

## Recovery continues in the wake of bushfires

It has certainly been a summer of contrasts for many. From bushfires to floods, it has not been an easy start to 2020. For many of our clients the focus is now on recovering and rebuilding, and more specific details are coming to us on what support packages are available. The Rural Assistance Authority has released the application process and guidelines for the *Special Disaster Loans – Bushfires* and we have provided further details over the page.

**If you have any questions around bushfire recovery, please phone Kothes on (02) 6491 6491.**

**We are available to assist you in any way we can.**

## Kothes longest serving employee celebrates 30 continuous years

*Jenni Nichols is one of the longest serving employees at Kothes, starting with the firm in 1983. In case you think we can't add up, she's been with us for 37 years but she had some parental leave during that time, so has just clocked up her 30<sup>th</sup> consecutive year. At Jenni's celebration morning tea we enjoyed hearing some of her recollections of times gone by from strict dress codes to a computer system that took up a whole house!*

Jenni completed her secretarial training and worked for architects in Sydney before moving to Merimbula and starting her job with Kothes in 1983. In her secretarial role in the Merimbula office she would manually type out client tax returns on a ribbon typewriter with a bottle of whiteout handy if she made a mistake.

It was an era of typing pools and strict dress codes, and if you worked in the Bega office you had to wear stockings and skirts to the knee.

She remembers when the first electric typewriters arrived at Kothes, and how they revolutionised their work systems. Then Kothes purchased its first computer, which it stored in a house in Bega. "It took up the whole house and the equipment needed to keep the computer running filled several rooms," she recalls.

Today's cloud-based accounting and paperless offices are a far cry from when Jenni and other secretarial staff would fill in the cash book ledger by hand.

"It's hard to imagine now with the way technology is today. Things are getting quicker and quicker. Just going from paper to paperless makes everyone a bit more organised and you don't have piles of paper and files everywhere."



Jenni's career progression stems from her long-held talent for numbers; she can rattle off a long list of people's phone numbers that she knows by heart. She has extensive experience across all aspects of accounting and is valued for her broad knowledge.

And although the typewriters have disappeared, Jenni keeps a bottle of whiteout handy just in case.



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BEGA | MERIMBULA | EDEN | BOMBALA | BERMAGUI | COOMA | JINDABYNE

## Grants and support for fire and drought

There are a range of grants, allowances, payments and support options available to individuals and businesses impacted by the fires and drought, and it can be overwhelming navigating through them all. We are listing a few as a starting point, although there are many more options available:

- NSW Bushfires – Australian Disaster Recovery Payment
- Australian Taxation Office deferrals and lodgements
- Farm household allowance, Centrelink
- Drought loans, Regional Investment Corporation
- Animal Welfare Transport Subsidy & Emergency Drought Transport Subsidy
- Drought Assistance Fund
- Infrastructure Rebate Scheme
- Farm Innovation Fund
- AGL Farmer Assist
- Rural Financial Counselling Service
- Bega Valley Shire Council rate relief
- Financial assistance through The Salvation Army, Vinnies and Red Cross
- Bushfire insurance and clean-up, NSW State Government

**We encourage you to get in touch with your Kothes accountant and we can help you access these support packages - phone 6491 6491.**

### BAS payment deferrals for fire-affected areas

The ATO is granting impacted postcodes automatic deferrals for lodgements and payments due. If you live in one of the identified impacted postcodes, the ATO will automatically defer income tax, BAS, SMSF, FBT and excise return lodgements, and their associated payments, to 28 May, 2020.

**Please visit the ATO website for more information about BAS due dates in your postcode area, or call your Kothes accountant.**

### Counselling support for Kothes clients

As a member affiliate of Walker Wayland Australasia, our clients can access a confidential counselling and support service. We would like to extend an open invitation to all clients to access this support which can be for anything from depression and anxiety to family and parenting issues, stress management, financial coaching or legal referrals. This is through the Employee Assistance Program, which Walker Wayland has extended to include clients. It provides three appointments via phone and is available to *all* clients, even if you are not directly impacted by the bushfires. Please call us or drop into one of our offices for a brochure.

### Xero & myob subscription waiver




Xero and MYOB are also providing support for clients impacted by bushfires regarding subscriptions. Please contact us for details.



## Teaching the value of tax

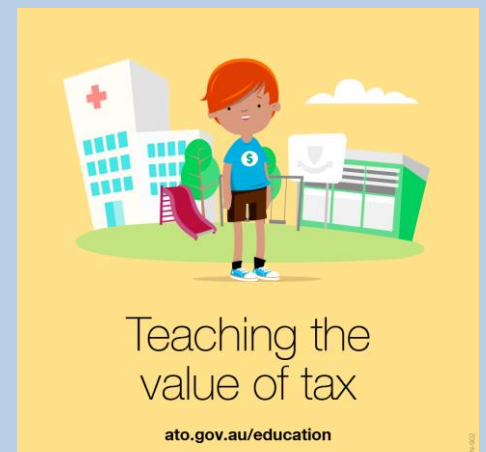
Tax and super are an important part of daily life – which is why we're thrilled that financial literacy is part of the Aussie school curriculum.

The Australian Taxation Office supports teachers, parents and students learning about tax and super by providing:

-  In-school presentations
-  Online resources
-  Educational videos and webinars

If you're a parent or teacher, get the details and request support for your school at:

[www.ato.gov.au/General/Education-zone](http://www.ato.gov.au/General/Education-zone)



### Changes to Awards

Employers need to be aware of upcoming changes to many Awards that will take effect from 1 March 2020.

Although annualised arrangements are still permissible, 22 of the federal system Awards will have revised or new 'model terms' that will require employers to undertake some consideration.

The new Award terms refer to 'annualised wages' and create a range of administrative requirements for employers. Exact requirements will depend upon the specific Award that applies to your employee. **Please contact Kothes if you need help.**