis.

"Lions are people in your local community who come together to volunteer and make a difference. Everyday Lions volunteers across Australia go above and beyond to help people in need and make our community a better place to live. We are so proud of the incredible work this organisation has achieved over the years. Whilst the past year has been a difficult one for our country it has been a powerful reminder of the importance of Lions particularly when a disaster strikes," says Lions Australia CEO Rob Oerlemans.

"We have over 1300 Lions Clubs across the country which enables us to easily identify those in need in the affected communities. Since before Christmas Lions in affected bushfire areas have been doing incredible work from cooking thousands of meals for emergency services workers and evacuation centres to checking on residents and providing urgent support to those in need," says Rob Oerlemans.

"But it's not just clubs and volunteers in affected areas providing support. Lions have been out in full force right across the country shaking donation buckets and hosting sausage sizzles and fundraisers for the National Appeal. With Australia's help, over \$1.3 million has been raised for the Australian Lions Foundation National Bushfire Appeal in the past 12 weeks. Lions is proud to have already

distributed over \$785,000 of this to affected areas in Queensland, South Australia, NSW and Victoria with more support being provided to communities in need each day.”

Lions on the ground have been using the funding from the national appeal to purchase local shopping vouchers, food, water and supplies - this is supporting residents in need as well as businesses which have also been heavily impacted by the fires.

Lions volunteers pay annual membership fees to cover admin costs which means 100% of funds donated to your local Lions Club goes directly towards the cause.

“This is why Lions is so effective in times of need. Every dollar donated goes directly to the cause and through Lions’ large network of clubs we are able to quickly identify those who require assistance and find the best and most efficient ways of supporting those people and communities,” adds Rob Oerlemans.

“So if you see any Lions out in your community in coming weeks we encourage you to say hello and get some information on what your local club is up to. If you are interested in making a difference ask your local Lions how you can get involved. Whether you want to cure cancer, help the deaf and blind, support communities after a natural disaster or simply meet some new people and give back to your local community – Lions can help you do that.”

Over \$50 million is donated to Lions Australia each year with all funds going directly to important causes and people in need. Over \$5 million is invested in youth programs each year, over \$20 million is invested in medical research, \$5 million in drug awareness, \$20 million in hearing services and over 3000 environmental projects are carried out by Lions Australia every year.

Australians looking to make a donation and support those affected by the bushfires can do so through their local Lions Club or through donating directly to Australian Lions Foundation.

Every dollar will go directly to supporting those affected and donations over \$2 are tax deductible.

To make a donation visit <https://www.givenow.com.au/australianlionsfoundation>

If you support Lions maybe you would be interested in finding out more information on how you can get involved? Visit www.lionsclubs.org.au

To find a Lions Awareness Day event near you visit <https://lionsaustralia.mysocialpinpoint.com/lions-awareness-day-2020>

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About Lions Australia

Where there’s a need, there’s a Lion. Lions Australia is Australia’s largest service organisation with more than 1300 clubs in Australia and Papua New Guinea. Lions Australia promotes youth, support medical research, provide aid to people with disability, community service and disaster relief.

Lions are friends, family and neighbours who share a core belief: community is what we make it.

For more information, please visit <http://lionsclubs.org.au>