



Your details

Submission details

I am making this submission as

A resident in a bushfire-affected area

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

Your story

I live on a large bush block that I am managing for conservation. I am also a keen naturalist and a volunteer with a number of nature based organisations, including NPWS and BirdLife Australia. The fires in our area started in late November and continued until mid-February. While my property wasn't burnt, I felt it was inevitable that the fire would reach here. I am deeply traumatised by the threat to my safety over such a long period and am mourning the loss of our local forests and the creatures that lived in those forests.

Terms of Reference (optional)

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

1.1 Causes and contributing factors

There is no doubt that climate change contributed to the drought which created the conditions that allowed the fires to spread as they did. Climate change action is very slow. Our towns are surrounded by State Forests and their logging practices have become increasingly irresponsible. The rate of logging in areas close to towns has increased over the past 10 years. The amount of timber left on the ground after logging contributed to the fires travelling as fast as they did.

1.2 Preparation and planning

Even though the first fires in our shire (Eurobodalla) started at the end of November, there was no clear planning or preparation undertaken by our local council. The word from the RFS was that we should plan for a bushfire as the fires would likely spread but there was no leadership from council.

1.3 Response to bushfires

The immediate management by the Eurobodalla Shire Council was appalling!! There was no leadership, no communication, no reassurance. We were left to make decisions on our own. An evacuation centre was set up in Moruya that was inadequate to deal with the number of people who needed it. Facilities were woeful. We were told to go there and set up tents and then were told to take them down again as they were an ember attack risk. Briefing were scheduled twice a day but these did not run consistently, were cancelled at the last minute and and when they did run, there was only an occasional RFS briefing. The telecommunications in the area failed. electricity was lost. There was no television signal. The local ABC was off air. We were left to fend for ourselves. How could we be abandoned in this way?

1.4 Any other matters

There has been no word from the Eurobodalla Shire Council about what they have learned from this experience and how this will improve conditions for the next fire season. Council have had no public meetings, or process by which information is gathered. They seem to have gone into hiding as they did when the fires were here.

Supporting documents or images
