



Community Brigades Support Initiative



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Community Brigades Support Initiative

Program objective

This initiative has been designed to support operational readiness and improve capacity for CFA volunteers and brigades along the proposed Western Renewables Link (WRL) project route.



This initiative supports equipment and amenity upgrades that strengthen volunteer efforts and enhance emergency response capabilities. It reflects WRL's commitment to delivering early, meaningful benefits to communities, based on local feedback.



Important information

- Applying for or receiving a grant from this initiative does not indicate support or endorsement of the Western Renewables Link project by CFA or individual brigades.
- The CFA has reviewed all documentation to make sure it aligns with existing grants programs available to brigades.
- Brigades wishing to apply for a grant must first follow CFA's existing grants process. These processes are outlined on Members Online, or you can contact your District Office for further advice.
- Applying for or receiving a grant from this initiative does not prevent brigades from being eligible for or submitting applications to the WRL Local Grants Fund, which will run simultaneously.



What can be funded

- Examples of the types of items that this funding is intended to support include thermal imaging cameras, air conditioning and heating units, fridge/freezers, BBQs, dash cams, security alarm systems, security cameras, solar panels, painting, furniture, IT and AV upgrades etc.
- Brigades can apply for a grant of up to \$8,000 (plus GST) in total for equipment and amenities.



What the grant will not cover

- Items that require ongoing maintenance or storage costs, without the prior approval of CFA District and Regional Management.
- Items or works that require additional financial support not already confirmed or that will take longer than 12 months from date of application to WRL to have total budget confirmed.
- Items, works or projects that discriminate against any persons, organisations or groups; the use of funds for political activities; and the use of funds for activities or events that could be detrimental to public health or safety.

Application criteria

To be eligible, brigades must be situated within 10km of the proposed WRL alignment.

- Brigades should submit a CFA Grant Funding Application Form signed and approved by the CFA District/Region.
- Brigades must follow CFA's existing grants processes **first** if they choose to apply for a grant. These processes are outlined on Members Online. Further advice can be sought from CFA District Offices.
- The request should provide a likely benefit to the brigade or community.
- Applicants should provide quotes to validate the costs of the items requested.
- The brigade must have the ability to coordinate the fulfillment of their request and be responsible for funds and purchasing.



Assessment process

Grant rounds will be open from **31 March 2026 to 30 June 2026** to allow brigades to facilitate quotes and funding approval letters from the CFA. Applications will be assessed by the WRL project.

Applicants will be notified of funding application outcomes within three months of the date of receipt.

Selection criteria

All applications will undertake assessment against the following criteria. Applications need to be complete and submitted by 30 June 2026 to be considered eligible for assessment.

Table 1: Weighted selection criteria

Criteria	Weighting
Demonstrated need for support	25%
Extent of the benefit the support will provide to the brigade or the community/ impact the support will have	25%
Alignment to program objectives	25%
Viability of request/capacity to deliver	25%

Acquittal reporting

Brigades that are successful in their request for support will be asked to provide WRL with a simple acquittal report which will be due four months after receiving funds. This is to make sure funds have been used for the agreed purpose.

The acquittal report would include confirmation of how funds were spent, a short summary of outcomes, evidence that the initiative was delivered as intended (and include photo documentation).

Terms of funding

WRL will send a letter to the brigade confirming it is awarding the requested funds, which will be released to them upon signed confirmation of the letter of offer.

WRL via AusNet will administer payments for the Community Brigades Support Initiative via the [CFA & Brigades Donations Fund](#) (the Trust) which provides an established, transparent payment mechanism that allows WRL via AusNet to direct funds to specific brigades. The Trust does not determine how funds are allocated; that's up to the donor.

While there is no obligation to publicise or promote individual grants, at a later date WRL will document where community funds have been invested through an online map, showing the locations of communities that have received support.

Required support materials

Applicants will be expected to provide quotes to support their application, along with any links to products, designs, images etc. that provide evidence of costs, as well as uploading a copy of the *CFA Grant Funding Application Form* that has been signed by the relevant District approver.

Table 2: Brigades eligible for support

District 14	District 15		District 16
Melton	Waubra	Bungaree	Joel Joel
Toolern Vale	Glendaruel & Mt Beckworth	Wallace	Landsborough
Diggers Rest	Clunes	Gordon	Crowlands
Caroline Springs	Learmonth	Ballan	Elmhurst
Bulla	Ascot	Millbrook	Amphitheatre
Sunbury	Allendale	Greendale	Lexton
Rockbank	Kingston	Myrning	
	Creswick	Bacchus Marsh	
	Smeaton	Darley	
	Newlyn-Dean	Coimadai	
	Molonghip	Parwan	
	Glen Park		





Western Renewables Link

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Information straight to your inbox

Sign up for information straight to your inbox at the project website www.westernrenewableslink.com.au.

Feedback

You can provide feedback on this document via our website www.westernrenewableslink.com.au or by calling 1800 WRL WRL (975 975) or by emailing info@westernrenewableslink.com.au.

Translation and interpretation services



If you need an interpreter, please call 13 14 50.



If you are deaf and/or find hearing or speaking with people on the phone difficult, please contact the National Relay Service on voice relay number 1300 555 727, TTY number 133 677 or SMS relay number 0423 677 767.

Western Renewables Link Benefit Sharing Program



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