

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

We live on our 40 hectare property west of Moruya and have done so for 40 years. Our property is mainly bush - ironbark, spotted gums, casuarina and many other species - and it (and the surrounding area) supports a rich variety of wildlife.

Immediately to our west is State Forest. We have always been aware of this as a risk factor for us as there has been little evidence of effective burning practices.

My partner burns areas on our own property strategically each year and this, in addition to weeks and weeks of other preparation throughout this summer, stood us in good stead when fire reached us on the 23rd January fanned by a NW wind much stronger than had been predicted.

Whilst the fortuitous arrival of two brave fire fighters together with the efforts of my partner and myself saved our home and main storage shed (which also housed our stand alone power system), we did lose a few smaller sheds, and sustained damage to our orchard and vege garden - trees and infrastructure - but the rest of our property burned.

We initially felt elated that we had survived with 'so little loss' compared to others in our own area as well as those along the whole eastern seaboard. However shock set in a few days later. We were supported well through this due to the services offered at the local Recovery Centre. And we picked up relatively quickly and began the clean up, and feeding and watering of surviving wildlife.

Almost three months later however I am still digesting the enormity of the damage and recording the progress of regeneration in the surrounding bush. Our whole property burned - as did great swathes of the surrounding bush. The lyrebirds have mostly disappeared from the part State Forest where I walk daily.

Links with community members were an invaluable support - but sadly the face to face nature of these have now disappeared with the effects of the pandemic. I am part of the artist community and am acutely aware how the pandemic has affected fundraisers such as concerts and exhibitions also. Also as many still wait for the rebuilding, and reconnection to power and communications, the pandemic has diverted attention away from the results bushfire - as well as killed the rekindling recovery of local business - that was being so well supported by visitors to the area eager to spend. I belong to a non-profit group which runs a small gallery in our shire - so I am acutely aware of the effects the fire has had on our business - the summer downturn due to the fires, and the brief period of recovery before the pandemic closed us down altogether for an indefinite period.

What I would like to see for the future:

Government listening to scientists predicting disastrous conditions such as our past summer - and acting appropriately to properly resource groups such as the RFS.

Attention being given to the wisdom and learning accumulated and passed on by our indigenous community who have successfully managed the use of fire to care for our environment for tens of thousands of years.

Adequate funding for and education of those working in State Forestry and National Parks, as well as workshops for farmers, to support appropriate burning practices - following principles learned from indigenous experts.

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

Issues needing addressing include:

Government action re climate change is urgent. No place for fossil fuels. Let's move into the future!

Changed attitudes to 'preventive' burning that uses the wisdom of our indigenous community, who have successfully managed fire to care for the land for thousands of years.

1.3 Response to bushfires

Need to listen to requests from fire fighting groups before the fire season for resources and ACT on these!

Supporting documents or images
