

## Your details

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## Submission details

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### I am making this submission as

A member of the general public

### Submission type

I am making a personal submission

### Consent to make submission public

I would like this submission to remain anonymous

## Share your experience or tell your story

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### Your story

I live in Sydney with mild asthma and basically stayed indoors for the entire summer because I couldn't breathe. My sister has significant respiratory issues and it was even worse for her. And yet the thing that impacted us the most was seeing the trauma residents in bushfire affected communities were going through, the impact on animals, and people's continued denial of the fires link to climate change. The government should be taking responsibility for it. Not using the Greens as a scapegoat nor the fire fighters inability to backburn etc.

## Terms of Reference (optional)

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The Inquiry welcomes submissions that address the particular matters identified in its [Terms of Reference](#).

### **1.1 Causes and contributing factors**

It was climate change. The government needs to stop being in the pocket of billionaires and the mining industry and do something substantial. It's denial of climate change is becoming like America's refusal to introduce gun control and not only is it turning us into a global laughing stock, but it's going to kill us. Fires of this magnitude are going to become a regular thing unless we change things. The science is clear on that.

### **1.3 Response to bushfires**

The mental health impacts of this crisis are going to be a lot worse than people imagine. Whole towns will be effected and they wont just be suffering from depression and anxiety. Mental health issues that were present before the fires will be compounded in a system that already struggles to provide enough for these people. The amazing firefighters who were there day in and day out for months will be suffering. Even those rescuing animals are suffering. I know of people who assisted in rescuing animals who say they won't ever forgot the horrifying sounds of animals dying and not being able to reach them in time. One off funds aren't enough, overcoming trauma is a long process and at times it can be a life long battle. The Medicare bushfire recovery services will cease at the end of 2021 but that's not how mental health works.

### **1.4 Any other matters**

So many animals died or were horrible injured in the fires. Then a huge number died after from starvation. Some are still in the care at places like the Kangaroo Island Wildlife Park. That is going to have a huge impact on the ecosystem and when fires like this happen again and again it will hurt us where the government cares; financially. When people across the world talk about wanting to go to Australia the first thing they mention is our wildlife. Every celebrity that has ever stepped foot on Australian soil has been given a koala or wombat to hold. Take the animals away and a significant amount of our tourism money goes with it.

And yet despite this there has been no significant movement by the government to protect our animals. In particular, the government is ignoring our koalas who were threatened even before this. In fact instead of increasing protections for our animals the government has decided to continue land clearing of unburnt land because I guess 5.4 million hectares of land burnt wasn't enough for the NSW Forestry Corporation. Part of that clearing includes the Lower Bucca state forest which is supposed to be part of the proposed great koala national park. I fail to see how a koala habitat would work without any trees. Will the government fill in wombat burrows with cement next?

Not everything can be left to charity and volunteers and the government's failure to protect animals following the fires is appalling.

### **Supporting documents or images**

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