



# Robyn Preston MP

## Member for Hawkesbury

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## MEDIA RELEASE

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### PLANNING CHANGES FOR BUSHFIRE AFFECTED COMMUNITIES

Small businesses in Hawkesbury will be able to operate from portable offices without council approval, under the latest bushfire recovery initiative from the NSW Government.

Member for Hawkesbury Robyn Preston MP said the changes are not only great for business owners and operators, but for the whole community.

“Our small businesses are the backbone of Hawkesbury, and these planning changes will help businesses that have been impacted by the bushfires to keep operating,” Robyn Preston MP said.

Planning and Public Spaces Minister Rob Stokes said the changes will ensure regional business owners can continue to earn an income, employ local residents and support local economies.

“This may only be a small change, but it’s one that will have a significant operational impact for the many small business owners across the State who have been devastated by these fires,” Mr Stokes said.

“Small businesses are the lifeblood of our regional communities, and these changes will make it easier for owners to get back on their feet and start trading again.”

The changes to the *State Environmental Planning Policy (Exempt and Complying Development Codes) Amendment (Bushfire Response) 2020* will enable any existing business that has sustained damage in the bushfires to operate from a portable office, such as a shipping container, for up to two years.

This is the latest planning amendment to make life easier for bushfire-affected communities, and follows changes to allow temporary accommodation like caravans and storage containers to be on property for up to two years without council approval.

The NSW Government is also waiving Planning Reform Fees, worth an average of \$320, and is issuing free BASIX certificates which usually cost \$50, for bushfire-affected residents who need to rebuild their properties.

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